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**SITTING DAYS—2015**

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FORTY-FOURTH PARLIAMENT
FIRST SESSION—SIXTH PERIOD

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

House of Representatives Office holders
Speaker—Hon. Bronwyn Kathleen Bishop MP
Deputy Speaker—Hon. Bruce Craig Scott MP
Second Deputy Speaker—Mr Robert George Mitchell MP
Members of the Speaker’s Panel—Mr Russell Evan Broadbent MP,
Ms Anna Elizabeth Burke MP, Ms Sharon Catherine Claydon MP,
Mr Patrick Martin Conroy MP, Mr Alexander George Hawke MP,
Mr Ian Reginald Goodenough MP, Mrs Natasha Louise Griggs MP,
Ms Sarah Moya Henderson MP, Mr Stephen James Irons MP, Mr Ewen Thomas Jones MP,
Mr Craig Kelly MP, Ms Michelle Leanne Landry, Ms Clare Ellen O’Neil, MP,
Mrs Jane Prentice MP, Mr Donald James Randall MP, Mr Ross Xavier Vasta MP,
Mr Brett David Whiteley 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. Anthony John Abbott MP
Deputy Leader—Hon. Julie Isabel Bishop MP
Chief Government Whip—Mr Scott Buchholz MP
Government Whips—Mr Andrew Alexander Nikolic, AM, CSC and
Ms Nola Bethwyn Marino MP

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

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

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<tr>
<td>Whiteley, Mr Brett David</td>
<td>Braddon, TAS</td>
<td>LP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wicks, Mrs Lucy Elizabeth</td>
<td>Robertson, NSW</td>
<td>LP</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Denison, TAS</td>
<td>IND.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Williams, Mr Matthew</td>
<td>Hindmarsh, SA</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wilson, Mr Richard James</td>
<td>O’Connor, WA</td>
<td>LP</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wood, Mr Jason Peter</td>
<td>La Trobe, VIC</td>
<td>LP</td>
</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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**Heads of Parliamentary Departments**

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Clerk of the House of Representatives—D Elder  
Acting Secretary, Department of Parliamentary Services—D Heriot  
Parliamentary Budget Officer—P Bowen
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<td>The Hon. Tony Abbott MP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minister for Indigenous Affairs</td>
<td>Senator the Hon. Nigel Scullion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minister Assisting the Prime Minister for the Public Service</td>
<td>Senator the Hon. Eric Abetz</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minister Assisting the Prime Minister on Counter-Terrorism</td>
<td>The Hon Michael Keenan MP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minister Assisting the Prime Minister for Women</td>
<td>Senator the Hon. Michaelia Cash</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister</td>
<td>The Hon. Charles Porter MP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister</td>
<td>The Hon. Alan Tudge MP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minister for Infrastructure and Regional Development (Deputy Prime Minister)</td>
<td>The Hon. Warren Truss MP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assistant Minister for Infrastructure and Regional Development</td>
<td>The Hon. Jamie Briggs MP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minister for Foreign Affairs</td>
<td>The Hon. Julie Bishop MP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minister for Trade and Investment</td>
<td>The Hon. Andrew Robb AO MP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Foreign Affairs</td>
<td>The Hon. Steven Ciobo MP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Trade and Investment</td>
<td>The Hon. Steven Ciobo MP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minister for Employment (Leader of the Government in the Senate)</td>
<td>Senator the Hon. Eric Abetz</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assistant Minister for Employment (Deputy Leader of the House)</td>
<td>The Hon. Luke Hartsuyker MP</td>
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<tr>
<td>Attorney-General</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minister for the Arts (Vice-President of the Executive Council)</td>
<td>Senator the Hon. George Brandis QC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Deputy Leader of the Government in the Senate)</td>
<td>Senator the Hon. George Brandis QC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minister for Justice</td>
<td>The Hon. Michael Keenan MP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parliamentary Secretary to the Attorney-General</td>
<td>Senator the Hon Concetta Fierravanti-Wells</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Treasurer</td>
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<tr>
<td>Minister for Small Business</td>
<td>The Hon. Joe Hockey MP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assistant Treasurer</td>
<td>The Hon. Bruce Billson MP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parliamentary Secretary to the Treasurer</td>
<td>The Hon. Joshua Frydenberg MP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minister for Agriculture</td>
<td>The Hon. Kelly O'Dwyer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Agriculture</td>
<td>The Hon. Barnaby Joyce MP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minister for Education and Training (Leader of the House)</td>
<td>Senator the Hon. Richard Colbeck</td>
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<tr>
<td>Assistant Minister for Education and Training</td>
<td>Senator the Hon. Simon Birmingham</td>
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<tr>
<td>Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Education and Training</td>
<td>The Hon. Scott Ryan</td>
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<tr>
<td>Minister for Social Services</td>
<td>The Hon. Christopher Pyne MP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assistant Minister for Social Services (Manager of Government Business in the Senate)</td>
<td>Senator the Hon Mitch Fifield</td>
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<tr>
<td>Minister for Human Services</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Minister for Industry and Science</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Industry and Science</td>
<td>The Hon. Karen Andrews MP</td>
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<tr>
<td>Title</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Minister for Defence</strong></td>
<td>The Hon. Kevin Andrews MP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Minister for Veterans’ Affairs</strong></td>
<td>Senator the Hon. Michael Ronaldson</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Minister Assisting the Prime Minister for the Centenary of ANZAC</strong></td>
<td>Senator the Hon. Michael Ronaldson</td>
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<tr>
<td>Assistant Minister for Defence</td>
<td>The Hon. Stuart Robert MP</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Defence</strong></td>
<td>The Hon. Darren Chester MP</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Minister for Communications</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Communications</strong></td>
<td>The Hon. Paul Fletcher MP</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
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<tr>
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<tr>
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<td>The Hon. Robert Baldwin MP</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
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<tr>
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<td>The Hon. Michael McCormack MP</td>
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<tr>
<td>Assistant Minister for Health</td>
<td>Senator the Hon. Fiona Nash</td>
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Each box represents a portfolio. **Cabinet Ministers are shown in** **bold** **type.** As a general rule, there is one department in each portfolio. However, there is a Department of Human Services in the Social Services portfolio and a Department of Veterans' Affairs in the Defence portfolio. The title of a department does not necessarily reflect the title of a minister in all cases.
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<td>Hon. Bill Shorten MP</td>
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<td>Senator the Hon. Kim Carr</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shadow Minister Assisting the Leader for Small Business</td>
<td>Hon. Bernie Ripoll MP</td>
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<tr>
<td>Shadow Parliamentary Secretary for Small Business</td>
<td>Julie Owens MP</td>
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<tr>
<td>Shadow Cabinet Secretary</td>
<td>Senator the Hon. Jacinta Collins</td>
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<tr>
<td>Shadow Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Opposition</td>
<td>Hon. Michael Danby MP</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
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<td>Hon. Tanya Plibersek MP</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Senator Claire Moore</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
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<tr>
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<tr>
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<td>Hon. Anthony Albanese MP</td>
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<td>Shadow Minister for Cities</td>
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<td>Shadow Minister for Tourism</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
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<tr>
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<tr>
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<tr>
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<tr>
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<td>Hon. Shayne Neumann MP</td>
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<td>Shadow Parliamentary Secretary for Aged Care</td>
<td>Senator Helen Polley</td>
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Wednesday, 24 June 2015

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

BILLS

Appropriation (Parliamentary Departments) Bill (No. 1) 2015-2016
Appropriation Bill (No. 1) 2015-2016
Appropriation Bill (No. 2) 2015-2016
Appropriation Bill (No. 5) 2014-2015
Appropriation Bill (No. 6) 2014-2015

Returned from Senate
Messages received from the Senate returning the bills without amendment or request.

Australian Citizenship Amendment (Allegiance to Australia) Bill 2015

First Reading
Bill and explanatory memorandum presented by Mr Dutton.
Bill read a first time.

Second Reading

Mr DUTTON (Dickson—Minister for Immigration and Border Protection) (09:02): I move:

That this bill be now read a second time.

The Australian Citizenship Amendment (Allegiance to Australia) Bill 2015 implements the commitment made by the Prime Minister, myself and the Australian government to address the challenges posed by dual citizens who betray Australia by participating in serious terrorism related activities. This bill emphasises the central importance of allegiance to Australia in the concept of citizenship.

Australian citizenship is something to be treasured. It is a common bond which unites us all, whether we were born here or chose to make Australia our home. Australian citizenship involves a commitment to this country, its people and its democratic rights and privileges. Australian citizenship should not be taken lightly.

We face a heightened and complex security environment. Regrettably, some of the most pressing threats to the security of the nation and the safety of the Australian community come from citizens engaged in terrorism. It is now appropriate to modernise provisions concerning loss of citizenship to respond to current terrorist threats. The world has changed, so our laws should change accordingly.

To ensure clarity of these necessary changes, a purpose clause has been inserted into the bill. It states that, by these amendments, the parliament recognises that Australian citizenship is a common bond, involving reciprocal rights and obligations, and that citizens may, through certain conduct incompatible with the safety and shared values of the Australian community,
demonstrate that they have severed that bond and renounced their allegiance to Australia. The intention of the changes is the protection of the community and the upholding of its values, rather than punishing people for terrorist or hostile acts. The purpose clause uses concepts from the existing preamble in the Citizenship Act.

Allegiance is a duty owed by all citizens to their sovereign or state. A citizen's duty of allegiance to Australia is not created by the Citizenship Act, but it is recognised by it.

The concept of allegiance is central to the constitutional term 'alien' and to this bill's reliance upon the aliens power in the Constitution. The High Court has found that an alien is a person who does not owe allegiance to Australia. By acting in a manner contrary to their allegiance, the person has chosen to step outside of the formal Australian community.

The bill proposes three mechanisms for automatic loss of citizenship:

- First, a new provision where a person renounces their citizenship if they act inconsistently with their allegiance to Australia by engaging in certain terrorist conduct.

- Second, an extension to the current loss of citizenship provision for a person fighting in the armed forces of the country at war with Australia. The extension provides that a person ceases to be a citizen if they fight for, or are in the service of, a specified terrorist organisation overseas.

- Third, a new loss of citizenship provision if the person has been convicted of a specified terrorism offence by an Australian court.

In accordance with Australia's international law obligations, no-one will lose citizenship under any of these provisions unless they are a national of another country.

I now turn to examine the bill in more detail.

New section 33AA is an extension of the current provision which allows a person to renounce their citizenship. The new section provides that a person who is a national or citizen of a country other than Australia renounces their Australian citizenship if they act inconsistently with their allegiance to Australia by engaging in specified conduct.

The relevant conduct is:

- engaging in international terrorist activities using explosive or lethal devices;
- engaging in a terrorist act;
- providing or receiving training connected with preparation for, engagement in, or assistance in a terrorist act;
- directing the activities of a terrorist organisation;
- recruiting for a terrorist organisation;
- financing terrorism;
- financing a terrorist; and
- engaging in foreign incursions and recruitment.

Automatic loss of citizenship will be triggered whether the conduct takes place inside or outside Australia.

The loss of citizenship will be immediate upon the person engaging in the relevant conduct. The minister must give notice that a person has ceased to be an Australian citizen once the
minister becomes aware of the person's conduct giving rise to that outcome, but this notice does not affect when the loss of citizenship takes place. The bill makes clear that this notice may be given at such time and to such persons as the minister considers appropriate.

New section 35 provides for automatic cessation of citizenship if a person is a citizen of another country, is overseas and fights on behalf of, or serves, a declared terrorist organisation. A declared terrorist organisation will be a subset of those which are prescribed for the purposes of the Criminal Code. The minister will declare those organisations that are opposed to Australia or Australia's values, democratic beliefs, rights and liberties.

New section 35A provides that a person automatically ceases to be a citizen if they are convicted of a specified offence. This provision relies on a court having determined criminal guilt. The relevant offences include treason, espionage, terrorism and foreign incursions.

The bill provides the minister with a personal power to rescind a notice advising a person that they ceased to be an Australian citizen and exempt a person from loss of citizenship under these provisions if the minister considers it appropriate to do so in the public interest. If the minister rescinds a notice and exempts the person then they do not lose their citizenship. The minister does not have a duty to consider whether to rescind a notice and exempt the person from the loss of citizenship.

The bill makes it clear that the new loss provisions apply to all Australian citizens, regardless of how they acquired that citizenship. There is no concept of 'constitutional citizenship' in Australia and legislation has long provided that Australian citizens by birth can lose their citizenship in certain circumstances, such as fighting a war against Australia or, prior to 2002, becoming a citizen of another country.

The bill also limits section 39 of the Australian Security Intelligence Organisation Act 1979 in relation to these provisions, such as giving notice of a loss of citizenship or rescinding a notice and exempting a person from loss. This means that the minister may rely on any information provided by ASIO, whether it is preliminary information or whether it amounts to a security assessment or qualified security assessment.

It is intended to rely on the common law doctrine of public interest immunity and the National Security Information (Criminal and Civil Proceedings) Act 2004 (known as the NSI Act) to protect such national security information in any subsequent litigation. The NSI Act protects information the disclosure of which is likely to prejudice Australia's defence, security, international relations, law enforcement interests or national interests. The compromise of this information could possibly affect the security of the nation.

The bill provides that a person who loses their citizenship for terrorist related activities which demonstrate a breach of allegiance is not able to reacquire Australian citizenship in the future. This is entirely appropriate because such a person has shown that they are not capable of upholding their commitment to our country and are not worthy of the honour of Australian citizenship.

I now turn to the issue of review rights. These provisions operate automatically, without a decision from the minister. A person who loses their citizenship under these provisions would be able to seek a declaration from a court that they have not in fact lost their citizenship. Members would be aware that there is no need to mention this explicitly in the bill because the Federal Court and High Court both have original jurisdiction over such matters.
The loss of citizenship provisions in the bill will not be retrospective. However, the Parliamentary Joint Committee on Intelligence and Security will inquire into this and other aspects of the bill. The renunciation provision in section 33AA and the fighting or serving a terrorist organisation provision in section 35 will only apply to conduct after the bill commences. The loss of citizenship following a conviction in section 35A will apply to convictions after commencement, although the conduct which forms the basis of the conviction could have occurred before commencement.

Conclusion

In conclusion, this bill deals with the threat caused by those who have engaged in terrorist related conduct that is contrary to their allegiance to Australia. It formally removes a person from the Australian community when they themselves have breached their allegiance to Australia.

I commend this bill to the House.

Debate adjourned.

Tax Laws Amendment (Small Business Measures No. 3) Bill 2015

First Reading

Bill and explanatory memorandum presented by Mr Billson.

Bill read a first time.

Second Reading

Mr BILLSON (Dunkley—Minister for Small Business) (09:12): I move:

That this bill be now read a second time.

This bill amends various taxation laws to provide tax relief and reduce red tape for small business.

Small business is the engine room of our economy. The contribution of the hardworking women and men of small business cannot be understated. They account for 96 per cent of all Australian businesses. They employ over 4.5 million people and they produce over $330 billion of economic output each year.

By taking risks, small business owners grow their business, employ more people and delight their customers. They are constantly innovating and adapting to a changing business environment. However, small businesses face a higher relative regulatory burden than larger businesses. It is important that policy settings do not make owning and operating a small business harder and more costly than it has to be. We are committed to energising enterprise, not putting up roadblocks.

This is why this government has introduced the largest jobs and small business budget package in Australia's history. This is a $5.5 billion package that will help small business invest more, grow more and employ more.

This is the third of four bills this government will introduce to deliver the Growing Jobs and Small Business package. The company tax cut of 1.5 per cent and accelerated depreciation for small business bills were passed by the House and the Senate. I am pleased that they received royal assent a couple of days ago. The fourth bill will include the budget measure to allow small businesses to restructure without incurring a capital gains tax liability.
This bill will provide a tax discount for unincorporated small businesses, allow immediate deductibility for professional expenses and expand the FBT exemption for work related portable electronic devices.

The measures in this bill will provide improved cashflow for small businesses. In addition to improved cashflow, providing immediate deductibility of professional expenses and expanding the FBT exemption for work related portable electronic devices will reduce red tape for small businesses.

Small businesses tend to face proportionately higher regulatory costs than larger businesses, because of their inability to take advantage of economies of scale in understanding and complying with regulation.

**Schedule 1 of this bill will provide a five per cent tax discount for approximately 70 per cent—more than two-thirds—of Australian small businesses which are not incorporated, capped at $1,000 per taxpayer.**

We have successfully brought legislation before the parliament to introduce a 1.5 per cent cut in the company tax rate for small business. That measure will provide very welcome tax relief to thousands of small incorporated businesses across Australia. But this bill extends that benefit in a proportionate way to the vastly greater number of unincorporated small businesses, broadly similar to the company tax cut.

Owners of small businesses will receive a five per cent tax offset on their small business income. As I mentioned, that is capped at $1,000 per taxpayer, per year.

We know that Australian small businesses are made up of many different Australians engaging in commerce through a range of different enterprise structures, and that's why we've taken this into account in crafting the Jobs and Small Business Budget Package.

Currently, unincorporated business income is taxed at its owner's marginal rate of personal income tax. This feature of Australia's tax system means that a company tax cut will not benefit unincorporated businesses. All of those 'tradies—Tony's tradies, if you will—who operate as sole traders, the mum-and-dad business partnerships and the family business operating through a trust would miss out if we solely focus on the small business company tax cut. This bill will ensure all small businesses are entitled to a tax cut, irrespective of how they are structured.

With this tax cut of up to $1,000 for each business owner, small businesses will have more cash flow. The increased cash flow can be reinvested in the business, helping it to reach its full potential.

**Schedule 2 of this bill will provide immediate deductibility of professional expenses for small business.**

Currently, there are some expenses related to starting a business that have to be depreciated at 20 per cent of the original cost over five years. Some examples of these expenses include professional advice on starting a business, such as legal advice or costs associated with raising capital, including those incurred in accessing crowd-sourced equity funding.

This bill allows these expenses to be immediately deducted instead of depreciated over five years. The benefit here is not just to the business cash flow but to the record-keeping requirements that small businesses face. Small businesses will not have to track these...
expenses over five years, as previously required. They will now claim the deduction for the entire amount and get on with running their business and growing Australia's economy.

Immediate deductibility of professional expenses will be available from the start of the 2015-16 income year.

**Schedule 3—FBT and personal electronic devices**

Schedule 3 also reduces red tape within the fringe benefits tax system, by expanding the FBT exemption for work-related portable electronic devices.

Simplifying fringe benefits tax (or FBT) arrangements for small businesses will reduce the existing complexity in complying with current rules, and improve access for employers to work-related benefit exemptions.

Small businesses (with an aggregated turnover of less than $2 million) will be able to access an FBT exemption for all portable electronic devices that are provided for work purposes.

This exemption will be available even if multiple devices have substantially similar functions and have been provided by an employer to their employee for work purposes.

FBT applies to certain non-cash benefits provided by an employer to an employee. FBT is levied on the employer.

Under the FBT system, fringe benefits are not taxed at an employee's marginal tax rate, but are instead taxed at the top marginal tax rate.

FBT maintains the integrity and fairness of Australia's taxation system by taxing non-cash benefits provided by an employer to its employees. It also facilitates the inclusion of fringe benefits in an employee's income for the purposes of means-testing benefits such as family tax benefits.

Currently, there is an FBT exemption for five categories of work related items that are primarily for the employee's employment. These categories apply to portable electronic devices; items of computer software; items of protective clothing; briefcases; and tools of the trade.

Within the portable electronic devices category, an FBT exemption can currently be provided for more than one device, provided the devices do not have substantially similar functions.

For example, a mobile phone and a laptop are not considered to be substantially similar in their functionality (so each would get the exemption), but a tablet and a laptop are generally considered to have substantially similar functions (and so only one would be able to get the exemption).

With the development of new products and increasing overlaps in functionality, it is becoming more and more difficult for employers to determine which devices can access the existing FBT exemption, and is thereby stemming the use and availability of a critical tool of the trade for small businesses, being portable electronic devices.

With evolving technology being used for work purposes, the legislative provisions that allow for an FBT exemption for portable electronic devices and computer software have not kept pace.
There have been many examples of business seeking clarification from the ATO regarding whether multiple items can both be exempt in the same FBT year.

Allowing the existing FBT exemption to apply to items that have substantially similar functions as proposed will simplify the current rules and provide employers with more flexibility in the number and nature of items provided to employees, by disregarding overlaps in the functions of items.

As such, simplifying this exemption is expected to lead to a reduction in compliance costs and red tape for employers.

Employers will no longer need to determine whether items such as a tablet and laptop have substantially similar functions. The benefit will potentially increase in the future as the range of items such as smartphones or smartwatches increase in use and function.

It is estimated that around 30,000 businesses will initially benefit from this measure.

This reinforces the government's position that the tax system should not impede innovations by companies hoping to grow and employ people.

To this end, removing and simplifying the FBT portable electronic devices exemption will provide proportionately greater benefits to small business.

The 2014 Board of Taxation report, Review of Tax Impediments Facing Small Business, noted that small business stakeholders frequently raised fringe benefits tax as an area of concern, suggesting that it imposes a significant and disproportionately high regulatory burden on small business.

The government has listened to the concerns of small business owners and employees, and is committed to making it easier for smaller enterprises to do business in Australia.

It is estimated that there will be compliance cost savings associated with the measures contained in this schedule, which will commence from the beginning of the next FBT year on 1 April 2016.

As I mentioned, this bill, coupled with other initiatives announced by the government in the 2015-16 budget, encourages small businesses to provide their staff with all the necessary tools they need to grow and build the businesses that they have a great interest and stake in, in seeing their success for the future. We are encouraging people to have a go.

We are committed to ensuring Australia is the best place to start and grow a small business.

Full details of the measures are contained in the explanatory memoranda. I commend the bill to the House.

Debate adjourned.

Treasury Legislation Amendment (Small Business and Unfair Contract Terms) Bill 2015

First Reading

Bill and explanatory memorandum presented by Mr Billson.

Bill read a first time.

Second Reading

Mr BILLSON (Dunkley—Minister for Small Business) (09:23): I move:
That this bill be now read a second time.

The coalition has for many years argued that in many cases small businesses have no more market power or ability to vary take-it-or-leave-it standard form contracts than an individual consumer, yet small businesses lack the consumer style protections that provide for unfair terms to be struck out of contracts.

The Treasury Legislation Amendment (Small Business and Unfair Contract Terms) Bill 2015 implements the government's 2013 election commitment to provide a 'fair go' for small businesses, by extending to the small business sector unfair contract terms protections currently available to consumers. This is a long sought-after and very much welcomed new protection for small business.

This bill will amend the Australian Consumer Law, which is set out in schedule 2 of the Competition and Consumer Act 2010, and the Australian Securities and Investments Commission Act 2001 (ASIC Act), to extend the consumer unfair contract terms protections to cover standard form, small business contracts that are valued below a prescribed threshold.

Consumers have been protected from unfair contract terms since 2010. However, the former government, despite its initial interest and intentions, decided not to proceed with offering similar protections to small business.

It is time that small businesses, which often face the same vulnerabilities as consumers, also receive protections when offered 'take it or leave it' contracts. Between 1 January 2011 and 31 December 2014, the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission received 1,375 small business complaints relating to unfair contract terms. This figure does not include complaints directed to state and territory fair trading bodies, state small business commissioners and industry ombudsmen.

Under the new protections, a court will be able to strike out a term of a small business contract that it considers unfair. For example, a term that allows the business offering the contract to unilaterally change the price or key terms could be considered unfair.

In this way, the bill provides a remedy for small businesses when an unfair contract term is included in a standard form contract. This will reduce the incentive to include and enforce unfair terms in contracts with small businesses, providing for a more efficient allocation of risk and giving small businesses greater confidence to enter into contracts to invest and grow their business.

This bill is an important reform for small businesses and reflects a key part of the Abbott government's small business policy platform from the 2013 election. The bill is an Australian first, and in designing the legislative amendments the government consulted extensively with stakeholders.

In 2014, the Commonwealth Treasury, on behalf of Commonwealth, state and territory consumer affairs ministers, conducted a 10-week public consultation process to gather information about the extent of the problem and the views of stakeholders on policy options. Over 80 submissions and around 300 survey responses were received as part of this process.

Stakeholder feedback indicated that small businesses across a wide range of industries have concerns about unfair terms. Small businesses, like consumers, are vulnerable to the inclusion of unfair terms in standard form contracts as they can lack the time and legal expertise to critically analyse the detail of contracts.
The consultations also found significant support for addressing the problem through a legislative extension of the current consumer unfair contract terms law.

I note that state and territory governments were actively engaged in the development of this measure and the consumer affairs ministers formally agreed to the proposal to amend the Australian Consumer Law in April 2015, as required under the Intergovernmental Agreement for the Australian Consumer Law. In line with the Corporations Agreement 2002, the Commonwealth notified the states and territories that these legislative protections would be mirrored in the ASIC Act.

Public consultation on the exposure draft legislation was held between 28 April and 12 May 2015, providing stakeholders with the opportunity to comment on the draft bill. It received almost 50 submissions and my department, the Treasury, also held discussions with a number of stakeholders.

I would like to thank all of the stakeholders that engaged with the government through these consultations. Your feedback has helped ensure this important reform will be implemented effectively.

I would now like to turn to the provisions of the bill.

In both the ASIC Act and the Australian Consumer Law, this bill applies the unfair contract terms provisions to small business contracts. A contract will be a small business contract if at least one party to the contract has fewer than 20 employees and its value is below the prescribed threshold.

A headcount approach is used to determine whether a business has fewer than 20 employees by headcount, excluding casual employees not employed on a regular or systematic basis. This characterisation of small business, which is used by the Australian Bureau of Statistics, has been chosen as it provides a proxy for the human resources available within a small business.

A headcount approach, rather than full-time equivalent, will also simplify the application of the law. It assumes that small businesses will find it easier to recall the number of people they employ at the point of entering into a contract, rather than a full-time equivalent calculation.

It is important to note that only casual employees employed on a 'regular and systematic' basis will be counted as part of this definition. This is intended to account for factors such as seasonal variations in employee numbers which are not part of a business's normal workforce.

The second limb of the small business contract test is that the value of the contract must not exceed $100,000, or $250,000 for a multi-year contract. This 'transaction value' threshold was chosen so that the protections apply when small businesses engage in day-to-day transactions, while encouraging them to conduct due diligence on large contracts fundamental to the success of their business. There is a significant difference between high value contracts and those day-to-day contracts thrust before small business. It is right and reasonable for all enterprises to seek advice on larger contracts. Responsible and savvy small businesses understand this responsibility.

Based on the 2014 survey results, around four in five small business standard form contracts will be covered by this reform, and as traders review their standard form contracts to comply with the new laws the practicalities and the perceptions of traders will work to ensure
that in addressing questions of fairness action to remove unfair terms from contracts below the thresholds will see changes flow through to businesses and transactions above the thresholds. The ACCC’s enforcement action, too, can have an impact beyond the businesses or transactions falling within these thresholds.

Determining how this threshold applies to a contract did attract significant feedback in the exposure draft consultations and this will inform the development of guidance material to support the implementation of the law.

The final element of the bill I would like to highlight is the mechanism that will allow the government to exempt laws that it deems are equivalent to the unfair contract terms law.

This mechanism recognises the importance of avoiding regulatory duplication and unnecessary compliance costs in sectors where there are equivalent and enforceable protections against unfair contract terms. In designing this regulation-making power the government has taken care to ensure the power is not broader than is necessary to achieve this objective.

Specifically, this bill provides that to grant an exemption the responsible Commonwealth minister must be satisfied that the law or regulation provides enforceable protections for small businesses which are at least equivalent to the unfair contract terms protections. In forming such a view, consideration must be given to a number of prescribed matters, namely the impact on small businesses, businesses generally and the public interest.

I will now turn to the implementation of this important reform.

This bill will take effect six months after it receives royal assent. Over this six-month period, the regulators will engage with industry and produce guidance material and other information to assist traders to comply with the new law. As part of the 2014-15 budget, the government provided $1.4 million to the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission for this purpose.

In conclusion, this bill introduces an important reform that will give small businesses access to a level playing field to grow, invest and create jobs. With this legislation, the government is restoring time and resources back to small businesses to invest in their business's success rather than navigating a costly and time consuming maze of contract terms.

Stakeholder feedback provided in 2014 and 2015 has helped the government to settle on an appropriate model for these protections. The selected transaction value thresholds ensure the protections apply when small businesses engage in day-to-day transactions, whilst encouraging small businesses to conduct due diligence on large contracts fundamental to the success of their business. The bill also provides a mechanism that will allow the government to exempt laws that it deems are equivalent to the unfair contract terms law and enforceable.

The bill is part of the Abbott government's strategy to ensure Australia is the best place to start and grow a business. It meets our 2013 election commitment to extend to the small business sector unfair contract terms protections currently available to consumers. It is an important reform, an Australian first, and the latest in the government's ongoing commitment to the men and women of Australia.

Before commending the bill to the House I would like to acknowledge the diligence and professionalism of the Treasury officials who have engaged incredibly constructively with the
many stakeholders involved in the development of this legislative proposal to implement our
election commitments. I commend the bill—it is a ripper.

Debate adjourned.

Tax and Superannuation Laws Amendment (2015 Measures No. 2) Bill 2015
First Reading

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

Second Reading

Mr Frydenberg (Kooyong—Assistant Treasurer) (09:35): I move:
That this bill be now read a second time.

Today I introduce a bill that is yet another stepping stone towards repairing Australia's
budget.

Like the many tax bills since we took office, this bill helps get the budget back on track and
amends various taxation laws to reduce uncertainty for investors and companies.

First, let's talk about the budget. We are all aware of the budget position that was left to us
by the previous government. In the 2013-14 Mid-Year Economic and Fiscal Outlook, gross
debt was projected to grow to $667 billion by the end of the medium term.

Without taking action to address this debt, Australian families and businesses face a bleak
future. Tackling the debt and getting the budget back on track is vital to maintaining our
living standards. And we need to maintain them so that our children and grandchildren can
enjoy the same lifestyle we do.

Our fiscal plan will ensure government services are sustainable and stop borrowing at the
cost of future taxpayers.

This bill is another part of the job the Australian people elected us to do: to fix the nation's
debt and build a strong, prosperous economy.

Second, this bill reduces uncertainty and red tape for investors and companies, and ensures
the tax system operates as intended. Because it is yet another step towards our commitment to
clear the backlog of 92 announced but unenacted measures.

The changes in this bill will make our tax system better, support businesses, investors and
mining exploration.

Specifically, this bill makes four changes.

One—the bill provides tax relief for some companies altering their mining practices.

Two—the bill alters the way software expenses is treated for tax purposes, so that the
effective life of in-house software is increased.

Three—the bill confirms the longstanding industry tax treatment for investors in instalment
warrants, and instalment receipts over certain assets.

Four—the bill clarifies the ability of companies to carry forward losses.
Schedule 1: Tax relief for certain mining realignments

Schedule 1 of this bill will make sure that the immediate tax deduction, for rights and information used in resource exploration, fulfils its original purpose of encouraging genuine exploration.

Limiting the immediate deduction was intended to remove the exploration tax concession for trading of late stage exploration rights and information, where the price reflected the value of resources discovered rather than the right to explore.

It was not meant to remove the immediate deductibility of an exchange of an interest in a mining, quarrying or prospecting right in return for exploration services, otherwise known as a 'farm-in, farm-out' arrangement.

Nor was the integrity measure meant to affect parties to a joint venture, when they exchange interests in mining, quarrying or prospecting rights so that the owners of the project have a consistent ownership interest in all the reserves and resources of the project.

The resources sector was given assurances that these arrangements would not be affected when the changes were announced. Although not subject to the integrity concern, resource sector companies would be affected if not specifically exempted from the integrity provisions.

So, this bill will maintain the tax neutrality of a 'farm-in, farm-out' arrangement where an interest in a mining, quarrying or prospecting right is exchanged in return for exploration services.

This bill will also provide tax rollover relief for an interest realignment, in which parties to a joint venture exchange their interests in mining, quarrying or prospecting rights to pursue a single development project.

It will also address a technical issue that may have prevented some taxpayers from claiming immediate deductions for expenses for enhancing mining, quarrying or prospecting information.

These arrangements mean that genuine exploration activities and other legitimate restructuring arrangements can continue without any unintended tax consequences.

And importantly, these amendments will minimise uncertainty for business, and prevent investment decisions in the mining and petroleum industries from being delayed.

Schedule 2: Increasing the effective life of in-house software

Speaking of investment, let me now talk about the change to the tax treatment of software expenses.

Schedule 2 of this bill makes a small change to the way expenditure on software is treated for tax purposes, to increase the effective life of in-house software.

Currently, taxpayers claim a tax deduction for software expenditure over four years. Software expenditure can include software bought off the shelf, as well as money spent on developing software in-house.

This schedule changes the time period over which the tax deduction can be claimed from four to five years.

This will ensure that the effective life of software for tax purposes better reflects the typical useful life of software for businesses.
The new treatment will start for expenditure made on or after 1 July 2015 and will result in a saving of $420 million over the four years to 2017-18.

That is not far from half a billion dollars—money which can be redirected to fund other priorities.

**Schedule 3: Income tax look-through treatment for instalment warrants and similar arrangements**

As well as altering a tax treatment to help progress our repair of the nation's finances, this bill confirms into law an existing tax treatment for investors in instalment warrants.

In this way, schedule 3 of this bill provides certainty to investors. Schedule 3 clarifies the income tax treatment for investors in instalment warrants and instalment receipts over certain assets.

Instalment warrants and receipts allow an investor to purchase an asset, such as a share, by paying in one or more instalments.

Under these arrangements the investor is entitled to receive the benefit of any income, such as dividends, from the underlying asset throughout the term of the arrangement.

Uncertainty has arisen about whether this industry practice is supported by the tax law.

The changes in this schedule confirm the longstanding industry practice to ignore the instalment warrant or receipt for capital gains tax purposes.

These amendments treat an investor in an instalment warrant or receipt in certain widely held securities as the owner of the underlying asset for income tax purposes.

Investors benefit from these changes, as there will be no capital gains tax applicable at the time the last instalment is paid.

Equally, the investor rather than trustee will be assessed on any dividends or income received from holding or selling the assets.

Consistent with providing this treatment for instalment warrants and receipts, regulated superannuation funds that borrow to buy assets in a particular way, including with instalment warrants, are also provided with this treatment for income tax purposes.

These changes provide much-needed certainty for individuals, businesses and superannuation funds.

**Schedule 4: Multiple classes of shares**

This bill also provides certainty about the tax treatment of losses. Schedule 4 of the bill clarifies the ability of companies to carry forward losses.

Companies make a tax loss when their total deductions claimed are greater than their taxable income earned in a year.

Companies can carry forward these losses to offset assessable income in future years.

To carry forward losses, companies must have either maintained the same ownership and control or carried on the same business since the loss was incurred. A number of tests are used to assess this.

There are a couple of minor technical issues with these tests which may result in the rules not operating as intended.
The bill will:

- modify the continuity of ownership test for companies whose shares have unequal rights to dividends, capital distributions or voting power;
- ensure that companies do not have to trace ownership through certain entities, including complying superannuation funds; and
- clarify that in applying the same business test, the head company or members of a consolidated group will not need to take into account the history of a subsidiary member prior to the time that it joined the group.

Without these amendments, companies may be unable to meet the tests even though there was no significant change in underlying beneficial ownership, control or business during the period.

The amendments are good for business and will provide taxpayers with the certainty that they need.

In conclusion, this bill is part of the government's plan to repair the budget and secure Australia's future so that future generations can enjoy the same living standards as we do.

That plan is all about government living within its means so that vital services can be sustained well into the future. It is about laying the groundwork for the economy to grow and for all of us to participate. And it is about building a future that is just and prosperous.

This bill also ensures that genuine exploration activities and other legitimate restructuring arrangements can continue without any unintended tax consequences.

In addition, this bill reduces both uncertainty and compliance costs for investors and businesses and restores integrity to the tax system.

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

I commend this bill to the House.

Debate adjourned.

Aboriginal Land Rights (Northern Territory) Amendment Bill 2015

First Reading

Bill and explanatory memorandum presented by Mr Tudge.

Bill read a first time.

Second Reading

Mr TUDGE (Aston—Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister) (09:45): I move:

That this bill be now read a second time.

It is my pleasure to introduce the bill to this chamber. The bill reflects this government's ongoing commitment to empowering Indigenous landowners and community members with localised decision making, particularly about the use of their land. It enables Indigenous landowners and community members to play an integral role in fostering economic development in their communities, and move them closer towards owning their own homes.

The bill also demonstrates the government's commitment to recognise the ownership of land in the Northern Territory by its traditional owners. To that end, it schedules two parcels of land which will enable that land to be granted as Aboriginal land.
The community of Mutitjulu is located on Aboriginal land in the Northern Territory and in 1985 was leased by the Uluru-Kata Tjuta Land Trust to the Director of National Parks for 99 years. Because of the nature of the lease to the Director of National Parks, tenure arrangements in Mutitjulu are irregular, uncertain, and inconsistent with other communities on Aboriginal land in the Northern Territory.

In order to resolve this issue, this government, through the Minister for Indigenous Affairs, Senator the Hon. Nigel Scullion, has been working in close cooperation with the Mutitjulu community, traditional owners and the Central Land Council to negotiate a sublease which will provide certainty of tenure in Mutitjulu.

The bill amends the Aboriginal Land Rights (Northern Territory) Act 1976 to allow the Executive Director of Township Leasing, on behalf of the Commonwealth, to hold a sublease of Aboriginal land.

The bill also makes provision for the executive director to transfer this sublease of Aboriginal land to an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander corporation, and for that corporation to transfer that sublease back to the executive director. Any such transfers will need to be in accordance with the terms of the relevant sublease.

The bill allows for the Minister for Indigenous Affairs to direct that funds from the Aboriginals Benefit Account be paid to an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander corporation for the purpose of acquiring and administering that sublease. The minister may also direct that such funds be paid to the Executive Director of Township Leasing if it holds a sublease of Aboriginal land.

Accordingly, the amendments contained in the bill will allow for the subleasing of the community of Mutitjulu to the Executive Director of Township Leasing. The bill will also facilitate a robust Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander corporation, comprised of community members and traditional owners, holding that sublease in the future.

Certainty of tenure in Mutitjulu will allow the Mutitjulu community to take advantage of the unique economic development opportunities offered by its location in close proximity to two of Australia's most visited World Heritage sites, Uluru and Kata Tjuta. These negotiations signal the strong interest of this government, the Mutitjulu community and traditional owners in their community's economic future.

The Mutitjulu arrangements, which contemplate transferring responsibility for holding the sublease to a community corporation in the future, are also reflective of the government's direction in township leasing.

Similar negotiations in the Northern Territory are being undertaken between traditional owners, land councils and the government to give communities with economic vision a new way forward for making land decisions. Instead of leasing their community to the Executive Director of Township Leasing, a strong community entity may instead take control of the township lease and have direct responsibility for decisions about land use in their communities. Some communities may wish to lease to the executive director with provision for a transfer to a community entity in the future.

Finally, the bill will add parcels of land in the Wickham River area and in the Simpson Desert to Schedule 1 to the Land Rights Act. These amendments will enable the parcels of land to be granted to the relevant Aboriginal land trusts.
I commend the bill to the chamber.
Debate adjourned.

PARLIAMENTARY ZONE

Mr BRIGGS (Mayo—Assistant Minister for Infrastructure and Regional Development) (09:50): I move:

That, in accordance with section 5 of the Parliament Act 1974, the House approve the following proposal for work in the Parliamentary Zone which was presented to the House on 23 June 2015, namely: Construction of a memorial commemorating the Malaysia Airlines Flight 17 (MH17) tragedy.

This was announced by the Prime Minister earlier this week in this place. Under section 5 of the Parliament Act 1974, the Presiding Officers are responsible for works within the parliamentary precinct. Accordingly, this motion is moved on behalf of the Speaker and the President. I also acknowledge the work of Christopher Molesworth in my office, from the department, in making this happen.

Question agreed to.

PARLIAMENTARY ZONE

Mr BRIGGS (Mayo—Assistant Minister for Infrastructure and Regional Development) (09:51): I move:

That, in accordance with section 5 of the Parliament Act 1974, the House approve the following proposal for work in the Parliamentary Zone which was presented to the House on 23 June 2015, namely: Enhancement of the John Gorton Building carpark.

Question agreed to.

BUSINESS

Rearrangement

Mr McCORMACK (Riverina—Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Finance) (09:51): I move:

That order of the day No. 1, government business, be postponed until a later hour this day.

Question agreed to.

COMMITTEES

Human Rights Committee

Report

Mr RUDDOCK (Berowra) (09:52): On behalf of the Parliamentary Joint Committee on Human Rights I present the committee's 24th report of the 44th Parliament, entitled Human rights scrutiny report.

Ordered that the report be made a parliamentary paper.

Mr RUDDOCK: by leave—This report provides the Parliamentary Joint Committee on Human Rights' view on the compatibility of the human rights bills introduced into the parliament from 15 to 18 June 2015, legislative instruments received from 15 to 28 May 2015 and legislation previously deferred by the committee. The report also includes the committee's consideration of responses arising from previous reports.
In line with the committee's statutory function, this report outlines the committee's examination of the compatibility of these bills and instruments with our human rights obligations. Of the five bills and one instrument considered in this report, two were assessed as not raising human rights concerns and four raised matters requiring further correspondence. The committee has continued to defer consideration of a number of instruments and conclude its examination of three bills.

In this report, the committee examined the Foreign Death Penalty Offences (Preventing Information Disclosure) Bill 2015, which was recently introduced by the honourable member for Fairfax, Mr Clive Palmer MP. This bill raises a number of complex human rights which have been explored by the committee. The bill makes it an offence to disclose information which may assist in the investigation of a prosecution or the punishment of a person in another country where the death penalty may be applied. This is clearly intended to promote the right to life under the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, under which every human being has the inherent right to life, which should be protected by law. However, the bill contains an exception to allow information to be shared if disclosure is said to be necessary to prevent or assist in the investigation or prosecution of a person suspected of engaging in terrorism or an act of violence causing death or endangering life.

I might say that this raises complex questions over the nature of Australia's international obligations in relation to providing cooperation with foreign authorities. This is particularly so in circumstances where the provision of information may necessarily thwart an attempted terrorist attack and therefore protect the lives of many innocent people. I assert, and I think that the committee agrees, that we must remember that the right to life includes an obligation on the state to protect people from being killed by others. Yet, as Australia long ago abolished the death penalty we are also under an obligation not only not to subject people to the death penalty ourselves but also where we may expose a person to real risk of the death penalty in another country.

This is an area that has generated considerable debate within the committee, particularly as many members acknowledge the difficult operational questions that arise for police if they are to be prohibited from providing international cooperation or assistance where the death penalty might apply. If you saw something like the tragedy on Bali that may have been thwarted if we had been able to provide information, one would be very hesitant about saying that we should not try to save the lives of Australians on a beach offshore because those who were guilty of plotting a terrorist attack might be subjected to a death penalty if they were caught.

I note that under the committee's mandate under the Human Rights (Parliamentary Scrutiny) Act that it is to examine all legislation that comes before the parliament for compatibility with human rights and to report to the parliament on this issue. In this case, the statement of compatibility, the bill did not address the human rights concerns outlined above and, as such, the committee has determined that it requires further information to complete its human rights assessment.

As I have said before, the committee seeks to engage in dialogue with proponents of legislation—both to help the committee better understand the intent of legislation and to help relevant legislation proponents to identify and explore questions of human rights compatibility. This report also includes an examination of three bills on which the committee
has now received responses from relevant ministers. Of these, two bills, the Australian Citizenship and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2014 and the Migration Amendment (Maintaining the Good Order of Immigration Detention Facilities) Bill 2015, raise complex issues.

I would like to thank my colleagues for the constructive discussion we have had in relation to this matter in seeking to resolve a number of difficult questions. As will be apparent from the report, the committee did find different views amongst its membership as to whether a number of members had been justified. Obviously, I encourage fellow members and others to examine the committee's report to better inform their understanding of the committee's deliberations.

The ultimate purpose of the committee is to inform debates of the parliament on the merits of legislation which we are asked to consider, and in that spirit, and with these comments, I commend the 24th report of the 44th Parliament to the House.

Public Works Committee Report

Mr PERRETT (Moreton) (09:58): On behalf of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works I present report 5 of 2015 of the committee relating to the 17th Construction Squadron relocation infrastructure project, and I ask leave of the House to make a short statement in connection with the report.

Ordered that the report be made a parliamentary paper.

Mr PERRETT: by leave—On behalf of the Parliamentary Standing committee on Public Works I present the committee's fifth report of 2015 concerning the 17th Construction Squadron relocation infrastructure project, which was referred to the committee in March 2015.

The committee examined Defence's proposal to relocate the 17th Construction Squadron from Holsworthy Barracks in New South Wales to RAAF Base Amberley in Queensland—

Mr Neumann: Hear, hear!

Mr PERRETT: I take that support from the member for Blair there, whose electorate Amberley is located in!

The estimated cost of the project is $71.8 million, excluding GST. The 17th Construction Squadron operates under the 6th Engineer Support Regiment, which serves as a regimental headquarters for the command and control of several Royal Australian Engineer squadrons.

As part of two large projects in 2009, Defence relocated both the 6th Engineer Support Regiment and the 21st Construction Squadron to RAAF Base Amberley.

Defence told the committee that relocating the 17th Construction Squadron will further consolidate the 6th Engineer Support Regiment and will provide opportunities to enhance the command and control of engineer units in South East Queensland. It will also improve the overall operational and training effectiveness, and gain unit-wide efficiencies through the provision of shared services. And the committee saw some of that during our time in Queensland.

The proposed work will provide purpose-built and adaptively re-used facilities that are fit for purpose, compliant and provide value for money. The scope will include offices,
workshops, vehicle and equipment shelters and car parking. A fire training facility, suitable for training personnel to use the new generation of fire-fighting vehicles, will also be constructed.

The committee visited the RAAF Base Amberley and held hearings in Ipswich on the same day. Defence told the committee that their previous experience with similar relocation works would translate into considerable cost savings for this project. The Mayor of Ipswich, the irrepressible Paul Pisasale also spoke briefly at the public hearing. He told the committee that he believes RAAF Base Amberley is enthusiastically supported by the Ipswich community—and I am sure the member for Blair would support that assertion.

The committee heard that Defence would take steps to ensure the continued easy flow of traffic in and around the base during the works.

The committee is satisfied that the project has merit in terms of need, scope and cost, and recommends that it proceed.

In concluding, I commend this report to the House.

BILLS

Social Services Legislation Amendment (Youth Employment and Other Measures) Bill 2015
Second Reading

Debate resumed on the motion:

That this bill be now read a second time.

Mr NEUMANN (Blair) (10:01): This bill makes it clear—as if there was any reason to doubt—that the Abbott government has learned few lessons from its manifestly unfair budget in 2014.

Sure, the government has engaged in a bit of reluctant backpedalling here and there—including in this bill. But, this bill, as the minister said in his second reading speech, includes measures which 'incorporate the reintroduction, with modifications, or the replacement of three 2014 budget measures'. Why would these measures require reintroduction, modification or replacement? There is a simple answer to that: because they were among the most unfair, unreasonable and unwarranted aspects of the Abbott government's first budget. These measures targeted vulnerable young job seekers. They were measures that were opposed by Labor. They were measures rejected by the Australian community.

Even in a budget widely regarded as the most unfair in 20 years, the rank unfairness of these measures in this first bill when it came before the chamber stank out. That was the 2014 budget of 'lifters' versus 'leaners'. It was a budget that attacked vulnerable Australians, a budget that poured the pain on low- and middle-income families, pensioners, students, Indigenous Australians, young job seekers and the sick. There were cuts to family payments, cuts to pensions, $100,000 university degrees. Billions of dollars were cut from health and dental programs and from schools. There were cuts targeting low- and middle-income families, pensioners, students, et cetera. There were cuts laser-targeted at those the government obviously considers 'leaners'.

What was in the original bill before this House? Some of the government's cuts targeted young job seekers. These included: pausing indexation of income test free areas for all
working age allowances for three years from 1 July 2015; extending the one-week ordinary waiting period to all working-age payments from 1 January 2015; extending youth allowance (other) from 22- to 24-year-olds in lieu of Newstart allowance and sickness allowance from 1 January 2015. Perhaps the most egregious and disgraceful measure that came to best exemplify the rank unfairness of the government's 2014-15 budget was forcing young jobs seekers under 30 to wait six months before receiving an income support payment, and then, after they had received the payment for six months, denying it to them for another six months.

The National Welfare Rights Network estimated this last measure—a six month wait for income support—would affect about 43,000 young people, if introduced. The government knew this but continued to do it. Why else did it reserve an additional $229 million over four years for emergency assistance to young job seekers impacted by this measure? Because they knew there would have to be emergency relief for these people.

So let us consider how those original measures have transitioned to this bill. What has the government reintroduced? What has it modified? What has it replaced? Well, the government has reintroduced its measure to pause the indexation of income test free areas for all working-age allowances, other than student payments, for three years from 1 July 2015. For student payments, the government has modified the start day for the pause of indexation of the income test free areas from 1 January 2015 to 1 January 2016. That is the sum total of the modification to this measure: pushing back the start date 12 months.

These indexation pauses are a $134.8 million cut in support for job seekers and students. Labor rejected this measure in its original form and we reject the reintroduced measure in this bill. Secondly, the government has reintroduced its measure to extend the one-week ordinary waiting period to all working-age payments—excluding widow allowance—modifying the start date from 1 January 2015 to 1 July 2015. Again, the only modification to this measure was to push back the start date by six months. This is a $274.8 million cut in support for receiving working-age payments. Labor rejected this measure when it was originally introduced and rejects the reintroduced measure in this bill.

The government has reintroduced its measure to force young job seekers to wait before receiving an income support payment. The government has modified this measure so that it applies to those under 25, rather than 30, and will make them wait four weeks rather than six months. As a side-note, it is ironic this measure now mirrors the New Zealand model, given reports in The Australian newspaper last year on 16 May that 'cabinet arrived at the six-month no-dole rule after looking at the New Zealand model, which -involves a one-month no-payment period, and wanted to make it stronger'. Never mind. In its modified form, this measure is a $173.3-million cut in support for young job seekers. Thankfully, thanks to
Labor's opposition, the government has scrapped its ridiculous plan to lock young job seekers into rolling six-month non-payment periods.

So the government says it will now make young job seekers under 25 years of age wait four weeks for income support. However, as this bill's explanatory memorandum makes clear, many young job seekers will be forced to serve the four-week waiting period prior to the additional one-week ordinary waiting period, meaning they will be waiting five weeks for income support. Young job seekers need support to find and keep jobs, not senseless and unfair measures that push them into poverty, crisis and potential homelessness. Then and now, this measure will place many vulnerable young people in my electorate of Blair in South-East Queensland in severe financial hardship. At the end of December 2014, 5,895 people, many of them under 30 years of age, were receiving Newstart allowance in Blair. This was an increase of 363 since March 2014. At the end of December 2014, 1,449 people were receiving Youth Allowance (other) in Blair, an increase of 52 since March 2014. These are the people in the sights of the government.

Labor opposed this punitive measure in its original form and we reject its modified form. Whether it is one month—or really five weeks—or six months, Labor rejects a measure that the government knows has the potential to lock young job seekers into periods without income support. Labor will not leave these young Australians with nothing to live on. The National Welfare Rights Network said this four-week waiting period will:

...place young people in severe financial hardship, leaving them without food, medicines, money for job search and rent. No income means no income — whether it's for six months or four weeks. There is no place in our social security system for such a harmful approach.

This is a government that seems drunk on ideology and blind to reality. It knows the measures in this bill will push young job seekers towards poverty, but it does not care; it could not care less. It could not care that it is denying income support for four or five weeks, potentially without food or rent or medicine or transport to even get to the job interviews they are required to attend.

It expects that young people, who are among our lowest-paid workers and who often are dealing with varying hours of casual employment and high rents, will go to their interviews and look for employment in circumstances where they have been left without the basic necessities of life. This is more and more a symptom of the reality deficit of this government, which is inflicting a Prime Minister who believes Australians want and deserve knights and dames, but does not believe they deserve income support to get into employment. The Treasurer tells people that poor people do not drive cars and tells young families struggling to afford their first home to 'get a good job that pays good money'.

This bill reveals the government believes the false premise that young Australians lack the will to work. In his second reading speech, the minister said:

We do not want to see a shuttle run from the school gate to the Centrelink front door.

This attitude, pervasive within the government, ignores the genuine barriers that young people face when seeking and maintaining work, including: a lack of available work, particularly entry-level and full-time positions; a lack of relevant skills and qualifications; and a lack of employers willing to employ young people. Only a biased and blinkered government assumes that every young person who fails to find a non-existent job lacks gumption and
determination. There is no evidence that young Australians as a group lack the will to work, and it is an indictment of the government's attitude to young Australians.

Thankfully, Mission Australia has looked at this issue. Each year since 2002, the organisation has asked young people for their thoughts and opinions on a range of issues for the national Youth Survey. The 2014 survey spoke with 13,600 Australians aged between 15 and 19 years of age. Did these young people report they would rather dodge work for something else, to sit on the couch and do nothing? No, they did not. Eight out of 10 told Mission Australia that achieving career success was either 'extremely or very important' to them, but over 40 per cent though this success was only 'somewhat likely', 'less likely' or 'not likely at all'.

Further evidence of the barriers young people face finding work was outlined in the Australia Institute's 2013 *Hard to Get a Break* report. That report found that 54 per cent of people aged between 17 and 24 cite an inability to find work as the reason for their unemployment. When asked to identify the barriers they faced when re-entering the workforce, 36 per cent of those young people cited 'too few jobs' and another 31 per cent cited 'lack of relevant skills'. This is the reality facing many young people. The government shrugs its shoulders and ramps up the harsh and punitive measures and the harsh and punitive rhetoric towards these people.

But unemployment has risen under the Abbott government. When Labor left office in September 2013, Australia's unemployment rate was 5.7 per cent. It has been over six per cent and is now six per cent. For historical interest: Australia's unemployment rate last started with a six back in 2003, when the current Prime Minister was the Minister for Employment and Workplace Relations in the Howard government. The 2015-16 budget predicts that unemployment will remain above six per cent over the forward estimates. In last year's budget address, the Treasurer said:

Unemployment is too high with over 700,000 Australians looking for a job. In this year's budget address, he failed to mention the number unemployed.

According to the ABS data, there are currently 756,300 young people, older people and mature-age people looking for employment in this country. Nationally, as I said, unemployment sits at about six per cent. In my electorate of Blair, it is 7.4 per cent. According to the most recent available data, youth unemployment sits at about 13.65 per cent nationally and at 16.6 per cent in Ipswich, part of my electorate.

These are crisis numbers, and they are a crisis for the reality and experience of young people. Looking back at the government's 2014 budget, which gutted $2 billion from skills and training programs, shows just how short sighted this government has been in relation to jobs and skills and training. The government refuses to reverse these cuts, and the consequences to young people are devastating.

I call on the government to reverse the cuts it has undertaken and cuts which have made a big impact in my local community. The Trade Training Centres in Schools Program has been a complete success in my electorate. The Ipswich Region Trade Training Centre at Ipswich State High School provides training and support for students from schools like Bremer State High School, Bundamba State Secondary College, Lowood State High School and Rosewood State High School. The Riverview Springfield Trade Training Centre at St Peter Claver
College, at Riverview, does likewise. That is a great trade training centre. I have been there on numerous occasions. It is the same thing with the Ipswich trade training centre at St Edmund's College and the West Moreton trade training centre at West Moreton Anglican College, in Karrabin, yet this government has cut the funding. This is emblematic of its attitude to skills, training and jobs and its lack of commitment to young people in this country.

Mr CRAIG KELLY (Hughes) (10:16): I rise to speak on the Social Services Legislation Amendment (Youth Employment and Other Measures) Bill 2015. Firstly, I think we should focus on where we are on unemployment in this country. I think everyone accepts that our unemployment levels are currently too high. We cannot look at that in isolation. We need to look at the history of the past several years and where we are to see where we can go in the future.

We start by going back to the last coalition government. That last coalition government actually decreased the unemployment queues in this country by over 300,000 people. There were 300,000 people who were on the unemployment line when the previous coalition government took office who were actually in paid work when the coalition left office—a reduction of 300,000 people. That was also done at a time when the debt was paid back, and not only the $96 billion worth of Labor debt that they had inherited. It should never be forgotten that along the way they also had to pay back $54 billion in interest payments. They paid back $96 billion. That money had to be taken out of the economy. It had to be earned—every single cent of it—by private enterprise and taken out of the economy to pay back Labor's debt: $96 billion plus another $54 billion in interest. And then another $40 billion was put aside in the Future Fund and the surplus was handed over, with a budget in surplus by $20 billion. That is what the previous Labor government inherited. And, with all that work paying back all that debt and putting aside that money in the Future Fund, the previous coalition government were still able to decrease the unemployment queues in this country by 300,000 people.

Let us contrast that to the six years of Labor. They blew the surplus. They went on a reckless and wild spending spree, running up over $300 billion in debt, which now costs this nation at least $13 billion every single year in interest payments. It simply goes straight out the door. And yet, during that period of time, the unemployment queues in this country increased by 200,000 people. We could fill the MCG twice with the number of people that joined the unemployment queues under the previous Labor government.

It is quite simple. We have seen in speech after speech from members of the Labor Party that they simply do not understand how jobs are created in this country. They think that the government can create jobs. They think they can go out there and spend money on all these little pet projects, like we saw with the home insulation and the schools projects. They think that is what creates jobs. But all they are doing is taking money from productive parts of the economy, like they did with their carbon tax on small business, slugging all those businesses with extra costs and imposts and taxes and making it harder for those people, when those small business people are the ones who are actually the job creators of this nation. That is what we have to get a basic, fundamental understanding of. Those small businesses, especially those entrepreneurs that go out and have a go and create those new businesses, are the job creators of this nation.
Of course, that is why we saw under the previous Labor government their complete misunderstanding of that basic concept. Not only did we see the unemployment queue increase by 200,000, but the sector that they hit the hardest was the small business sector. Over 500,000 jobs were lost in the small business sector of this nation under the policies of the previous Labor government—519,000 jobs were lost in the small business sector. That is what we of the coalition have inherited. That is what we are trying to turn around—not only all the landmines that have been planted along the way.

I can confidently say that we have gotten off to a good start. Already, under this coalition government, we have seen 280,000 jobs created in this nation. They are not created by government. They are created mostly by our small business sector out there in our community. That is 280,000 jobs added since this government took office. We saw 42,000 jobs—according to the ABS seasonally adjusted numbers—created in the last month.

I am proud to say, coming from the state of New South Wales, that a large proportion of those jobs were actually created in New South Wales. If we look at the laggard states—unfortunately the laggard state of Victoria—over the last two months combined, according to the ABS, we have seen 35,000 jobs created in New South Wales. But guess how many, under a Labor government, have been created in Victoria? If you guessed none, you would be close but you would still be wrong. Over the same time that the Liberal coalition government has created 35,000 jobs in New South Wales, in Victoria we have seen almost 2,000 jobs lost, again showing the importance of coalition policies, coalition principles and the simple understanding that governments do not create jobs. It is the private sector and especially small business that create jobs.

The way to get that job creation up is to take those government taxes and reduce the government levies, reduce the red tape, reduce those burdens on those small businesses and give people the incentive to get out, have a go and start a new business. That is what creates jobs. That is what this side of the House understands. And that is one of the reasons why we have seen 280,000 jobs created since this government has come to office.

Also, we have seen the previous Labor government's forecasts for unemployment at this time were 6¼ per cent. That is what they forecast. We have seen from most of their forecasts time after time underestimating the costs of their policies. That was their best case scenario—an unemployment rate of 6.25 per cent. We, in the coalition, have that down to six per cent and we are determined to get that lower. That is why policies like our free trade policies open up trade opportunities with China, with South Korea and with Japan. I note the trade minister is currently working over in India, where we have enormous opportunities to increase jobs in this nation. But back to the specific provisions of this bill. Unemployment in this country is still too high. We still have to help the private sector to create more jobs, more wealth and prosperity for this country.

One thing that must be noted about this bill is that the measures are not stand-alone. In the 2015-16 budget, the government announced a jobs and small business package which increases support services for those impacted by the changes of this bill. You will hear Labor speakers get up on this bill and try and pick holes in it, but this bill cannot be looked at in isolation. You need to look at all the other aspects they have put into the budget. And they include that we have invested in additional work experience places—$18.3 million—to provide job experience and connection for employers. We are running intensive support trials
for vulnerable job seekers with a cost of $55.2 million. We are providing new support for youth and mental health conditions—another $19.4 million. Another $22.1 million is for vulnerable young migrants and refugees. We are continuing to support parents to prepare for unemployment—another $8.9 million. These trials will focus on the most disadvantaged and help them prepare for work, find a job and stay in that job.

From 1 July 2016, young people under 25 who are most job ready—that is important—who apply for youth allowance or other special benefits will serve a four-week waiting period before becoming eligible for payment. It is quite a simple concept. We believe that it is against a person's interests to go from the school gate to the Centrelink office. We believe that, no matter what welfare we give them during that period, to have a system where you can go from the school gate to the Centrelink office is not in the long-term best interests of that person. But we do have provisions and exceptions in this, because job ready means someone has to live in an area with good employment opportunities. They have to have reasonable language, literacy and numeracy skills, and they have to have recent work experience. The measures in this bill will save $200 million, but the additional support services that we are putting in have a cost of $375 million. When you add the two up, when you look at the provisions in this bill and the other things the government is doing, we are providing more for disadvantaged youth to give them greater opportunities to get into jobs.

During those first four weeks, a young job seeker will be required to meet with a proactive job provider, agree to a job plan, develop an up-to-date resume, create a job seeker profile on a job search website and provide evidence of a satisfactory job search of up to 200 job applications. Further, we have made $8.1 million available in emergency relief funding to provide assistance for job seekers affected by the measure who are experiencing hardship. This funding will be available for the emergency relief providers. This measure will encourage young people to make every effort to look for work and to maximise their chances of getting a job. Students will not be subject to the four-week waiting period. Further, in recognition of the importance of education and training in preventing future unemployment, young people who return to school or take up full-time vocational education or university study will be able to seek more suitable payments such as Youth Allowance and therefore would not be subject to the four-week waiting period. Job seekers who have been assessed as having significant barriers to finding a job will not be required to wait the four-week waiting period.

Then there are a number of important exemptions. Firstly, someone who has served the four-week period in the last six months will not have to serve another four-week period if they have left a job or their job has ended through no fault of their own. Also, if someone has a disability, they will be exempt. If they are pregnant in the last six weeks, they will also not have to serve the waiting period. These measures will not impact job seekers who have left state care within 12 months. The government will make sure only youth 16 to 25 will have to serve the waiting period. There are some cases where a person under 16 can be on a special benefit. And these exemptions will ensure the bill is fair and there is ministerial discretion.

It is estimated today there are 6.5 million young people under the age of 25 who are living at home with one or two parents. During this waiting period, many people will find jobs that do not require income support payments. We are taking measures to encourage young people
to go out and take that first job, rather than perversely encouraging them to go from the school gate straight to the Centrelink office.

I encourage young people today when they are going out looking for their first job to try many different things. I remember my first job when I was still in school. The first day I got my licence I went and sold some things at Paddy's Markets with a mate of mine. We went around some of the factories and were able to con them to give us some of their old broken merchandise. It was a bit of a consignment deal. We would take it to see if we could sell it. They were happy to get rid of their old broken stuff. We fixed it and took it to the markets in the back of an old station wagon as soon as we had our licence. We were able to earn ourselves a few extra bucks that way. That is what I encourage young people to do. Not just to look at the traditional sources of employment but to look in all areas of the economy where they can have a go. Go and knock on the doors of businesses in your local area and show that you are willing to turn up. There are still many job opportunities in this country.

In conclusion, we live in a wonderful country. There are many opportunities for many young people. I know that often the first job they take on will not be the job they have for life. We want to incentivise those young people and take away the perverse incentive to go from the school gate to the Centrelink office, but we have to have appropriate safeguards. This bill, with the other measures we are putting in place, achieves both of those aims and includes those important safeguards. I commend this bill to the House.

Mr LAURIE FERGUSON (Werriwa) (10:31): In his contribution the member for Hughes gave kindly advice to unemployed young people and selectively utilised statistics over a convenient timeline. I concede, however, that he made one accurate comment. He said that we cannot see the current situation in isolation. I want to quote somebody slightly more renowned and respected in financial and economic debate in this country than him. I want to quote the governor's foreword to the national accounts of 2009. He spoke of 'the most serious and widespread financial crisis in generations'. He further commented that 'these actions averted in this country a much more serious financial disaster' and he spoke of 'significant private wealth having been destroyed'. He spoke of a 'lengthy period of escalating tension'.

People come in here and say that under Howard we had this rate of unemployment and under Labor we had this rate of unemployment, but they leave out the worst financial crisis since the 1930s. One would think that the member for Hughes had never heard of Lehman Brothers and never had any consideration of Fannie Mae, Freddie Mac, AIG, Bear Stearns and the Bank of Scotland. It all went past him as the United States and the United Kingdom renationalised financial institutions and taxpayers saved them and bailed them out after the crisis when mortgage backed securities collapsed.

When we look at unemployment in this country this kind of rhetoric about what happened between Labor and Howard is absolutely ridiculous. Despite the realities of that financial crisis, in this country in 2008 there were 20,000 people aged between 15 and 24 who were long-term unemployed and today there are 58,000 people aged between 15 and 24 who are not just unemployed but long-term unemployed. Youth unemployment has reached 13 per cent nationally. Youth unemployment is currently sitting at 13.6 per cent. It pushed above 13 per cent in mid-2014 and has remained above that level ever since. That rate was never reached during the entirety of the previous Labor government. One in five unemployed
Australians are teenagers. The unemployment level hit 20 per cent for 15- to 19-year-olds in January this year.

The National Youth Coalition for Housing has estimated that 42 per cent of homeless people in Australia are under 25. They are not waiting around for the advice from members of parliament, who are on quite high incomes, to go doorknocking. They are actually homeless and sleeping on the streets. That is about 26,000 people under 25 are already out on the streets on any one night.

This bill has some very disturbing aspects. It extends from 1 July 2015 the ordinary waiting period for all working age payments. It removes access to Newstart allowance and sickness allowance for 22- to 24-year-olds and replaces these benefits with the much lower youth allowance. They will lose $50 a week. Some people have quoted a very useful statistic in the last few weeks: that some of these welfare payments are less than what the Treasurer of this country receives in overnight travel allowance for staying at his wife's residence in Canberra. That is the comparison: the people this is hitting earn in one week the allowance he gets for one night here and not paying rent.

Mr Tudge: What do you get?

Mr LAURIE FERGUSON: I get a similar payment. That is the whole point, you idiot. As I said, they are severely attacking people. Last year this same Treasurer, with the usual huff and puff—

Ms Scott: Mr Deputy Speaker, I have a point of order. The member used a quite unparliamentary term in regard to the minister sitting at the table. I ask that he withdraw.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Goodenough): I ask if the member would assist the House.

Mr LAURIE FERGUSON: What expression? What was it?

Ms Scott: You know exactly what you said.

Mr LAURIE FERGUSON: I don't. This is just disruption of the worst order. Mr Deputy Speaker, can you tell me what the expression was? She wants to disrupt. I will go along with what she says.

Ms Scott: It was a legitimate point of order. I ask that you withdraw the unparliamentary term you called the minister sitting at the table.

Mr LAURIE FERGUSON: What was it?

Ms Scott: I'm not going to use it in this chamber.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: I believe you may have used the term—

Mr LAURIE FERGUSON: I withdraw it.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Please proceed.

Mr LAURIE FERGUSON: Last year, in typical huff and puff hyperbole, the Treasurer talked of 'an eventual train crash on the budget'. He went on to say that we face a 'tsunami coming across the water'. That was the kind of justification he had last year for saying that unemployed young people should not get any payment for six months. We do not have a situation where these people can always rely on going home and having family support. We have a situation where there are crises in families, where there are disputes, where there are
family units breaking up and reforming. Last year, using his same justification, he said that they could be condemned for six months. Because the Australian people revolted, because parents came to my office giving their children's actual circumstances and expressing such extreme opposition, those opposite backed off.

This year, all of a sudden that crisis disappeared. Yes, there is certainly a crisis—a crisis of confidence in this country. This year, in a desperate attempt to try and precipitate change from this crisis of high unemployment, the government brought down a less austere budget. But the Deputy Governor of the Reserve Bank, Philip Lowe, made this comment about their latest antics:

It is unlikely to be in Australia's long-term interest to engineer a consumption boom by encouraging people to borrow large amounts against future income.

The government are basically saying, 'Go out there and spend; go out borrow.' It typifies the mentality of this government that when, in the last few weeks, people raised the issue of the huge interest rates that banks are charging on credit cards—20 per cent when the base rate in the country is two per cent—one of their ministers said, 'Oh, it is dreadful to raise the question of credit interest rates—it is bank bashing.' In this country at the moment there is $48 billion in personal debt on credit cards, and $33 billion of that attracts interest of 20 per cent. With this mentality in the government, it is not surprising that they seek to attack unemployed young people, to make them the victims, to basically say, 'We will exploit the unpopularity of young people amongst older society by making life hard for them.'

This is a government which advises people to go out and get a well-paying job. We all know that most people in the Australian workforce, the US workforce and the British workforce gain employment not from labour market companies but from connections. Not every person has the advantage of having a family with a business like Hockeys Property, where four people conveniently have the name 'Hockey'. Not everyone in this country can just walk into a company and get a job through family, but that is the kind of mentality over there: 'If you have got a problem with housing, go out and get a good job.' Quite frankly, the Australian people are not interested in whether the Prime Minister owns a property on the North Shore of Sydney and whether he thinks higher housing prices are good for people. They are more interested in the fact that the kids of people in Penrith cannot afford to have a house these days. It is a dream for people in this country to have a house, and it is disappearing if you are under 30. And the Prime Minister says, 'Rising house prices are great because I own property.' This is the kind of mentality that affects this government—a government of privilege, a government of elitism, a government that tries to divide people between so-called workers, and shirkers and bludgers.

The measures in this bill are so disturbing that there is a great possibility that the bill infringes a number of international conventions that we have signed up to. People might occasionally complain and be unhappy with these conventions, but I challenge the government to resile from them, to abandon them, to withdraw from them. Article 11 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights—which this country and this government continue to adhere to—requires that people have a right to social security and a standard of living. Under the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, discrimination based on age, gender or personal type is frowned upon; it is outside the understanding of what should occur.
These measures are indeed deeply disturbing. The mentality of this government is perhaps epitomised by a speech made by former British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher—one of the great heroes of the current Prime Minister. It was virtually to the week 19 years ago that she addressed the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland and made an infamous speech, quoting a letter by Paul to the Thessalonians, where he said that if people work they can live, and if people do not work they can starve. It is interesting that, at the end of that great contribution by Margaret Thatcher, which many people regard as the beginning of the end for her, the General Assembly gave her the church reports on poverty, housing and a fair social benefits system.

That is the mentality of this government—a government which basically says 'We will reduce access to decent training; we will make it harder for people to aspire to go to university, particularly in Western Sydney, by pricing courses out of their hands; and we will say that Work for the Dole is the only solution to these kinds of matters.' At the same time, they reduce the availability of training. People need decent training. The unemployment pattern is not just affecting young people. I see significant numbers of older people who had worked in industries for 30 years, and they want to be employed; they still seek work. Quite frankly, they are never going to be employed, because, whether you can establish it or not, the reality is that employers will not take them on. These people often have experience. They do not necessarily need a Work for the Dole exercise to give them an understanding of work habits, how to work with colleagues, how to get to work on time; they need proper retraining to actually be useful to the workforce.

Here, on National TAFE Day, we see the recitation of statistics in this country about the decline of TAFE systems, the retreat of people from this well-established, internationally recognised body to fly-by-night operators in the private sector. We see the cost of courses escalating to the point where people are walking with their feet and unable to have recourse.

Kate Carnell, the Chief Executive Officer of the Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry, recently said that we face a generation of young people on the fringes of the economy. That is so true, with unemployment figures reaching levels unseen since the Howard government. The previous member mocked Labor for at one stage hoping for an unemployment rate of 6¼ per cent. I think he should look at his own Treasurer's comments this year, where he speculated about unemployment of 6½ per cent being the outcome in the next few years.

This bill contains a variety of severe measures that will affect young people. Significant numbers of them will be in very desperate circumstances because they do not have strong family support mechanisms available to them. They are often from families who have endured generations of sporadic employment. They live in parts of our capital cities that are not close to public transport and so they are discriminated against in the labour market because employers want people who are readily available.

I was interested in the question about the kind of people this legislation stamps on. This week a report was released by ACOSS, titled *Inequality in Australia: a nation divided*. Quite frankly, we should have a bit more concern about the increasing inequality in this country rather than taking the hammer to young unemployed Australians. That report noted that 20 per cent of households in this country earn over $232,000 a year and own $2 million in assets. That is the top 20 per cent. The lowest quintile have property worth $44,250 on average. That
is the value of the property of one-fifth of Australians; and, despite the view of the Treasurer that 'poor people don't drive cars', it is usually restricted to items such as cars and home contents. This is predominantly where the unemployed young people who are now going to be condemned to $50 less a week and basically be deprived of access to any money whatsoever for a significant period of time come from.

I want to very strongly join with other opposition members in noting, firstly, our success in countering a measure last year which would have deprived people for six months, and, secondly, our continued opposition to these measures.

Mr IRONS (Swan) (10:46): I rise to speak on the Social Services Legislation Amendment (Youth Employment and Other Measures) Bill 2015. As a government, there are key services which members of the Australian public expect us to provide, and those are health, education and infrastructure. These are all vital to our future progression and sustainability as a nation and as a community, but the area where government has become increasingly relied upon are those policy areas which fall under the very large umbrella of social services.

As we are talking about employment, I would like to mention that recently I met with Community Employers WA, CEWA, which is a representative body of 130 employer organisations in the not-for-profit community services sector. Their objectives are focused around the sustainability of services, just as the government's focus is. CEWA was established in 2008 and the board comprises the CEOs of a number of large charities in Western Australia. The purpose of the meeting was for CEWA to share their perspectives on the not-for-profit community services sector, on the relationship with government, on the front-line opportunities and challenges many of their members are currently experiencing, and on the challenges of finding employees in Western Australia, particularly in times when there is a mining boom.

I also met with Tony Hagan, Executive Manager of VisAbility Guide Dogs WA. They have been running a community program, through a foundation called the Scottish Masonic Charitable Foundation, to support blind and vision impaired West Australians to achieve sustainable employment. The program exists to achieve better outcomes for people who are blind or vision impaired. As the existing DES system was not achieving the results that they wanted, they set up their own system. This is relevant in the context of the task force being set up by Minister Fifield to try to improve the disability employment system.

VisAbilty Employment has achieved a fantastic result in the first 18 months of operation. A recent cost-benefit analysis conducted by KPMG indicated that for every dollar invested in the program, $5.58 of economic value is achieved. In addition to this, there are obvious social benefits for the participants in the program and for those who gain jobs through the program, which is not government funded. It was inspired and driven by a not-for-profit and by the private sector and philanthropy. So there are other areas of support for people to gain jobs without relying purely on the government.

Disability support, age pensions and childcare subsidies are just a few of the support networks this government provides each and every day. But overall these social security or welfare measures are continuing to cost taxpayers more and more every year. In fact, in the 2015-16 financial year government expenditure will be highest for these policy measures, costing taxpayers $154 billion. This is vital expenditure as it is directed toward support services for our most vulnerable. It is a safety net for those who cannot afford a basic standard
of living and where they would not have a roof over their heads, clothes on their backs and food in their mouths without this additional government assistance.

I would like to believe that people who claim these support payments recognise that they are for our most vulnerable and that they are able to assess their own circumstances to determine whether they are truly in need of that support. I would also like to believe that each member in this place lives in a country where these vital services are not taken advantage of. As members know, the reality is that society is not always quite so moral and there are those who will seek to take advantage of others when they can.

Before the House today we have a bill which seeks to address a particular type of social services payment which focuses on supporting our youth, who are the future of this country, to find and keep a job. The Liberal Party has always said that the best thing you can give anyone is a job. It would be completely unfair to say that every youth who does not have a job is what society often refers to as a 'dole bludger'. This is far from the truth. But there are those who are this way inclined, and there are those who want a particular job which may not be available at a particular time so they choose to not have one at all.

The Social Services Legislation Amendment (Youth Employment and Other Measures) Bill 2015 addresses this concept by taking the view that this coalition government is implementing measures to ensure young job seekers accept a suitable job—not just a job they would like to have. We take this view because it is not fair for every Australian taxpayer to support young job seekers who are not willing to take jobs that are available. In the first instance it is about having 'a job', not 'the job' and focusing on supporting those job seekers who are struggling to find work.

A key provision in this bill is therefore to extend the waiting period young people aged between 16 and 25 must serve before becoming eligible for the Youth Allowance or Special Benefit payment to four weeks. For clarification, the form of youth allowance this bill refers to is those payments made to job seekers, not the youth allowance which is paid to students and apprentices. It also specifically refers to those youths who are what the government deems 'job ready'. This means someone who lives in an area with good employment opportunities, who has reasonable language, literacy and numeracy skills and who has recent work experience. Because these are the people who should not be relying on government handouts, they are the people who should be working to benefit their future and the future of this country. During this first four weeks, young job seekers will not just be sitting on their laurels either. They will be doing everything they can to make themselves job ready. They will be meeting with a Jobactive provider; agreeing to a job plan; developing an up-to-date resume; creating a job seeker profile on the Job Search website; and providing evidence of satisfactory job search, with up to 20 job applications. In other words, they will be doing all the things that will make them a good candidate for employment.

Now I note that when extending the waiting period for these payments was debated in this and the other place previously there were those who suggested that no waiting period should apply. So, if a person does not have a job, they would straightaway be provided with government assistance. On that basis, I put this question to those members: do you really think young 18- or 19-year-old young adults are really going to try that hard to find a job if they know that all they have to do is walk into Centrelink and they will straightaway be given a handout by the government?
Ms Scott interjecting—

Mr IRONS: I hear the member for Lindsay say 'of course'. Really, I know that cash-splashing is about the only thing those opposite are good at, so I cannot really say that I am surprised they would think this is a great idea. However, the reality is this: while there are people who would hate even the idea of being provided with this form of government assistance, there are also those who would sit back and take full advantage of this type of payment system. I can refer back to my experience with my own son. His first job out of school was to be an AFL rookie, which provided him with a job and a lot of hard work as well. Unfortunately, when he was delisted after two years with the AFL club he was with, he had to go and find himself another job. One of the things suggested to him was that maybe he should enrol for unemployment benefits while he was looking for a job. Thankfully, I had instilled in him that he should not rely on the state, that he should rely on himself or rely on his parents and that it is not the state’s responsibility to look after him until he finds himself a job. He had the same attitude and said that he did not want to sign up with Centrelink. Eventually, he found a job by working in about five different types of jobs. He took any job he could until he found the job that suited him. Now I am pleased to say that he has a job working as an apprentice bricklayer. He has become an important part of the community and a taxpayer to support those who are really in need. I was proud of him for having the morals and the values whereby he thought he did not need to rely on the state and that he should rely on his own abilities to go and find any job that he could until he found the job that he really wanted.

I now turn back to the measures before the House. By introducing this four-week waiting period, the government will save $200 million. However, we are not extending this waiting period without considering the need to provide additional employment opportunities for those who are job ready—quite the opposite. As members on this side of the House know, the coalition is a government which focuses on creating jobs and providing the necessary building blocks to ensure Australia remains a prosperous country. One of the ways we have achieved this in the 2015-16 budget is through our Jobs and Small Business package. As I said earlier, this is about investing in our nation's future, and this government recognises that in order to achieve this we must invest in our small businesses and we must invest in those who will be the taxpayers of the future—our children, our teenagers and our young adults. So what this government has done through our Jobs and Small Business package is invest: $18.3 million in additional work experience places; $55.2 million to run intensive support trials for vulnerable job seekers; $19.4 million to provide new support for youth with mental health conditions; $22.1 million for vulnerable young migrants and refugees; and $8.9 million to support parents prepare for employment. Each of these funding measures will create new job opportunities, will support our youth and, most importantly, will focus the government's attention and expenditure on our most disadvantaged, which is the exact purpose of all social services payments. It is also important to note that under this measure the government has also implemented an $8.1 million emergency relief fund which will be specifically dedicated toward assisting job seekers who may experience hardship as a result of the measures before the House and which will be available through emergency relief providers.

In my electorate of Swan, we have six Job Services Australia providers at eight sites which support both adults and our youth to find employment opportunities. In relation to these eight
sites, $52.6 million excluding GST has been spent by the Australian government to assist these job seekers between 1 July 2009 and 28 February 2015. This includes service fees, job placement fees and 13- and 26-week employment and education outcomes, and Employment Pathway Fund expenditure. Although these are significant funding measures to support job seekers, particularly in Swan, this coalition government, when developing these policy measures, has also taken into consideration those who may be assessed as having significant barriers to finding a job. Specifically, this refers to those youths who have been assessed as stream B and C Jobactive clients. These people will be exempt from the four-week waiting period. There are also a number of additional exemptions, including those who have already served a four-week waiting period in the last six months and whose job ends through no fault of their own; someone who has a disability or an activity test exemption; and those jobseekers who have left state care within the last 12 months.

Lastly, I take this time to note that the bill before the House also reintroduces a number of measures previously passed in this place but not the other place under the Social Services and Other Legislation Amendment (2014 Budget Measures No. 1) Bill 2014 and the Social Services and Other Legislation Amendment (2014 Budget Measures No. 2) Bill 2014. This includes extending the one-week ordinary waiting period which currently applies to Newstart Allowance and Sickness Allowance to Youth Allowance and Parenting Payment from 1 July 2016 and increasing the age eligibility to 25. I note that this measure does now exclude Widow Allowance claimants from this waiting period, which was part of the previous bill. The maximum age of eligibility for the Youth Disability Supplement will also be increased to 24 for recipients of Youth Allowance from 1 July 2016. The bill will cease the Low Income Supplement from 1 July 2017 and it will maintain the income-free areas for all working age allowances, other than student payments, and for parenting payment single at level for three years. Lastly, it will maintain at level for three years the income-free areas and other means-test thresholds for student payments, including the student income bank limits, with a new start date of 1 January 2016.

Overall, the bill before the House continues the work of this government to create new jobs and implement vital savings measures that will put this country's economy back onto a sustainable path. It will remove this concept of entitlement and instead refocus our support payments back to their original intent—providing a safety net for those who need it most. Each of these measures has been appropriately considered by government as necessary to make this $154 billion worth of social services expenditure sustainable in the future, and they are measures which I will be joining with the minister in commending to the House.

It is interesting to note in the employment figures that were released recently that, since the beginning of the year, over 111,000 new jobs have been created, or more than 22,000 new jobs per month. The labour market has continued to perform strongly in the first five months of 2015, after a strong 2014. In 2014, under the coalition, we saw jobs growth of nearly 4,000 jobs a week, which was quadruple the rate we saw in 2013, under the previous Labor government. So the coalition is on track, as I said before. The best thing we can give anyone is a job, and that is what we are focusing on. We are making sure that the system provides those who are vulnerable with the safety net that they need. As I said before, I join with the minister, and the rest of my colleagues, in commending this bill to the House.
Mr CHAMPION (Wakefield) (11:01): Mr Deputy Speaker, I seek leave to continue the speech which I began earlier but was unable to complete.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Goodenough): Is leave granted?

Mr Tudge: Leave is granted.

Mr Irons: Very generous of you!

Mr CHAMPION: I thank the Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister. I know how keen he is to always hear my speeches in this place. As the member for Swan says, it was very generous. He is a picture of generosity, of bipartisanship, in this place. I probably have not helped his preselection or his standing in Liberal Party branches by saying that, but he is always very convivial in this House.

In my comments, I made it pretty clear what I think about the Social Services Legislation Amendment (Youth Employment and Other Measures) Bill 2015. One of the things I was talking about was entry-level jobs and my own experiences and the experiences out there in the community. We have so many people in my electorate who really do try hard to get entry-level jobs, who apply and apply and apply again. Sometimes you hear of people doing 40 or 50 applications a week. It is not unknown for young workers without experience to try and do that. It is very, very tough to get your start in an industry. The other group who never stop applying are those mature age workers—often men but not exclusively men—who, after a very long period of their working life, having worked right the way through, find themselves made redundant and find it very hard to get a job in another industry. Often they are prepared to not be job snobs, to actually get out there and apply and to do the rough jobs that I did in my youth—fruit picking and the like. People are often pretty keen to do that.

That is why it is so disturbing when I talk to union officials like Tony Snelson of the National Union of Workers—who was on the ABC, on the Four Corners program—and he tells me that there are employers who have arrangements, particularly related to the 417 visa, the backpacker visa, that are taking vast swathes of entry-level jobs out of the system, out of the labour market. That is the effect of them. D'VineRipe are an employer in my electorate, and they have now written to me and communicated with me and assured me that they are taking every step to try and eliminate some of the practices that were highlighted in the Four Corners program. I thank them for that, because in the past I have been a supporter of some of their projects, based on the employment that they will generate in my electorate. And we need jobs in my electorate, after this government's treatment of the car industry.

We want to make sure that there are entry-level jobs out there. That is why it is so distressing to read on the ABC website and to see on the 7.30 program, Lateline and Four Corners issues around Baiada chicken-processing plants and the high use of 417 visas. In one ABC report, by Jason Om—it is there on the website—there are reports of workers working up to 18 hours a day without overtime. The Deputy Fair Work Ombudsman, Michael Campbell, is quoted as telling Lateline:

I don't believe that any worker in this country should be forced to work in those types of circumstances nor endure those types of practices by any employer.

An ombudsman report that found much of the work was done 'off the books', with the foreign workers paid in cash. Mr Campbell equated it, in one instance, to syndicated crime. Mr
Campbell said, in relation to the fact that some companies—mainly labour hire companies—provided fabricated records or vanished altogether:

Unfortunately what this means for our investigation is that it's very hard to pin down an individual to hold accountable. In many ways, what we see is like syndicated crime. You take one player out and another steps into their shoes.

This is a major employer in this country, a major company that provides chickens to nearly every supermarket—it is hard to buy chicken in this country without coming across Baiada Group's labels: Lilydale and the like—and yet we have these egregious work practices in entry-level jobs. When a person is employed in these conditions on a 417 visa, it in effect denies an entry-level job to a young Australian—a South Australian, a Victorian or a New South Welshman—or indeed a mature age worker. It denies them the opportunity to apply for that job. And it is not just the ABC that is making these findings. If you look at the statement of findings on Baiada Group by the Fair Work Ombudsman—and this is from the Fair Work website, something those opposite should avail themselves of—it says:

Baiada refused permission for Fair Work inspectors working on this Inquiry to access the factory floor at its worksites, denying them an opportunity to observe work practices, as well as talk to employees about conditions, policies and procedures.

Baiada also failed to provide the Inquiry with any “significant or meaningful” documentation on the nature and terms of its labour contract arrangements.

However, the Inquiry found that employees working at Baiada sites are not being paid their lawful entitlements.

The company had verbal agreements with an extensive list of labour-hire operators used to source most of its workers, largely 417 working holiday visa-holders from Taiwan and Hong Kong.

Baiada’s labour-hire contractors were unwilling to engage with the Inquiry and produced inadequate, inaccurate and/or fabricated records to Inspectors.

So here we have the Fair Work Ombudsman, which is an agency of the executive arm of government empowered by this parliament to make sure that Australian workers get fair entitlements, yet what do we find? We find a major Australian company deliberately obstructing the investigations of the Fair Work Ombudsman. This is an outrage and it should be seen as such. Then we have this bill denying young Australians any income at all and those opposite talking about young Australians having to do unpaid work experience around the place in the hope that some employer will give them a job. We all know circumstances where that has been good and we have all seen circumstances where that has been bad. But to have this company, which is employing a lot of workers at entry level, behaving in this way while the government brings this bill into the House is utterly egregious. If you think Australians are going to cop this sort of circumstance, you have another thing coming. The bill is manifestly unfair and completely at odds with our traditions of a fair go.

Mr NIKOLIC (Bass—Government Whip) (11:10): Given the opportunity to speak on a bill about youth unemployment, we instead get many minutes of union talking points, the politics of division, the rhetoric of billionaires and those in poverty in Australia, the same sorts of things, sadly, that we get from the member for Wakefield and others on the other side of House.

In addressing the issues raised in the Social Services Legislation Amendment (Youth Employment and Other Measures) Bill 2015 it is important we ensure the full story about
employment and youth unemployment in particular is addressed. I have heard recent speakers from the Labor Party refer to the current unemployment rate as being too high. Any rate of unemployment is too high. We need to do everything we can to make sure it is as low as it can be, but I remind those opposite that prior to the 2013 election when the Pre-Election Economic and Fiscal Outlook was released by the member for Lilley, the Treasurer of Australia at the time, he predicted that the unemployment rate in Australia would be 6.25 per cent in the June quarter of 2015. So having beaten Labor's own forecast, somehow the current unemployment rate is too high. Indeed, I would say to those opposite that we have made significant inroads into and improvements in the unemployment rate, particularly when it comes to my state of Tasmania. Hearing members opposite lecturing the government on economic performance and unemployment is a bit like the sound a wet lettuce makes when it hits the side of the colander at home. It is a lot of bluff and bluster but it really does not have a lot of veracity behind it when you think about what occurred with Labor's own forecasts relating to unemployment.

Everyone knows that Labor have dealt themselves out of the rational debate when it comes to the economy. Australians are aware of their false claims when they talked about achieving a surplus time and time again. They know about the Labor government's forecast in 2012 of a $2 billion budget surplus which, at their 2013 budget, suddenly became an $18 billion deficit and then in the aftermath of the 2013 election turned out to be a $48 billion deficit. When you add up the maths, that is a negative $50 billion turnaround in our economic circumstances. You do not need to be Einstein to realise that when the economic circumstances of the country experience such a turnaround that has an impact on things like employment, jobs and our economic freedom of action. But it gets worse. Because of debt repayments and Labor locking in spending growth above inflation, we are in fact spending $100 million every day more than this country earns from taxpayers and businesses. We have to borrow that money and pay interest on it. The opportunity cost by any measure is appalling. We could build two new schools every day if we were not spending more than we earn. We could build many kilometres of new roads or a new teaching hospital each and every month just in the funds we spend paying the interest on Labor's debt.

It is now a matter of historical record that our debt under Labor went from zero at the 2007 election to a trajectory of $667 billion in just six years. That means that each and every single month this country borrows $1,000 million dollars just to pay the interest on Labor's debt. I mention that statistic because, if we are talking about our economic future, if we are talking about our freedom of action, if we are talking about opportunities for our children and grandchildren, those statistics will have a compelling impact on their job opportunities in the future.

Employment and the need to create local jobs is the No. 1 issue in my state of Tasmania. So the words 'youth unemployment' in this bill are particularly compelling. When you think about the broader unemployment rate in Tasmania at the 2013 election, it had an '8' in front of it. The rate was 8.1 per cent. In recent months it has been under seven per cent, certainly representing a move in the right direction.

And it certainly needed to after 16 years of state Labor government in my home state—state Labor and Labor-Green government—concurrently in the last six years of that with Labor and Labor-Greens government here in Canberra. I say that the continuing fall in
Tasmania's jobless rate in 2015 is encouraging. It is the best it has been in six years. There is certainly more work to be done, and the policies of the Abbott and Hodgman governments are firmly focused on creating more local jobs.

I will dwell on some of the green shoots of recovery. Over the course of 2014, 13,400 jobs were created in Tasmania. This compares to a decrease of 5,400 jobs through 2013, a year when federal Labor was responsible for the economy. Tasmania's housing sector, I am pleased to say, is showing strong increases in building approvals over the past year. Residential building approvals for Tasmania over the 12 months to April 2015, which is the latest available data point, were 42.9 per cent higher than the previous 12 months.

So it is important to emphasise that the measures in this bill are not stand-alone and should not be considered as stand-alone by those opposite. In the 2015-16 budget the government announced the Growing Jobs and Small Business package which increases support services to those impacted by changes in this bill. As part of the Growing Jobs and Small Business package, from the day after the budget a higher subsidy payment of up to $6,500—doubling from $3,250—is available under the Tasmanian Jobs Program and includes a payment of $3,250 for part-time places.

To strengthen Tasmania's business investment and jobs, a $203 million expansion was made to the Tasmanian Freight Equalisation Scheme. From January 2016 the scheme will be extended to goods going to markets not currently covered by the scheme. Indeed, goods that are destined for international markets through the Port of Melbourne will get that $700 per shipping container assistance to make sure that our producers are able to ship their goods in a way that equalises their costs with what it might cost elsewhere on the mainland to ship similar goods.

The trifecta of free trade agreements negotiated by the coalition in 2014 will also have a significant impact on jobs, particularly in my home state of Tasmania, whose clean, fresh, quality produce will grace growing Asian markets. And when you think about the growth of those markets, Deputy Speaker, it is truly an economic miracle that is coming to the Asia-Pacific. At the moment there are in the region of 500 million people constituting the middle class in that region. The estimates are that in the next 15 years that 500 million will grow to 1.7 billion people entering the middle class, from India to Asia. That will be an extraordinary economic miracle as people are raised out of poverty. And as they are raised out of poverty, here we sit astride the Indian and Pacific oceans in a region that is going to be the engine room of global prosperity for the next 50 years. What an incredible opportunity that is going to be! We have heard the evidence in this place, of Reid Fruits—marvellous producers of cherries in Tasmania—that, by virtue of the free trade agreements signed in the last year, have grown their exports from five tonnes to 185 tonnes.

The Treasurer was in my home state of Tasmania only a few weeks ago, talking to a local fisherman, Karl Krause, who showed the Treasurer some of his documents where a year and a half ago he was selling his crayfish at $65 kilo. They are beautiful crayfish, caught east of Flinders Island, near Babel Island. I have been fishing with Mr Krause. Instead of $65 a kilo he is now getting $100 a kilo for those crayfish. So when I say that we are beneficiaries of that trifecta of free trade agreements, I know that Karl Krause and others want to hug the trade minister, Andrew Robb, for concluding them in such a wonderful way. They are going to be strategic enablers of my state's prosperity for many years into the future.
The government is also investing a billion dollars in Tasmanian infrastructure, including $400 million for the Midland Highway, $38 million for the Hobart airport runway extension and an additional $60 million for tranche 2 irrigation schemes, including a long-overdue irrigation scheme in my electorate of Bass. This will be near Scottsdale and it will provide 95 per cent water certainty. It will enable the conversion of marginal farmland into something that is much more productive so that people will be able to grow more, produce more and export more, to tap into those markets that have been enlarged and enhanced through that trifecta of free trade deals that I talked about earlier. The tranche 2 irrigation schemes—and that $60 million of federal investment will deliver approximately 40,000 megalitres of water to landholders and communities who connect to those schemes.

I would say to those opposite that when it comes to creating more local jobs, when it comes to linking strategy and government investment to the tactical things happening on the ground that are actually going to create those local jobs, then what you are seeing from the Abbott government, working in cooperation with the Hodgman government, is practical action to deliver those jobs into the future.

You would have thought that if this were such an important issue for the opposition that they would have done more about it while they had six years in government in Canberra and while they had 16 years in government in Tasmania—to actually do something more practical in some of these areas. Indeed, in his budget reply speech, the opposition leader, Bill Shorten, did not mention the issue of youth unemployment at all. And, to date, Labor has committed a paltry $21 million towards tackling this issue. By comparison, the coalition is leading by example and has committed 15 times more money to help 15 times more people. Our $330 million youth employment strategy is a jobs plan directly targeted at helping young people who are most at risk of long-term unemployment through Transition to Work and intensive support programs. The strategy also provides targeted support to vulnerable and at-risk groups like people with mental illnesses and refugees. So I say to those opposite: stop your ceaseless complaining; stop being part of the problem and start being part of the solution.

We heard from the member for Wakefield during his contribution to this debate union attacks on some of our programs. He attacked our Work for the Dole program. In my electorate of Bass, people are benefiting from these programs. Our National Work Experience program initiative, despite its proven success, is giving people on welfare real job experience that leads to paid work. I have heard members opposite have a go at the Green Army program!—as if this is something that is not treating these young people equitably. I have had two Green Army programs rolled out in my electorate of Bass from Kings Bridge to the Tailrace and from Kings Bridge to Duck Reach. I have talked to these young people who are not only doing environmental projects that are enormously valuable for our community but also learning the skills, knowledge and attitudes that are going to help them get jobs into the future.

Mr Champion: It is a pity you are not doing something about climate change. What is going to happen in Paris?

Mr NIKOLIC: I hear the intervention from the member for Wakefield. These skills are skills and competencies under the National Training Framework. These are things that will make a real difference to their ability to get a job into the future. I do not understand why members opposite are actually talking down some of the things that we are doing that will
address some of that disadvantage, particularly in regional areas like mine where youth unemployment has been a problem for far too long.

It is self-evident that the best way to create more jobs into the future is by ensuring that our economy continues to grow, and it is growing at an annual rate of 2.7 per cent. Under Labor it was only 1.9 per cent. Job advertisements are up, as measured by the ANZ, and it remains strong, rising in 10 of the past 11 months to be up 7.3 per cent over the year to April 2015 in seasonally adjusted terms and up 9.5 per cent in ANZ's preferred trend terms. There is so much more I could say about those green shoots of recovery, but I would simply say to those opposite: when it comes to job creation and when it comes to job creation for the most vulnerable in our society, get behind the coalition's program.

**Ms O’NEIL** (Hotham) (11:25): I am really pleased to have the opportunity to speak today on the Social Services Legislation Amendment (Youth Employment and Other Measures) Bill 2015 because it gives me a chance to express how angry I am on behalf of my constituents in Hotham that the government is going ahead with this raft of measures that are nothing other than an unbridled attack on the young people of this country.

I am angry on behalf of the young people who live in my electorate and those around Australia. But it goes well beyond that because the legislation that is under review by the House today is a broader conversation about what kind of country we want to live in and how we are going help support young people to adapt to economic change that is underway in this country. The measures that are in the bill go right to the heart of these difficult questions about how we can express in a true economic sense the egalitarianism that we all talk about so much in our conversations with one another.

I will go through the critical measures in the bill so that those in the gallery and the kids who are watching are able to understand some of the proposals that are before us. There are four that I want to focus on in particular. The first is the change that is being suggested in this legislation where people who apply for working age payments, excluding the widow's allowance, will have to wait for one week before any payment is made to them. Essentially, anyone who needs the support of the state in some way or another is being told that they will survive for one full week without income. The second is there is a new requirement for young people under the age of 25, who will now have to wait four weeks before they receive any income support from the state. So young people doing it tough without work will receive no funding at all for one month. The third is the extension of youth allowance, which applies today to Australians under the age of 22, reflecting the general view that there is some level of additional support for young people from family. Under this legislation, the age at which youth allowance applies instead of something like Newstart—that is, unemployment benefits—is being raised from 22 to 24. It is a significantly lower payment, so now everyone in this country who is between 22 and 24 and unemployed is going to see a real cut to their payments. The fourth is indexation changes. Essentially, the impact of this is that incomes will be held down because the point at which income support will kick in is being suppressed, a move that will do nothing more than simply suppress the incomes of Australians who are doing it tough while the rest of the nation grows more wealthy.

I think this legislation—of all the issues that we discuss in this House—makes fully transparent some of the values that underlie the decisions that are made by this government. They are values that tell us that people who are on welfare who have some support of the state...
should be made to suffer because they have no incomes of their own. That is the effect of some of these provisions which will directly put more Australians into poverty. It is legislation that surely could only have been written by someone who believes that inequality in this country does not matter. Again, I would say the clear, direct impact of this legislation is that many more thousands of Australians will end up living in poverty, some in incredibly deep poverty. It is a reminder for us of what this government wants Australia to look like. That is a place where the generations of people who have fought for better social protections for people who are doing it tough are having them stripped back slowly and surely. We have seen that not only in the legislation that we are discussing today but also in many other proposals that have been put forward by this government, whether it is changes to the indexation rate of pension that will see pensioners worse off over time or whether it is a GP tax, where people in this country, no matter how sick, will have to pay to go to the doctor—clearly a move that will put people on lower incomes in an already worse position.

I reflect at times on what could possibly be driving the government to put forward legislation like this which will so severely damage the quality of life for people in this country who need the government's help. I have to conclude it is one of only two things: either the government is a group of not very nice people, or they just do not get it. They are just not living in the same Australia that I, and most of my constituents, live in. I am going to give the government the benefit of the doubt and assume that it must be the latter, because I know many people on the other side of the House, and I know them to be good people. I have to infer that they have designed this legislation for a very different group of young people than the ones that I represent in my community of Hotham.

For some young people in Australia provisions like denying them any income for a month may seem workable. It may seem workable when you are talking about a young person who has lots of family support; maybe a young person who lives at home with their parents; a young person who can raid the fridge if they need something to eat; a young person who can borrow their mum and dad's car; a young person who can borrow 50 bucks if their parents feel like lending them a bit of cash. It is a very different proposition for those young people to be without income for a month, compared to the young people that I represent. Many of the young people I represent do not live in a household like that. Many of them do not have families that support them. Some families just cannot afford it themselves. They themselves are struggling. Many of them may also be in a situation where they need the support of government.

Let us reflect on some of the comments and indicators that we have heard from those on the other side of the House. The comments of the Treasurer really lead me to believe that this is where this has come from. We know that in the past the Treasurer has made ridiculous comments like suggesting that poor people in this country do not drive cars, which is obviously factually incorrect and also offensive. We had another example relatively recently where the Treasurer said that if people could not afford a house, they should go out and get a better job—as if there are low-income people all over this country who just had not thought of that. It is another indication of how seriously this government does not get it. It is another indication that they are living in what seems to be a very different country to the people I am representing in Hotham.
As you can probably sense, I am very upset about a lot of the proposals in this legislation. One of things that for me makes all this so much worse is that all these measures are being enacted in a time of rising unemployment for young people in this country. In fact, when you look at the numbers from the Australian Bureau of Statistics we have seen that youth joblessness has reached its highest point now since 1998. There are 15 per cent of young people between the ages of 15 and 24 who are looking for work and cannot find it. One in five, between 15 and 19 are unemployed.

Those are the macro national figures. We know of course that these figures look very different when we look at different parts of the country. In rural and regional areas of Australia—Cairns and northern Victoria come to mind—youth unemployment is north of 20 per cent. So one in five people in that broad age range are looking for work and cannot find it. It is an area of extraordinary national concern, and one for which we have seen absolutely zero leadership from those on the other side of the House. Instead they go to these draconian measures which imply that, if young people are unemployed, we can bully them into the workforce by taking away the unemployment support that they receive.

Mr Deputy Speaker Vasta, I know that you are probably aware there are lots of welfare organisations which are trying to elevate this issue on the national agenda. The Brotherhood of St. Laurence has done some fantastic work looking at areas of national concern for youth unemployment and brought forward some serious proposals that deserve real national attention. We have even heard, amongst other business organisations, the Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry—which is not known for its speaking out generally on poverty issues—point this out as an area of national concern. If the government is not going to listen to us, perhaps they will listen to the Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry.

One of the reasons that youth unemployment is such a concern is because we know that the impacts of being unemployed early in life can actually have repercussions for decades. Youth unemployment is not a short-term issue that is going to just affect this country for five or six years. If we allow this situation to continue, if we allow young people to start their working life without the opportunities they need to get off to a great start, then we are going to pay for that as a nation. There are issues of concern because of the people affected, but this youth unemployment problem has much broader social and economic implications for us.

There are lots of studies that have been done in very famous universities around the world which look at what effect unemployment early in life has on people. We know that young people who have this experience end up with something we call 'wage scars'. If we look at two young people in exactly the same position and track them throughout their lives, we find that the person who experienced long periods of unemployment early in their life will be at a much lower wage when they are in their 40s and 50s compared to the person that managed to get lucky and find a job early in their life. There is lots of literature about why we see that scarring effect.

One of the most distressing things you find, when you look into the literature of the long-term implications of youth unemployment, is the mental health and physical health impacts that people experience in their 40s and 50s. If the government is not willing to come to the party and have a serious conversation about this youth unemployment problem for the sake of the young people affected, then they should be thinking about what our society is going to look like in 30 or 40 years' time, when we potentially have a generation of young people who
have not gotten the help and support they need and instead have been attacked by having their income taken away for a month.

There are some reasons I have talked about concerns for youth unemployment but there is one more I want to touch on before I complete my comments. I am worried about youth unemployment because, when we look at the way our economy is changing in Australia at the very highest level, we are looking into a period where the challenge of getting young people off to a great start in life is growing, not diminishing. We are seeing that technology and globalisation are changing our economy very quickly and very dramatically.

There was a study published by Oxford University in 2013 which suggested that, within 20 years, 40 per cent of the jobs that exist today will have been replaced by machines. The OECD did a similar study looking at the impact of globalisation, finding that, within a similar time period, 20 per cent of jobs will be replaced by globalisation, effectively offshoring to other countries.

When we look at the jobs that are being outsourced and the jobs where people are being replaced by machines, they are the kind of entry-level jobs that young people for generation after generation have used to get their foot in the door, to get their start in the workforce. I am thinking about, for example, law firms taking on article clerks. In their first years at the law firm, article clerks would do very routine tasks. They would look through documents, look for key words in documents. You could imagine, all of this now is being done today by computers. I am thinking of young people who might have, a generation ago, got a job in a call centre. Of course, we know now so many of those jobs are being offshored into other countries.

It is important that we do not just lament this economic change because clearly Australia is getting a lot of benefit from it. We are growing more and more wealthy. We are one of the richest countries in the world. But we do need to think about how we have to change the way that we support young people in order to ensure that they are not victims of what is happening here and that they get to benefit from this increasing prosperity that we are so lucky to see in our country.

We hear stories about people in this country who have played national leadership roles, who have had great success. Paul Keating, for example, never finished high school; Lindsay Fox was the same. These were men who went out and got their start in life, took some risks and ended up being very successful. But we are not going to see this happen anymore. Young people are only going to be able to get ahead if they stick with school, if they get a skill and if they get a good start into the workforce. I really want to have a conversation in this parliament about how we can make sure that young people get that opportunity that they need.

One thing I am very confident about is that we are not going to see that transition happen for young people when we focus instead on punishing them for what is a changing economic environment and bad luck in many instances. Young people are usually unemployed because there are no job opportunities for their level of skill and no job opportunities in the place where they live. The idea that the key response of this government is to take away any income from those young people for a month absolutely beggars belief. As I say, it reflects the type of nation that these people want to live in and their really very false understanding of what life is like out there for young Australians.
Mr Laming (Bowman) (11:40): I rise to speak on the Social Services Legislation Amendment (Youth Employment and Other Measures) Bill 2015. It is good to see this very important topic considered today. Laid bare obviously are the different perspectives on this issue from the two major parties. While the previous address was somewhat vague about the detail of the bill, it is probably an appropriate time at the start of my comments to go through precisely what this bill is doing—rather than vague critiques about how young people deserve a quality of life through instantaneous payment of welfare.

Let's be very clear that there is a very mixed group of people seeking work and it is a really challenging environment. Between 16 and 25, some of the toughest social issues face us in our life cycle and getting a job must be one of those at the top or very close to it. We invest hundreds of millions of dollars in supporting people to find satisfactory work. The one thing I want to make sure we never do is just say, 'There is simply not enough jobs out there to go around so let's give up.' We are never going to give up. We are going to make it as positive, as encouraging as possible to skill our population and make sure they can do the work this nation needs.

The last thing we want to be doing is basically expropriating profits overseas by importing foreigners to do the work we are not prepared to do. And if anyone says there is not work for young Australians out there, I will take you to a local orchard or abattoir where there is a 'staff wanted' sign up 12 months of the year. There is work there but it is just not in the places where we choose to do it and not in the places where we want to live. Let's be absolutely clear that we have a challenge of mismatch, not a lack of employment. Let's be honest, the more skilled you are, the more capable you will be at getting a well-paid job. It seems completely self-evident, except if a Treasurer says it then it is offensive. If a poor man says it, it is just as true. We all strive to be skilled, to have skills like tools in a tool box to give us capability. From basic capability comes opportunity as Noel Pearson famously said.

With all of those blithe statements that you have heard from both sides of the chamber, the reality is that some people will not acquire those skills for a huge range of reasons. It is actually pretty hard for the state to separate all that out, to identify the people who are gainfully and willingly seeking work from those who are persistent evaders who simply do not want to work from those who have mental and other health and family issues that make it almost impossible to work their way through the thicket of life to engage with work.

The state does not have spies in every house. We do not have time for one bureaucrat to follow every job seeker, so we have to have basic rules that serve the nation well. Within those rules you need flexibility so that at some time a minister can make a determination to change the laws quickly, which this bill allows for; so that a department can provide an emergency relief fund of over $8 million to assist thousands of people who potentially may need emergency payments over that first month of job seeking, which this bill allows. We will stream young job seekers into A, B and C recognising their ascending levels of complexity in finding work, and we will exempt those stream B and C people from the one-month wait, which this bill allows. We recognise that some people have health issues making it impossible to work or they are in the second or third trimester of pregnancy and should not be subjected to this delay, as this bill allows. We also recognise that any times people have already lost a job through no fault of their own and then fall back upon the welfare system. But if they have
already served a one-month waiting period, they should not have to do it again in the same year, which this bill allows.

How many more exemptions can we put into legislation to ensure that those who should not be affected are not? We all know young people. We can all say we do not know about how life works but we have all been through it. We know that fundamentally one has a choice. If you are fit of mind and body, you can train, study or work. What this legislation says is that at any time, if you are facing a one-month wait and you choose instead to return to school to complete it or seek out training or, better still, go off to university, you should be exempted from any one-month waiting period. This bill does that.

We are reaching a point where it has become so perplexingly obvious that this works to identify the people doing the right thing and exempt them and then says to everyone else, 'Do your level best.' As a nation, there is not much more that we can ask. As a nation, we cannot say much more to a young person than: 'When you reach the age where you can work, we ask that you spend the first four weeks of that time meeting a jobactive provider, designing a resume, agreeing to a job plan and a strategy for the kind of work you would like to do and creating your profile on a website to make it easier for employers to find you and to make it easier for you to make an application. Then we ask of you, in that 28-day period, to turn up to a job interview, do your best and tell us what you've got. And then, after that period, you can, if nothing else has worked, access the nation's welfare system.'

We do have a problem. You would think, by listening to the other side, that we have no problem. You would think, by listening to the Labor Party, that the only problem we have is that we are not guaranteeing the quality of life of young people by throwing welfare at them on the day they ask for it. The entire system has waiting periods. When was the last time you went to an emergency department? When was the last time you went to a general practice? When was the last time you sat anywhere waiting for a service? There are legitimate waiting periods that play a role. This waiting period says: give it your level best. Let us just keep in mind that we have 6.5 million young Australians living at home in this period. They have every reason, with the support of a loving home, to go out and do their best to engage the real economy.

Australia holds a gold medal—not for the things that I am proud of. Australia, together with New Zealand and Ireland, has the greatest proportion of households that have no-one working in them. We have the greatest proportion of households in any community—should you fly over one when you are returning to your cities later tomorrow night from parliament—where simply everyone in that household under that roof receives welfare. Is that a legitimate challenge to a government? Are we not elected with the responsibility to change that? With the depth of evidence that we have around connection to employment and health outcomes, surely the next dollar spent is better spent connecting people to a job, placing under a roof in every town and city in this country at least one person earning a wage, at least one person who gets out of bed in the morning, at least one person who jumps in a car and drives to work, at least one person who brings home a salary, puts it on the table and says to their dependants: 'This is how a country works. This is how tax is paid, and from that come the services that we all know are there when we need them.'

But it is only this side of politics that does that simple bit of calculation, that tiny bit of calculus that you simply cannot make a promise that you cannot fund. You simply cannot
deliver a service if you do not have an income to do it. We have half of this parliament who think it is utterly okay to slide into perilous debt, which is effectively borrowing money from China and the Middle East to pay for what we cannot fund ourselves. Do you think that is done for free? Do you think they say, 'We won't call that one in one day'? It has to be paid by someone. The money has to come from somewhere. That is not a debate that we can have in a mature environment, even in this place, because there is a simple and fundamental belief on the other side that you do not need to run balanced budgets, because it is a problem for the next generation—it is a problem for our kids. We have talked long and hard about this idea of intergenerational theft by running a debt now because we presume our welfare needs are greater than our kids', and we just clock it up.

That stops with the election of this government. We will start to live within our means. It does not mean you do not still run a deficit budget if that is where you are caught, but you are slowly, slowly whittling away the living beyond your means. Every person up there in the galleries understands it. They all have their credit cards. They all pay them off. They all have their home loans. They all pay them off. But we have this preposterous claim by an opposition that we can simply keep spending.

We slid from zero debt to GDP to 17 or 18 per cent of GDP. And then we cast these glances across and laugh at the Greece-EU experience as if that is not some European manifestation of what we debate here in a slightly more moderate context. You have Greece with no concept of living within their means and an EU that fundamentally paid for them to do it until now and can no longer afford to do so. That is why we bring bills into this place like the one we debate today.

It is not as if 100 members of this parliament on one side sit around dreaming of ways to reduce welfare. That is not why I went into public life. I went into public life to try to make that dollar work as well as it possibly could and make sure it ends up in the pocket of the person who most desperately needs it. A perfectly fit, perfectly healthy, 16- to 25-year-old living in my town and my city should go out and look for a job if they are physically, mentally and socially able to. If they are not, all of the exemptions are built into this bill, and none of those dishonest speeches you are hearing from the other side will even address that. It is laid out for them in bullet points, but not a single speech over there talks about those exemptions.

You would expect a mature opposition to say, 'There are pages of detail here, and we appreciate that there is some effort to provide exemptions to the most needy,' but they might respectfully disagree on the way the exemptions are structured. Let us have that debate. That is why we pay us the big bucks down here: to come up with better legislation. But no, we do not. We hear this blind story about 'income scarring' and how people deserve a quality of life from the minute they are old enough. It is the old notion that the welfare officer from the CES goes to the grade 12 class and says: 'Make sure you know where the welfare office is. Make sure you fill out your forms. Make sure you go shopping for every entitlement you deserve.'

That is not a nation that I want to be part of. I want a welfare safety net, but I do not want it to be the reason for living. The whole point is getting people back to work. In my electorate, we have started that process. In my electorate, we have engaged up to 500 small businesses by saying: 'Will you take a young Australian? In this waiting period, can they work shoulder to shoulder with your workers? Can they turn up when everyone else turns up? Can they take
their lunch break when everyone else takes their lunch break? And can they be there, cheek by jowl, with people doing a job? Through no fault of their own, they have often lived in a household where nobody worked, where no-one has worked, where no-one has any hope of work. The first step is reducing the barriers to at least developing the lifestyle skills and a cultural awareness of what it is like to work.' It is so important. That is why we talk about it down here. It is why we agonise over how hard it is to draw some of the most complex young lives into employment, but we know that the big picture makes it worth that fight.

In my electorate I have men's sheds that are opening their doors to 50-year-old-plus gentlemen who have said, 'I can never work again,' but they say: 'Come down and learn some new skills. Come down and become certified and credentialed on these power tools.' Ultimately, what these men's sheds intend to do is to accept work from needy families where there is repair and maintenance on their households. Men's sheds can potentially provide an outreaching service from the men's shed. It is all well and good to sit around and have a coffee and do some wood turning and metalwork, but let's actually go out and find a widow, a pensioner, a person who has had a partner go into hospital or a single mum and help then with repairs around the home—the thing they love the most.

And suddenly you are unlocking the potential of work for the dole recipients who say: 'There's nothing to do. There is no job I can do.' There are thousands of hours of work to be done. It is about having the wit to connect. It is about taking senior skilled Australians and saying, 'You can be a paid supervisor of these work for the dole recipients.' It is about connecting need and expertise. It is not about giving up. It is not about walking around to your 18-40-year-olds and saying: 'They're a nasty government. All they want to do is take your welfare off you. All they want to do is remove your income' like it is some birthright—it is not. It is a privilege. A payment we enjoy in this country that very few others can call on is a privilege.

If there is one battle that will absolutely delineate the two parties we have here, it is that we regard welfare as a privilege that is earned by reciprocity and by acting within social norms. Aboriginal communities got it. They did not even invent paid welfare. In Northern Queensland it was Noel Pearson who said, 'If you are beating up your wife, if you are destroying your house, if you are not paying your welfare, if you are ending up in front of a court or if you are not sending your children to school why should we pay you welfare?' Pearson got it. This mob does not. That is a fundamental understanding that in return for welfare payments you do your best. We are saying here to go to 20 job interviews. Spend that month with a plan to work, not a plan to not work. It is a simple black-and-white comparison between this government and that opposition.

This government is not on a roll as we go into the parliamentary break for no reason. They are not on the skids for no reason. They are in this diabolical situation politically because they have not picked up the big questions and they have not answered them correctly. On this one they oppose a simple measure that says to young people: go out and give your best shot for 28 days. Then, potentially, the welfare system is open to you if there is no other alternative. They had a simple yes/no question. They got it wrong and they will pay for it at the next election.

Ms BIRD (Cunningham) (11:55): I listened with great interest to the member for Bowman's contribution just then. It is not just about saying go out and have a go for 28 days.
It is saying to people to try and do that with absolutely no money. That is what the issue is at the heart of this bill. I would like to see him try to go out and spend 28 days getting dressed, going on the transport system, having to buy lunch while you are out and looking for 28 jobs but having absolutely not a dollar of income to do it on. That is, at heart, the issue. We do not disagree with many of the principles the member for Bowman outlined in terms of mutual responsibility under these payments and about requiring people to participate and—as he said—to have a go. We just do not believe that is reasonable or fair to ask people to do that without any form of income support. Not everybody is in as privileged a position as many of us may have been at that age to have family who could support us through that time. That is at the heart of why we have these concerns with this bill.

The challenge, obviously—and the member for Bowman referred to this quite rightly—is there is persistent high youth unemployment across our nation. In particular, in regions like my own in Illawarra, it is one of the most serious and persistent social and economic issues that we confront. It is clearly the case that one of the flow-on effects across the developed world from the global financial crisis has been its impact on employment opportunities for young people. In Australia, we have seen a serious drying up of entry-level jobs. These are the ones that give young people a start in the workforce. This increasingly applies to young people with post-secondary qualifications. It is not only those without any employment specific education and training who are seeing the opportunities for entry-level jobs dry up right before their eyes.

Many young people are telling me and, I am sure, many of my colleagues in this place across both sides of the chamber that nearly every job they would like to apply for says an essential criteria is a minimum of two or three years experience. That requirement then blocks them from getting a start to get the required minimum experience in the first place, so they end up in this no-win situation where they want to get the experience they need to get a permanent job but then all the jobs that they are potentially qualified to apply for all require experience. It is a really persistent problem for them. And I am sure all my colleagues have heard this from young people who are in the job market.

Young people are also increasingly relying on cobbling together multiple jobs or indeed contracts—many of them working on short-term contracts—in order simply to make enough to live on. This type of work then locks them out of reliable or permanent work and it leaves them precariously attached to the workforce. Whilst sometimes this can lead to a permanent job after a period of time, that does not seem to be the common experience for many young people. In this context, therefore, I believe it is completely wrong for the government to seek to implement a bill that will only add to the financial stress and difficulty for young people in our communities.

This bill introduces a number of social service measures from the 2015 budget relating to both youth allowance and Newstart for young people. I would like to briefly outline these before indicating where I stand on the matters before us and then, more importantly, to discuss the significance of supporting education and training opportunities to assist young people with gaining employment.

Firstly, the bill seeks to reintroduce the initiative from the 2014 budget about a waiting period but with a different time frame proposed in this budget. Secondly, it seeks to revisit that proposal that required young people under 30 to actively seek work for six months before
receiving income support payments. This was opposed by the parliament and now the government is seeking to reintroduce the policy with a reduced period of four weeks, with a proposal to delay the introduction of that until 1 July 2016. Labor continues to oppose this proposition as it will leave young job seekers under 25 was nothing to live on for a full month. This would also limit their ability to participate in job-seeking activities as they would have no income available to them. Therefore, it seems a particularly short-sighted and mean proposition. Clearly this proposition would push young people into poverty and potentially trap them in an endless cycle of no income support at all, thereby increasing poverty, crisis and homelessness.

Thirdly, the bill continues the previous budget measure to extend youth allowance (other) from 22- to 24-year-olds in lieu of Newstart and sickness allowance, also simply making life harder for these young people. We continues to oppose that proposition. Fourthly, the bill proposes to cease the low-income supplement paid as part of the compensation for the carbon price from 1 July 2017. This is a payment that is made to singles and couples on low incomes. Labor is willing to consider this proposition but not in the context of the other proposals in this bill.

Finally, and fifthly, the bill seeks to re-introduce measures from the 2014 budget on indexation but with the exclusion of pensions and an amended start date. Specifically, it would maintain at level for three years the income-free areas for all working age allowances, other than student payments and parenting payment single, from the existing start date of 1 July 2015. Also, it would maintain at level for three years the income-free areas and other means test thresholds for student payments, including the student income bank limits, with a start date of 1 January 2016. This measure was opposed by Labor in the context of the 2014 budget and we continue to oppose it.

It is clear the government has actually learnt nothing from the fundamental unfairness of last year's budget. This budget is just as unfair as the last when it comes to young job seekers. This is compounded by the fact that this budget has done nothing to re-instate any of the savage cuts in last year's budget to the skills portfolio, in particular for apprentices and trainees. Apprenticeships and traineeships are important pathways for young people to undertake education and training that would improve their opportunities to gain a job.

Let me just recap the extent of the cuts in last year's budget. The government's early action on apprenticeships was to introduce the one initiative they had taken to the election on skills. They introduced their apprentice loan scheme. But we in Labor were quite angry on behalf of apprentices that in outlining this scheme before the election the government did not outline to apprentices that it would be at the cost of the Tools For Your Trade payments which provide direct financial assistance to all eligible apprentices to get the tools they need for their trade and to assist with other costs. I am sure that many members have received the same feedback that I have about the intense disappointment felt among apprentices about this decision.

Last year, I visited a construction site in Werribee, outside Melbourne, with my colleague the member for Lalor. We spoke directly to about 20 apprentices across a number of trades. They were all angry about the removal of the Tools For Your Trade payments and, to be honest, quite scathing about the Trade Support Loans as a replacement option. Indeed, in the in-detail budget session last week, the minister indicated that only around 24,000 apprentices across the nation had taken up the loan. Given that there are several hundred thousand young
people in apprenticeships at any one time, that is a very, very low uptake. This morning, with
the Leader of the Opposition, I visited some apprentices at the Canberra Institute of
Technology. I asked the class, 'How many of you have actually taken up the Trade Support
Loans?' There was only one in that class who had. All the rest had no interest in undertaking
debt. So they clearly missed the impact of Tools For Your Trade.

Just as importantly, there were very significant apprenticeship support programs abolished
in the budget. The first one was the Apprenticeship Access Program. This particularly
targeted very disadvantaged young people to get them the skills, appropriate knowledge and
familiarity with work culture, as the previous speaker spoke about, such that they were
prepared to undertake an apprenticeship. In November 2012, I visited the MTA Autostart
Access Program in Granville with the member for Parramatta. I saw firsthand an impressive
program that helped people who were very vulnerable job seekers get themselves ready to
gain a full apprenticeship. During that visit, I met local car business owners, managers and
representatives of the Motor Traders' Association. They were all very dedicated to helping
young adults get a start in a region plagued by youth unemployment. They were very proud of
the success they were having in transitioning so many of those young people into full
apprenticeships. With no notice or evidence of failure, this scheme was simply abolished in
the 2014 budget.

Another program that was abolished was the Apprenticeships Mentoring Program. Many of
my colleagues would be aware that there has been a consistent concern about the number of
apprentices who are actually completing their training. This program was very much
appreciated not only by apprentices but also by employers. In March of 2013, as the minister,
I launched the Construction Apprenticeship Mentoring Scheme at the Master Builders
Association of the ACT training centre.

Mr McCormack: A very good organisation.

Ms BIRD: As the member opposite says, this is a very good organisation and one that was
very keen to participate in the mentoring of young people in apprenticeships—a really
important thing to undertake. It was an $80 million program and it was critically targeted at
improving those completion rates. Again, I am quite at a loss to understand why the program
was simply abolished in the 2014 budget.

We also see cuts across the apprenticeship sector more broadly. The old Australian
apprenticeship centres have been rebadged as the Australian Apprenticeship Support
Network. The problem I have with this is that these network providers that work with
apprentices at the local level are now doing that with $10 million per year less than the old
apprenticeship centres had. Plus, they have been given the job-matching and mentoring work
that used to be happen under other programs. So all up, instead of $170 million or $180
million per year, they are being asked to do with less money. So the reality is that there is still
a lot more work with significantly less money, so I can only see that, with the best will in the
world, those new providers are really going to be under the pump to effectively impact both
apprentice commencement and apprentice completion rates.

In particular, I just want to make the point that one of the areas that are particularly
significant in this space is to get small and medium businesses involved in being able to take
on apprentices and trainees. Many of them are really keen to do this, but the management of
an apprenticeship—the paperwork, the legal requirements, the follow-up with the apprentice
and managing the apprentice—is just too much for them to take on as well as their business responsibilities. So for many decades they have had the option of the group training program in order to participate in training apprentices. The group training organisation did all of that work and managed the apprentice, who was placed with a particular employer. Sadly, at the end of last year, the government abolished the financing of the joint group training program which allowed them to do this. So we have seen a lot of slashing in the skills portfolio, at least half of which—about $1 billion—has been in support for apprentices and trainees in this country.

So the government, in bills like the one before us, has a very mean approach to dealing with young people who may find themselves unemployed and do not have the sort of extended family who can financially support them for a month. They will actually be unable to access any income support for that period. At the same time, we are seeing significant cuts across all the sorts of programs that would actually give them the opportunity to get some skills, some training and some work-readiness and to improve their ability to get into the labour market—and all this at a time when the labour market is becoming harder and harder for young people trying to get a start, particularly in those entry-level jobs, as I discussed at the beginning. We are now seeing increasing reports of university graduates who are struggling to get their first job, because they may have their degree but all the entry-level jobs in the professional area they are looking at require a minimum of two or three years experience. So it is not just young people with no post-secondary qualifications; it is increasingly those who are graduating from our TAFEs, our RTOs and our universities all facing this same challenge. So it just seems to me that the government is intent on creating a bit of a perfect storm that is just going to make it more and more difficult. If the OECD recognises that youth unemployment is a critical factor for the developed world, I think we should be putting in place decisions and legislation that lead to solutions to that for young people, not put more barriers in their way as I believe this bill does.

Mr ZAPPIA (Makin) (12:10): I am certainly pleased to follow the member for Cunningham in this debate, because I agree with the sentiments that she has just expressed, and I know that she has put an extraordinary amount of work over the years into working with young people. Indeed, I have served on committees with her and I am aware that she would be acutely familiar with the plight of young people in this country, and therefore she comes to this debate with a great deal of experience.

Let’s be absolutely clear about the Social Services Legislation Amendment (Youth Employment and Other Measures) Bill 2015: it would not be here were it not for the fact that the government's previous proposal, which would have meant that young people would have been left without any government assistance for six months, simply would never get through the parliament. It was not going to get through the parliament, because not only our side of politics—the Labor Party—but just about every crossbencher in the Senate opposed it, because it was grossly unfair and unjust. When that legislation was introduced in 2014, it signalled a very clear intention of the Abbott government to try to take away support from some of the most vulnerable people in our community, some of whom are clearly young people. When it could not get that legislation through, it then rebadged it and reframed it in a watered-down version of what is still considered by many to be heartless and unfair legislation—and that is what this bill actually is all about.
There is also a common theme to the Abbott government. It is a theme of the government wanting to wash its hands of responsibility and transfer the social and financial burdens onto others. We saw it with respect to the freezing of the financial assistance grants to councils: you cut $1 billion from the councils because you know full well that they will in turn have to find the money one way or another or cut their own services to their communities, but you transfer the problem to them. Again, we saw it with the cutting of the pensioner concessions, $1.3 billion in funding to the states, for exactly the same reason: you know full well that someone will pick up the pieces further down the line when the federal government washes its hands of the responsibility. Then we saw it with respect to the government wanting to introduce a GP tax, where indeed the same would apply: if you increase the GP tax then you make the community pay for the services they require. When it could not get that through, it came in through the back door: it froze the support payment to the GPs, knowing full well that in time they would pass on their increased costs to patients through the patient fee that they would then charge. Those are just some of the examples, and we have not even got to the cuts made to health and education.

It is clear that this government wants to transfer its responsibilities to the broader community, and again we saw it only this week when the federal government's green paper talked about cutting funding to public schools in this country, something that would never have been contemplated up until this week but is clearly on this government's agenda. Whilst the federal government and the Prime Minister have denied that they want to cut funding for primary and secondary public schools in this country, the truth of the matter is that that green paper signals a very clear intent of this government.

This particular legislation has within it two very unfair measures. The first is that it will make young people wait up to four weeks before being eligible for any government assistance. Currently the wait, I believe, is one week, so they go from one week to four weeks. The second is that under this proposal, as was the case in last year's proposal, young people will be transferred from Newstart to youth allowance. That means a loss of $48 per week for those young people. Right through to the age of 25, unemployed people will be eligible only for youth allowance, not Newstart.

Newstart at the moment pays around $260 a week, or less than $37 a day. Youth allowance drops that payment to $213 a week, or about $30 a day. Compare that with the minimum wage of $641 or the average wage in this country of $1,476 a week. The government is asking people to try and survive on $213 a week when the minimum wage is three times that. I ask members opposite who have come into this place to support this legislation whether they truly believe that they could live on $30 a day—to pay for their food, their clothing, their housing, their health needs, their transport and so on. I doubt whether they could. The reality is that most people cannot unless they get additional support from one place or another. What the Abbott government is effectively doing is deserting young people—because it has no sense of social justice and no understanding of the growing social inequity in this country.

Even more disappointingly, this is a government which is always looking at ways of balancing its budget on the back of those who are doing it the hardest but which rarely looks at trying to secure additional income from the higher income earners of Australia. As other speakers on this side have already made clear, not all young people who are out of work have family support to rely on or to fall back on—which is what this legislation is pushing them to
do. Some young people, for very good reason, have moved away from home, sometimes chasing a job which, when they got to their destination, simply did not live up to their expectations or to the promises that were made to them when they moved away from home. In other cases there might be family breakdown. I have personally dealt with families in my electorate where that has occurred, where the young person has moved away from home and communication between the young person and the family has indeed broken down. Then there are young people who, even if they could get support from their family, come from families that are already struggling to make ends meet. Making things tougher for the young person does not help the family situation at all. Lastly, I am aware of young people who have moved away from home and who find themselves in a difficult situation but who, out of pride, will suffer in silence and not turn to anyone else to assist them.

When a young person cannot make ends meet, that young person may become homeless. If so, they might start, in some cases, couch surfing and the like—turning to friends to support them even if it is just for a place to sleep overnight. Regrettably, some of them end up, out of desperation, finding themselves on the wrong side of the law, while others turn to charitable groups to help them. Whatever the case, the bottom line is that the community wears the cost.

We know that unemployment in this country is rising. It is projected to grow to around 6.5 per cent, which is higher than it has been for years. Even worse, we know that youth unemployment rates are much higher, in many places two or three times the headline unemployment rate. There are reasons for that, but what is disappointing is that, knowing that unemployment is rising and knowing that unemployment for young people is much worse, the Abbott government has cut some $2 billion over the last two budgets from apprenticeship and skills programs—the very programs which were meant to help young people, to train them up and give them some kind of a chance for a start in life. The Abbott government believes this is not important and has cut $2 billion from those programs.

Then we have the cuts to TAFE and the universities. When you make such cuts and you ask young people to go out and train themselves, the effect is to make the training courses much dearer. So you are asking someone who does not have a job, who is trying to get a job, to go and train themselves—but you cut the funding to the institutions that are providing the courses, knowing full well that they will in turn push the cost of those courses to unemployed young people even higher.

One of the ironies of this government's rhetoric is this. I can recall, months ago, the minister coming into this place and talking about the wonders of the Green Army program—how that was going to employ thousands of young people and how it was going to give them a chance and a start in life. But what do we see in this year's budget? A cut of $73 million to the Green Army program. The rhetoric having served its purpose months ago, the Green Army program is being quietly pushed to one side—again, knowing full well that that program might have given at least some young people a break.

Most of the unemployed young people we are dealing with come from low-income households. They do not come from the high end of town; they come from the low-socioeconomic areas. The statistics bear that out. So we are hitting hard young people who do not necessarily have a family with the capacity to support them. The underlying narrative to this government's rhetoric and, may I say, to the rhetoric of many of the speakers from the government benches who have come in to support this legislation, is that the unemployed are
not trying hard enough to get a job, particularly the young unemployed—that it is their fault that they are unemployed. Government speakers have implied that in their contributions.

The reality is quite different from that. The reality is that there are simply not enough jobs for the unemployed of this country. For young people, it is even more difficult. For young people, when there is a job advertised, the first thing a prospective employer asks is, 'What experience do you have?' If the young person has no experience, they do not get the job—and, if they do not get the job, they do not get experience. It becomes a vicious cycle and so they are not given the breaks that they need.

The truth of the matter is for many young people this bill is going to be bad news and, whilst it might only sound like a four-week break, a four-week break to them is $1000 which many of them simply do not have in their pockets. Only this week I received an email from the mother of a young person in my electorate—a 23-year-old—and the email in my view sums up the reality facing the young people of Australia. The first point she makes is that, whilst working for the dole is a reasonable idea, it rarely leads to paid work at the end of it. This young man has six level-two certificates from TAFE in various trades. He has paid for an additional course out of his own pocket to get a forklift licence. In 18 months he has applied for nearly 400 jobs. His job provider, again not surprisingly, has not been able to find this person a job, because the truth is there is no work out there. One employer offered him a job for six months on the basis that he works for nothing—in other words, 'You can do work experience with me for six months.' When a young person said, 'I cannot survive on nothing for six months,' he was told by this employer that, like so many other young people of today, he was simply not prepared to work. What kind of attitude is that? This young person, who has made every effort, in every sense of the word, and is desperately wanting to get a job but he cannot. He should not be further abused by having his payments cut or accused of being someone who is simply not trying.

There are a couple of other matters that I want to very quickly touch on before I conclude my remarks. In recent years we have seen governments, both at federal and state level, privatise a whole range of government departments and, as a result of that, we have seen the loss of opportunities in apprenticeships in particular that were previously provided by these government departments. We have also seen a number of major industries collapse in this country; I refer in particular to the auto industry. In my region Holden in particular was one of the major employers of apprentices in South Australia. With the closure of Holden, all of those opportunities for young people will be lost, and that is a real concern for people in Adelaide broadly. The last point I would make, and it is one that has been made by other speakers, is that, in their desperation, young people wanting to get jobs are being seduced into paying for very expensive training courses by unscrupulous RTOs with a promise of a job at the end, when in fact there will be none. These are young people who do not have the money in the first place, but out of desperation they scramble the money together, in one way or another, only to find out that they have just blown money they did not have. This is unfair legislation, which the side of the house will not support it and we do not support for very good reasons.

Ms COLLINS (Franklin) (12:25): I stand also to oppose this bill, which sets out to do five things. This bill deals with the one-week waiting period excluding the disallowance; it introduces a requirement for young people under 25 to wait four weeks prior to receiving
income support; it extends the youth allowance from 22- to 24-year-olds in lieu of NewStart and sickness allowances; it makes changes to the low-income supplement; and imposes indexation changes to working-age payments.

I am particularly concerned about the under-25 measure and its one-month waiting period. I have previously stood in this place to oppose to the under-30 measure, as it was then known, where we are asking young people to live on fresh air for six months. I am pleased that Labor stood its ground on that and it is because of Labor that the government backed down on the measure to a certain extent, but, of course, they have not backed down quite far enough. There is still a one-month waiting period proposed for people under 25. It concerns me that the government really has no idea what this will mean for young people. Young people will have no income support whilst they are supposed to be out there looking for work and they will be required to undertake work-seeking activities without receiving any payment. I do not think government members understand how it is possible to maintain yourself, to make yourself presentable, to go along for job interviews, to meet prospective employers or to enrol yourself in training, to get to appointments, to catch public transport to get to interviews, when you actually have zero income for a month—zero, nothing to eat, nothing to live on, no income.

What on earth are young people under 25 supposed to survive on? We have not heard anything from members opposite about how this is to be addressed. We did hear that with the previous the under-30 measure that some non-government NGOs had been given some more emergency relief money for this, but since then a lot of the emergency relief funding has been cut by the government and so a lot of these non-government organisations, which would ordinarily support to families and others without income, can no longer do so.

There are many young people to whom this measure will apply, and you have to wonder why the government would be introducing it. What is the government's motivation? We have been calling on them for some time to do something about rising youth unemployment, which in some parts of regional Australia should be very concerning for all of us. As a Tasmanian, I know there are regions in Tasmania where the unemployment rate is sadly well over 20 per cent and it is expected to continue to rise in the coming years to around 30 per cent. That high rate is quite shocking. Tasmania's south-east, north-west and north are all areas of high youth unemployment. The question, as I have said, is: what is the government's commitment to young people who are currently unemployed?

We did finally see some measures after we called on the government to do something in the last budget. I have said in this place on a number of occasions that we were pleased to see some measures, but sadly there is no new money in these measures. The organisations the government is talking about partnering with to support young unemployed people are the same organisations that do not support this waiting measure and did not support it last time; these organisations know the impact that it will have on young people and job seekers. They know that these people will not be able to be job ready and will not be able to meet their obligations if they are receiving no income for a month—no income for a month.

I just do not know how those opposite, if they are thinking rationally, can think that this is a good idea. If they are really serious about addressing youth unemployment—and I think that some of those on the other side in this place are, because they understand what it is doing, particularly to regional Australia—how can this policy be consistent with that? How can it
possibly be? There is no way that this is consistent with tackling youth unemployment. There is no way the government can possibly be serious about it.

As we have heard from previous speakers, the government has also been cutting money to apprenticeships and traineeships, about $1 billion now. We have had revelations today about the government perhaps walking away from vocational education and TAFE training altogether. In addition, as the previous speaker, the member for Makin, pointed out, we have a lot of training organisations preying on vulnerable young people and getting them to sign up to VET FEE-HELP loans without them understanding quite what they are. So, there are some really serious issues out there in areas of high youth unemployment, where people need support and assistance from government and from community organisations which should be appropriately funded to deal with that.

The last federal budget indicated that the unemployment rate in this country would go up to a 14-year high of around 6½ per cent. If you look at unemployment in Australia at the moment, there are around 800,000 to 900,000 job seekers, and there are about 150,000 vacancies at any one time. Clearly, when you 'do the math', there are not enough vacancies for everybody who wants to work or is looking for work to be able to take up a job. What we need to see from the government is job creation. The government need to have a jobs plan. They say that the small business measure is essentially their jobs plan, but I've got news for them: it needs to be more than that. There needs to be a jobs plan and it needs to deal with removing the barriers to work and the disadvantages that some job seekers have and to deal with the education system—with universities, TAFE and vocational funding. It is a very complex issue that requires thoughtful, detailed answers.

The government needs to sit down and make a proper jobs plan that will be effective, will work, and that targets all those different areas, looking at what is required and what levers the federal government has available to it to deal with this, because we are not going to see the unemployment rate drop. It will hover around where it is unless the government takes this issue seriously and actually has a job creation plan.

We cannot continue to come into this place to argue about what are essentially savings measures in the budget. These measures are not about getting people jobs. They are not about encouraging young people to go out and seek employment. They do not do that and they will not do that. All this government is doing with this bill is pushing young people into a cycle of poverty that they will be unable to get out of. That is all that it will do. It has the potential to put young people in a cycle of poverty, with no income support at all, as I keep reiterating—no income support at all: nothing for people to live on for months, nothing with which to pay their bills, nothing with which to buy food and nothing with which to pay for accommodation.

I do not see how this is fair. I do not understand how members opposite can continue to come in here and defend this bill. I do not know how they can possibly defend it. It really is an abandonment of young people by the government. It is really showing the unfairness of this government, and the unfairness of this budget and the previous budget. It is showing that the government do not care about young people in our community. They say they do, they had the youth unemployment measure in the budget, but we know the truth and young people know the truth—that, if the government were serious about youth unemployment, they would not have put those measures in this bill.
The bill has about $1 billion in savings over the forward estimates. That is $1 billion that could be in the pockets of unemployed people, to pay for their food and for their shelter. My question to the government remains: how are people going to be able to pay for these things? Who is going to pay? How are these young people going to pay for their food, how are they going to pay for the bus fare to go to a job interview, how are they going to pay their rent when it falls due if they are not receiving any money? I really do not understand why government members cannot comprehend this. How do you pay for these things when you are not receiving a cent? It is not that complicated.

I am just astounded—and you probably get that, Mr Deputy Speaker Mitchell, from the way that I am talking. I am astounded that we are in this place again looking at measures similar to those we stopped the government implementing last budget, and they do not appear to have learnt very much. They have come back with what is, I guess, an improvement, as I have said, but not much of an improvement at all. You have to wonder what it is going to take for the government to actually listen. What is going to take for the government to listen? How many times are we going to have to knock down punitive measures targeted at job seekers instead of welcoming a job creation plan from the government? How many times are we all going to have to stand up and knock back, speak against, this type of legislation that increases penalties for job seekers?

In my portfolios, I have had to stand up here many times and address punitive measures for job seekers, where the government is trying to ask more of job seekers and penalise them more. This bill does that, again. It will penalise young people. I am not sure whether the minister and/or the government have in fact looked at how this will interact with other measures, as I talked about, such as the cuts to emergency relief funding; the removal of some of the housing measures, with homelessness and housing affordability being such issues; and the cuts made to community service organisations that would ordinarily help people who do not receive an income of any sort or any support from government.

I do not think the government have thought this through very well at all. It appears that, in their last budget, they simply went hunting for savings. They identified that they could cut off payments to people and that that might make savings and also motivate young people to go out there and get themselves a job. But, as I have clearly outlined, the jobs are not there—and nothing the government are doing will create more jobs and more job vacancies.

That is the fundamental difference between this side of the House and that side of the House. We believe that governments have a role to play when it comes to job creation in this country. We believe that governments have levers available to them to go out there and to support industry, to support business, to support small business and to do other things in the community that generate employment, but also to invest in education and to invest in TAFE and vocational education.

Today is national TAFE day. As I said earlier, we have seen the green paper and other documents today that say that the government might take away vocational education and/or TAFE funding from states. This is just appalling. I have had people come and see me today about the importance of skills. Having been a TAFE-educated individual myself, I understand the wonderful role that TAFEs play in our community. The government really does need to look at the whole thing in terms of vocational training and education, higher education and job creation, and come up with a proper plan to deal with unemployment. The government's
own budget has unemployment going up to 6.5 per cent—a 14 year high. We have youth unemployment rising right around the country, particularly in regional areas and particularly in my home state. I know that many people in regional South Australia—and South Australians in this place—are also very concerned about their unemployment figures.

The attitude of the federal government appears to be: 'Hands off. Not our problem. It's the problem of the states when it comes to funding education. It's the problem of the states when it comes to dealing with employment issues.' That is simply not good enough. It is not a good enough for a federal government who is saying, on the one hand, that it wants to do something to support small businesses to hire people and is saying that it cares about youth unemployment, to then not look at this issue in a holistic way. It is not actually looking at all the different things that do need to be addressed so that we can address unemployment in this country—particularly youth unemployment—properly.

I am proud to be opposing this bill. I am proud to come in here, and I will keep doing it. I will keep coming in here and standing up for young Australians, who are out there and who want to have a go. They are being stopped from having a go by this government who wants to take away money from them at every single opportunity. The government does not seem to want to let up.

Mr RIPOLL (Oxley) (12:39): The Social Services Legislation Amendment (Youth Employment and Other Measures) Bill 2015 is a disgraceful bill. This is a bill that does nothing more than hurt young people, and it is particularly targeting young people that are employed. This bill does nothing to create jobs. It does nothing to invest in skills. It does nothing to invest in the economy or the future of our young people. This is a mean-spirited, punitive bill designed purely to save a few dollars for the government.

This bill introduces a range of social services measures from the 2015 budget that relate to youth allowance and Newstart for young people. It does a range of things from applying a one-week waiting period to all working age payments, excluding the widow allowance, to requiring young people under the age of 25 to wait four weeks prior to receiving any income support. This measure, of course, is bad enough on its own, but it is a revision from the 2014-15 budget measure that required young people that were under 30 years of age to actively seek work for six months prior to receiving any income support payments at all. This government wanted young people under 30 to not receive any assistance at all and basically go without a dollar for six months if they could not find a job.

We all want people to be actively out there searching for work and looking for work, and young people are doing that, and there should be assistance to do that. The reality is, though, that unemployment numbers for young people are really high because there just are not the jobs there for them. The solution to helping young people get into work is not punishing them. The solution for helping young people get into work is to bolster the economy, and work on a whole range of programs that build their skills and make sure that they are educated and qualified enough to find the jobs that are there. Of course, there are always going to be those who, for periods of time, will not be able to find a job. To punish them for that with the harsh measures that are contained here is reprehensible. This is a government that really has no sense of what it takes to actually work through an economy that has people in it—the people in our economy.
The bill before us is extremely harsh and extremely damaging, and it does nothing to lift the stocks of our country. The youth unemployment rate is currently very high at 13½ per cent—well over double the general unemployment rate, which is now at six per cent. Before the election, when Labor was in government, I recall that unemployment had a five in front of it. Now that the Liberals are in government, it has a six in front of it. It was too high under Labor at five, and it is way too high under the Liberals at six and rising. That is the reality that we face. The answer that the Liberal Party and the Liberal government put forward is to punish people. Their answer to youth unemployment is to punish young people. If you are young person who is out of work—not that you are not looking, not that you are not trying, not that you are not finishing school, going to TAFE, getting qualifications and going to university—and if, even after all of those efforts, you are unable to find work then the government will punish you, and they will punish you quite severely. You will be punished. You will be punished by losing any opportunity to receive any payments whatsoever from this Liberal government.

The government will force young people to borrow, beg and in some cases—I dare the thought—steal. That is what this amounts to. We do not live in the sort of world in Australia where we force young people—or anybody else, in such a harsh world where they have no options left to them—to beg, borrow or steal. That is what this bill should have been called: 'Beg, Borrow or Steal'. Young people, regardless of their efforts, regardless of how hard they try, are going to be sent a very clear signal from this unthinking, unkind and very harsh government.

There are about 281,000 young people who are currently unemployed. So that is more than a quarter of a million young people that are currently unemployed. They are looking for work, but the jobs do not just appear. We have really high unemployment rates. The rate for the general population is more than six per cent and climbing; if you are a young person, it is more than double that and not looking good at all. The worst part, though, is that in some parts of this country that figure is much higher. I know for a fact that in my electorate of Oxley, between Brisbane and Ipswich, youth unemployment is a serious issue. I know that with my neighbour Shayne Neumann in Blair unemployment is way too high. I know that in parts of Sydney, Melbourne, Adelaide and Perth—and particularly in regional and rural areas—it is way too high. This is a really harsh act on rural and regional centres. We in this place all understand that it is exceptionally difficult for anyone, let alone for young people, to find work in some of those rural and regional areas. In fact, an option for most young people in some of those rural settings is to go to the big capital centres where there is more opportunity.

Rather than come up with some solutions and some programs to help farming communities and small business employ young people and keep people in those rural and regional communities the government have said they are going to do the opposite. The Liberal government say: 'We are going to punish you. We are going to force you out of those communities. We are going to make you look for work in other areas.' This will further exacerbate the difficulty that rural and regional farming communities have. I wonder how many of those communities will be asking their representatives in the Liberal and National parties what they are doing about that and why they are driving more young people out of those communities.
It is beyond belief that this government would make people who are unable to find a job suffer for weeks and months at a time with nothing—no assistance, nothing at all. This is the beg, borrow or steal bill. We have many really severe youth problems in the country. I have seen tears on the other side when we hear of some youth problems in country areas and around rural and regional communities—‘What can we possibly do about it?’ I will tell you what we should not do: we should not pass this bill. That would be a good start. I do not know that there would be too many farming families who would look at this bill and think it was a good idea for their kids and people in rural towns. Youth unemployment in some rural areas is two or three times higher than this, so how does this help their town and their community? The simple answer to that question: it just does not. This is a punitive, mean, nasty method by which the government will save a few dollars. The government calls it 'savings' but of course a young person would see this in a very different light.

A range of very well respected groups around the country have come out and said they are appalled by what the government is doing. The National Welfare Rights Network said that the one-month waiting period:

… will place young people in severe financial hardship, leaving them without food, medicines, money for job search and rent. No income means no income—whether it’s for six months or four weeks. There is no place in our social security system for such a harmful approach. The Parliament should reject this plan outright.

I agree: we should just reject this outright. I do not see how we are going to help young people find work when they do not have any money to get on a bus to look for a job or any money to get on a train to turn up at an interview. If they cannot manage to do that then of course the government are going to punish them even further. They will say, 'Because you did not turn up we are going to punish you even more.' This is the response you get from the Liberal and National parties. This is how they deal with issues. You are punished by the government because you cannot find a job in a very difficult employment market. They will punish you. If you have got no money and are living on the street but can get there on time, you may not get that job because you cannot have a shower in the morning. If after applying for 150 jobs you are exasperated and turn to other things, then this government will punish you again. They will punish you severely.

What is the key message that the Liberal and National parties are sending to rural and regional farming communities and families out in the bush, where it is the toughest? That is where it is the toughest. As tough as it is in Sydney, in Brisbane and in the capital centres, there is actually more opportunity. If you live in a farming community that is where it really hurts. Why does the National Party in particular see this as a really good solution? It is a solution to what? Punishing young people for something that is not their fault.

If as part of this bill the Liberal and National parties actually said that they were going to counter this punishment by providing more TAFE courses, more funding for skills, more training and more job opportunities then you might think that at least there is some balance to their punishment, but there is not. In other areas and in other bills they are taking more money out. Only just this week we heard that the government are looking at options—remember this—to make every family pay again for public education. We all pay for public education, but they want families to pay again. They want to means test families—and 'mean' is the
correct word here; they are very mean. They want to keep making families pay more and punish them on the way. This is an unbelievable bill.

If at the same time they mete this punishment out to young people there were some glimmer of hope that they were working hard on restoring the economy so unemployment comes down, you would go, 'Maybe there is some balance here,' but there just is not. Before the election there was a debt and deficit crisis. We heard 'debt and deficit' and 'debt and deficit'. Tony Abbott called the fire truck. He turned up with a fuel canister and kept pumping fuel all over the fire and making it worse. Back then there was an emergency—a $17 billion deficit. That was the end of the world. Guess what it is today? It is not less; it is more. How much more? Is it $1 billion or $2 billion more? No. They doubled it. The economic geniuses in the Liberal and National parties took it from $17 billion to $35 billion. Anyone who thinks I am making that up should grab the budget papers and have a read for themselves. It is in their own budget papers.

If that was not bad enough, with their fantastic economic management they doubled the deficit. They are punishing young people. Unemployment is going up. Unemployment under this Liberal and National government goes in only one direction—up. There are more people unemployed. What did they do with the debt that was crippling our economy? Maybe they should start turning the debt down. You would expect there to be less debt. That would be the expectation. I am sure the people in the gallery are thinking, 'Of course, that is what they would do.' No, they did not. They put more debt on. In fact, just in the last budget that Joe Hockey put forward—not the first budget—he added an extra $35 billion of debt. There is another $35 billion. Where are they getting the money for that? They must be borrowing the money. This is a big-borrowing and big-spending government. They spend big but not in the areas that count, not in the areas where we should be getting some help. So they double the deficit, adding more to debt. Unemployment is going up. They want to put a tax on education—they want families to pay not once but twice, with a means test; they will say to all those communities out in rural and regional areas, 'You have got to pay again'. When it comes to TAFE, what do they do? They make it harder for the states to provide good-quality courses and trades training. What did they do with the apprenticeship trades training tools allowance that Labor put in place? They took it away—they want to make it harder for apprentices. Tony's tradies must be looking at this and saying, 'Please stop helping us.' If you are one of Tony's tradies, you must be exasperated with the help that you are getting.

In the next decade or so we are going to be short about 100,000 people with skills in science, technology, engineering and all those areas where Australia has a competitive advantage—where our small business community might actually be able to compete with the rest of the world and move forward. What does this government do with skills training? It defunds just about every skills program that the former government had put in place. When Labor say that we think it is important that kids learn coding at school and when we encourage young people to go into the sciences and to learn about mathematics and engineering, they think it is a joke—and in fact they were deriding our policies in this area. I do not think students think it is a joke, because that is where the jobs of the future are. In fact, the future is so close that it is right in front of you; that is how close the future is.

Ask any family what they want for their kids, ask teachers what they want their students to learn and ask people where they think the jobs of the future are—ask them. You will not get
the answers from a Liberal or National government. In answer to all of these complex questions that we have before us in our economy—the challenges of people getting a job, of young people getting into science, technology, engineering and mathematics, all of those areas—what is the solution that the Liberal and National parties put forward? More punitive measures to punish young people, more cuts to programs, fewer services, fewer skills, less training, less of everything. At the same time, they expect that somehow this will magically help those unemployment numbers. I am still waiting; I think that in another six months I will still be waiting to see if any of those numbers improve, but I very much doubt that they will.

Mr KELVIN THOMSON (Wills) (12:54): We have a discussion in this place from time to time about the issue of intergenerational equity, and I think this is a really important issue. I am very concerned that this generation has been letting young people down in all sorts of areas, whether it is housing affordability, the cost of education, or employment prospects. Young people are currently experiencing very difficult economic, employment and social circumstances. I believe that it is a fundamental responsibility and function of any government to help nurture, support and guide our young people to lead happy, productive and fulfilling lives. However, since being elected this Liberal government has been more than happy to take the axe to the support and resources that previous governments have provided for young people, and we have seen youth unemployment levels on the rise.

The measures in the Social Services Legislation Amendment (Youth Employment and Other Measures) Bill 2015 continue the Liberal government’s attacks on young Australians by seeking to introduce a one-month wait period for Newstart allowance. This bill leaves young job seekers under 25 with nothing to live on for a month. It represents an abandonment of young Australians by this government. Labor will oppose this cut to young Australians, just as we opposed last year’s attempt to leave young job seekers with nothing to live on for six months. Whether it is one month or six, Labor will not support a measure which pushes young people into poverty and hardship. How does the government honestly expect people to live during such a period? How do they buy food, pay the rent, pay for the train fare, maintain their dignity—pay to travel or dress for job interviews and the like?

This bill also seeks to change the eligibility age for Newstart, pushing job seekers between the age of 22 and 24 onto the lower youth allowance. This is a cut of around $48 a week or almost $2,500 a year. That is a very significant amount of money, particularly for a young person. Therefore, this bill has the potential to lock young people into a cycle of no income support at all, pushing many young job seekers into poverty and homelessness, with the prospect of mental health problems and quite possibly drugs and crime. It is not just Labor that thinks that this measure is cruel and unfair. Major welfare organisations right across the country have condemned the policy. The National Welfare Rights Network said that the one-month wait period:

…will place young people in severe financial hardship, leaving them without food, medicines, money for job search and rent. No income means no income — whether it's for six months or four weeks. There is no place in our social security system for such a harmful approach. The Parliament should reject this plan outright.

John Falzon, the CEO of St Vincent de Paul, said:

This change is a clear admission of the cruelty of this measure without actually abandoning it.

ACOSS said:
The government now proposes to reduce the six month wait for unemployment payments for young people to one month, yet neither policy has been justified, especially at a time when unemployment is rising.

Back in February, I held a Wills Youth Issues Forum, which was attended by many social service providers, employment networks and local community leaders. People at that forum expressed very serious concerns about the approach being taken by the federal government on the question of addressing youth unemployment and social welfare issues. With unemployment forecast to rise to 6.5 per cent, staying high longer than previously estimated, this type of harsh measure is unfair and bad for the economy. Since the federal election in 2013 the unemployment queue has grown by 56,500 more people, bringing the total number of unemployed people to 745,000 on this government's watch. According to the Department of Employment's March 2015 report, since Labor left office, unemployment in my electorate of Wills has increased from 6.1 per cent in September 2013 to 6.7 per cent in March 2015. In Brunswick, unemployment rose from eight per cent in September 2013 to 8.5 per cent in March this year; in Brunswick East, it increased from 5.7 per cent to 6.4 per cent; in Brunswick West, from 7.5 per cent to 9.1 per cent; in Coburg, from 8.5 per cent to 8.9 per cent; in Coburg North, from 5.8 per cent to 7.6 per cent; in Fawkner, from 7.8 per cent to 8.2 per cent; in Fitzroy North, from 6.1 per cent to 6.4 per cent; and across Glenroy and Hadfield it increased from 6.4 per cent to 7.2 per cent. In Pascoe Vale South it rose slightly, from 5.4 per cent to 5.6 per cent; and in Strathmore it rose from two per cent to 2.1 per cent. This is a pattern right across the electorate of increasing unemployment. Indeed, unemployment in Broadmeadows, just to the north of my electorate—an area with which you are personally familiar, Mr Deputy Speaker Mitchell—unemployment has risen from 21.9 per cent to 23.5 per cent. Really, that is a terrible result. The level of unemployment just to the north is really in Spanish or Greek terms.

Right across the nation, long-term unemployment is at its highest rate in 16 years. Yet, in the context of such high unemployment levels, the Liberal government wants to make it harder for people not only to get a job but also to make ends meet when they do not have a job. This is harsh and insensitive to young people who are experiencing very difficult economic and employment circumstances at the moment.

Youth unemployment is around the highest level since 1998. Young people accounted for 29.8 per cent of the long-term unemployed pool in February 2015—well above the 22.5 per cent recorded in September 2008—and youth unemployment in Melbourne's northern suburbs, as of April, is at its highest level since the 1990s, at more than 14 per cent. According to the Brotherhood of St Laurence, the number of young people facing long-term unemployment in Australia has tripled since the global financial crisis. In 2008, there were 19,500 long-term unemployed young people aged between 15 and 24; but now that has risen to over 56,000.

In response to these growing community concerns about rising unemployment and youth unemployment levels, I will be hosting a Wills unemployment forum next week, on 30 June, at the Coburg Concert Hall from 7 pm. I believe that providing people with sustainable job opportunities is fundamental to building a prosperous, socially resilient and happier community. The fact that we have seen economic conditions deteriorate and employment opportunities diminish is a matter of real concern in my community. I am committed to reducing unemployment for local people and I intend for this forum to provide a platform for
discussion, ideas and solutions. I will be bringing together a panel of experts to discuss and identify solutions to address the economic and social issues associated with unemployment and how we as a community can reduce unemployment for our residents. Members of the panel will be: the Hon. Brendan O'Connor, the federal shadow minister for employment, who is well known in this place; Councillor Meghan Hopper, the Mayor of Moreland; Melanie Raymond, the Chair of Youth Projects Ltd; David Kennedy, the Executive Director of the Inner Northern Local Learning & Employment Network; Professor Eoin Killackey from Orygen; Nik Filips from the Salvation Army Crossroads program; and Tony Coppola, from the Northern Melbourne Regional Development Australia Committee. I would imagine, Mr Deputy Speaker Mitchell, you are familiar with Tony. He is very well known in Melbourne's northern suburbs and has a long history in terms of promoting employment growth and industry growth in the north of Melbourne.

I look forward to reporting the outcomes of the Wills unemployment forum to the House, just as I have done previously with the Wills youth issues forum. When you mention people like Tony Coppola, it brings to mind the importance and significance of manufacturing in providing jobs for young people in my electorate of Wills and in neighbouring electorates around Melbourne. The National Institute of Economic and Industry Research modelled the prospective impacts on unemployment following closure of automotive manufacturing as far back as 2010. They developed models which gave estimates for the loss of jobs as a result of the closure of a major automotive manufacturing firm. At the time there was not an indication that that would actually happen, and the exercise was undertaken to demonstrate just how important the presence of Ford was to the regional economy of northern Melbourne. But, sadly, this scenario is now a reality. Under the scenario, Geelong residents, given their high level of employment capture locally, faced the greatest impact. For Hume the reduction in resident jobs was around 2,000 positions in the fourth year of closure. For Whittlesea, the peak was also reached after four years, with the best part of 1,000 fewer resident employment positions, and for the city of Moreland after four years they estimated more than 700 fewer positions.

The strategic issue is that the impact of the closure is long term, with regional economies struggling to replace the jobs lost. The issue is even more complex in that replacing jobs is one thing but replacing jobs with equivalent positions, in terms of skills and salaries, is quite another. The National Institute of Economic and Industry Research concluded that retrenched workers with lower qualifications would find it hardest to find equivalent employment and that the lowest-skilled workers would be stranded in casual work or long-term structural unemployment, particularly in Hume and in Whittlesea. So we face very serious unemployment issues in the northern suburbs, both the issues that we have right now and the issues that we have in prospect with the automotive industry being relocated. Kate Carnell, who is the CEO of ACCI, said that:

... unless the youth unemployment issue is addressed—and it will need to be addressed quite aggressively ... we will end up with a generation of young people on the fringes of the economy.

I think that is absolutely right.

I mentioned before the Inner Northern Local Learning and Employment Network. It is an independent local community organisation that has been undertaking important work, creating and implementing strategies to support young people across Moreland, Darebin and Yarra. I
want to take this opportunity to commend their work. They have found that Melbourne's northern region has significant disadvantage and high levels of youth unemployment between the ages of 15 and 24. They say that to tackle youth unemployment we need concerted action from stakeholders across multiple fronts. They have brokered the establishment of the Youth Employment Taskforce, a group of key leaders that will drive the development of a comprehensive strategy. They have 30 cross-sector members with representation from local leaders from business, local government, schools, educators, TAFE and university.

David Kennedy, the chair of the taskforce states:

We need to support young people to develop the skills and attributes required in the 21st century workplace, this is everyone's responsibility and must be seen as a priority by our whole community or else we will have a lost generation of young people.

The local youth employment strategy has been developed by a very broad coalition, recognising that young people in this region are finding it increasingly difficult to gain entry to the labour market and, as a result, unemployment and under-employment are increasing at a significant rate.

I mentioned earlier the Wills Youth Issues Forum that I held earlier this year. It dealt with some of the serious issues on the sharp end—things like the drug ice, alcohol, crime, mental health, homelessness and unemployment. I think everyone at that forum understood how important employment is in tackling those social problems and everyone understood how important education is in enabling people to achieve jobs. So we need to have a focus in this country on education, on manufacturing and on employment, because these are the things that will help solve our problems—not the bill before the House.

Mr MORRISON (Cook—Minister for Social Services) (13:09): I thank members for their contribution to this debate. The Social Services Legislation Amendment (Youth Employment and Other Measures) Bill 2015 will introduce four 2015 budget measures in the Social Services portfolio, along with certain other measures from the 2014 budget and earlier fiscal decisions. The 2015 budget measures incorporate the reintroduction with modifications or the replacement of three 2014 budget measures introduced previously.

From 1 July 2015, the one-week ordinary waiting period currently applying to Newstart Allowance and Sickness Allowance will be extended to Youth Allowance (other) and the Parenting Payment. This bill is amending last year's budget measure so that the Widow Allowance claimants will not be affected by the measure.

From a delayed start of 1 July 2016, the age of eligibility for Newstart Allowance and Sickness Allowance will be increased from 22 to 25. Young people between the ages of 22 and 25 may apply for Youth Allowance instead. Young people aged 22 to 24 in receipt of Newstart Allowance or Sickness Allowance before or on 30 June 2016 will not be affected and will remain on the higher Newstart or Sickness Allowance rates. Further, the 2015 budget measure in the bill will cease the Low Income Supplement from 1 July 2017.

The bill will also take the opportunity to introduce some amendments relating to indexation that are currently before the Senate. The first of these indexation amendments will maintain at level for three years the income-free areas for all working age allowances, other than student payments and for Parenting Payment (single) from the existing start date of 1 July 2015. The second will maintain at level for three years the income-free areas and other means test
thresholds for student payments, including the student Income Bank limits with a new start date of 1 January 2016. The 2014 budget measure Stronger Participation Incentives for Job Seekers under 30, which sought to introduce a six-month waiting period for under 30s applying for Newstart Allowance, Youth Allowance or Special Benefit, will no longer be implemented. Instead, the bill introduces a four-week waiting period for under 25s applying for Youth Allowance (other) or Special Benefit—and I should stress—for those who are job ready. The measure will start from 1 July 2016 and will only apply to job seekers assessed as job ready.

Job seekers affected by this measure will also participate in rapid activation pre-benefit activities to ensure that they are looking for work. This measure includes a long list of exemptions—exemptions that are conveniently ignored by those who oppose this measure in seeking to create concern amongst vulnerable people in the community. This is becoming the sort of rote response from the opposition when it comes to measures put forward by the government—scare campaign after scare campaign, misrepresenting and misleading vulnerable people and taking advantage of them for their own political interests. It is quite disgraceful. These new measures are the basis of listening to the Australian people on earlier measures introduced. They bring back measures which are far more modest in their ambitions but, importantly, reflect the consultation that has been conducted over the course of the last year.

The exemptions are many in this bill in terms of the four-week waiting period for under 25s. If someone has already served a four-week waiting period in the last six months, they will not have to serve another if that job ends through no fault of their own. I heard members opposite talking about someone going to another place and getting a job and in seeking that job they may have already served that four-week waiting period. If that job does not work out, they do not have to serve another waiting period within that same six months. It is an absurdity to suggest otherwise. That is not what is proposed in the bill. What happens in these cases is that, if they have done exactly what we have asked them to do, they will go onto the Youth Allowance payment. If someone has a disability or an activity test exemption—for example, they are pregnant and are in the last six weeks of their pregnancy—they will not have to serve the waiting period.

The measure will not impact job seekers who have left state care within the last 12 months. I will make sure that only youth aged 16 to 25 will have to serve the waiting period. There are some cases where a person under 16 can be on the Special Benefit. These measures apply to job ready Australians, young people. We are going to introduce regulation to include further exemptions that I have made absolutely clear over the course of this debate outside of this place. Former carers or people with a disability are exempted. Those recently released from prison or psychiatric facilities are exempted. Young people who are unable to live at home will not be subject to these measures.

This measure is not stand-alone. We have also invested in employment and education supports for young people under 25. We have made $8.1 million available in emergency relief funding to provide assistance to job seekers affected by this measure who are experiencing hardship. But not only have we listened and reversed the previous measure, at a cost of some $1.8 billion; we have invested more than $330 million in jobs programs for young people. The savings measure that results from this change is only $200 million. This is not about
savings. This is about a fairer system. This is about a system that encourages young people to choose a life of work and not a life of welfare.

The funding that we talk about through emergency relief providers or others, or those involved through the jobactive network, will be there to support young people and encourage them into work. We have invested $18.3 million in work experience places, which will provide on-the-job experience and connection to an employer. We are running intensive support trials for vulnerable job seekers—some $55.2 million. We are providing new support for youth with mental health conditions—some $19.4 million. For vulnerable young migrants and refugees, we are providing some $22.1 million. And we are continuing to support parents to prepare for employment, with around $8.9 million.

I noted in the debate that those opposite talked about the issue of young people who may fall victim to homelessness. I found this interesting, because it was the previous government that did not provide for the National Partnership Agreement on Homelessness. When we went looking for the funding that would continue to provide support to the states to assist people with homelessness, the cupboard was bare. Zero was the amount that was allocated by the previous government for the National Partnership Agreement on Homelessness in this budget year we are moving into—absolutely zero. So, as a new measure that had to be funded by savings that this government has been prepared to put through, we were able to commit a further two years to the National Partnership Agreement on Homelessness. And we are not just going to shovel the money out the door to the states like the previous government did. We are insisting that they give priority to two important issues: family and domestic violence and youth homelessness. They are the two things they have to deal with. There is $230 million to the states to provide support in those areas.

This measure will save $200 million by introducing a four-week waiting period for youth under 25, and it will cost $375 million in additional support services for young job seekers. This measure replaces the under 30s measure contained in the 2014-15 budget. The total cost of that reversal is $1.8 billion. We are taking measures to ensure that young job seekers accept any suitable job, not just the job that they would like to have. Unemployment benefits are for those who are looking for work and struggling to find work. We think this is a very fair and targeted measure. We do not believe—as those opposite seem to, in their ideological opposition to this measure—in running a shuttle from the school gate to the Centrelink office front door, what you could call the 'Shorten shuttle'. We do not believe in running the Shorten shuttle from the front gate of the school to the front door of Centrelink. It is not something we support. We believe young people should be choosing a life of work, not choosing a career of welfare. That is why we are making the changes we are. The position of those opposite is purely driven by ideology. It would not matter how we changed these measures; they always think that everybody is entitled to welfare.

Debate adjourned.

BUSINESS
Rearrangement

Mr TUDGE (Aston—Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister) (13:19): I move:

That business intervening before order of the day No. 11, government business, be postponed until a later hour this day.
Question agreed to.

MOTIONS

Centenary of Anzac

Debate resumed on the motion:
That this House:
(1) acknowledge that the 25th of April 2015 marked 100 years since Australian and New Zealand troops landed at Gallipoli;
(2) pay its respects to the 60,000 Australians who fought in the Gallipoli campaign, the nearly 9,000 who died, the 20,000 who were wounded and the thousands more who carried the unseen scars for the rest of their lives;
(3) remember the brave soldiers of Great Britain, France, India and Newfoundland who fought alongside the ANZACS 100 years ago;
(4) note that on the 25th of April, solemn services of remembrance were conducted at Anzac Cove and at Lone Pine in Turkey, attended by some 8,000 Australians, including the widows of Australian veterans;
(5) extend its thanks to the people and the Government of Turkey for their support of the centenary commemorations and their ongoing and faithful care of the Gallipoli battlefields; and
(6) note that on Anzac Day, millions of our fellow Australians gathered to remember the ANZACs and all those who have worn our uniform and served in the name of Australia, and that the people of every electorate represented in this Parliament have honoured this milestone, the Centenary of the landings at Gallipoli.

Mr MORRISON (Cook—Minister for Social Services) (13:19): It is a great privilege for all members of this House to be able to participate in this debate on behalf of all our electorates around the country and to ensure that, for all time, the commemorations that took place on that date form part of our nation’s permanent record—not just in this place, on Hansard, but also through the Australian War Memorial. I thank the War Memorial board and Dr Nelson for allowing such a fitting remembrance to be there for future generations.

Let the kings pass, and shallow pomp retreat,
This is the day of men greater than kings!
For them the drums of time shall ever beat,
And at their tomb death stands with fallen wings.

... ...

Though in the eyes of grief may brim the tears,
Above grief stands a pride tears cannot drown.

These are the words of Dame Mary Gilmore, my great-aunt. On the day of the centenary commemoration of Anzac, I had the opportunity to read those words at the community commemorative service held at Cronulla Beach's natural amphitheatre. Our Shire community turned out on that day to dawn remembrance services in unprecedented numbers at Caringbah, Sutherland, Miranda and Cronulla, as they did all around the country. Caringbah RSL Sub-Branch started their service and march at 4.30, as they always do. The sub-branch reported double its usual crowd. Caringbah High School Captain Stephanie Sambudjo gave a moving address, and the service was accompanied with a pipe band. Thousands of people
attended a wreath-laying service at the Eton Street Memorial in Sutherland. At the Miranda War Memorial, their crowds were double those of previous years, and it is estimated some 10,000 families and residents attended on that day. Eleven-year-old Charlotte Guest of Yowie Bay Public School spoke with a confidence, wisdom and understanding well beyond her years. She said:

By honouring them does not mean we are glorifying war. Anzac Day is not the day for political grandstanding or to present those who object to war with the occasion to protest. As Sir General Cosgrove stated "the soldier, above all other people prays for peace, for he must suffer and bear the deepest wounds and scars of war."

The Miranda RSL Sub Branch have expressed to me their gratitude to the community for coming in droves to remember the serving and the fallen and to the Sutherland Shire Council for the assistance they gave in providing an enhanced sound system to meet the needs of the increased crowd. Cronulla RSL Sub Branch recognised the need for a much larger venue and they moved from the usual location where the memorial is posited and settled on the majestic setting of Cronulla Beach that morning, where the sun would rise symbolically upon the waters of Bate Bay. Having attended the Cenotaph early that morning on behalf of the Prime Minister, it was a great privilege to return to my own community to join all of those down at Cronulla Beach with my own family, as we watched the dawn rise and as we commemorated.

The Cronulla RSL Sub Branch and Sutherland Shire Council were recipients of the federal government’s Centenary of Anzac grants to support what was an extraordinary attendance down at Cronulla Beach. A cenotaph was erected with a three-metre-high white cross, adorned with a large crocheted red poppy and was secured by 250 sandbags, representative of World War I trenches. A large stage and screen had been installed for the expected crowds. Thousands of people calmly and quietly walked down to the beach standing shoulder-to-shoulder to remember and to honour those who served.

The choir from Our Lady of Mercy College, Burraneer, performed the hymns *Recessional* and *Abide with Me*.

A current serving officer of the Royal Australian Regiment, Phillip English, delivered the keynote address. On hand were 69 volunteers from Rotary Club of Cronulla to cook breakfast and lunch to feed the estimated 20,000 who attended there that morning.

Families came with blankets, chairs and picnics and set up for the morning to wait for cross to the Gallipoli Service later that day. Following the Dawn Service, Sutherland Shire Council organised a full program of events including a screening of the short film *Jack and Tom*, made by students from Miranda Public School and Port Hacking High School, which captured the hearts of all who saw it—you can look it up on YouTube. The film, with its use of the term ‘Over the top’, gave an account of two boys growing up together in our idyllic Sutherland Shire and then going off to war. In closing Tom, played by Mr Bruce Grimley, President of the Miranda RSL Sub Branch, remembers his fallen mate, Jack, at the Miranda War Memorial. The film provided the perfect segue to the Community Commemorative Service at 11 am.

Aunty Deanna Schreiber from Kurranulla Aboriginal Corporation welcomed us to country and spoke of the service of many Aboriginal people who also served our nation in the Great War. The Kurnell Public School Choir, led by Adrienne Brown, performed our national anthem. Local school and elected representatives, members of our emergency services and
other invited guests planted a handmade poppy in a field of remembrance in front of the cenotaph down in Cronulla Park.

Hundreds of commemorative poppies were knitted, crocheted and felted by people across the Sutherland Shire and, indeed, across Australia. The 431 men and women from the Sutherland Shire who served in World War I were honoured with an individual poppy and name plaque detailing their service. Their names are inscribed on our 14 local memorials and honour boards. Sadly, 64 never returned and they rest now in foreign soil. Their histories are recorded in the book Service and Sacrifice funded by the Centenary of Anzac grants and published by the Botany Bay Family History Society, which I table for the House. It has been written by Marilyn Handley and Susanne Hewitt, who have spent five years researching the stories of these men and women, whose names appear on our honour boards. We are very pleased to have that now as a permanent record of all those who served. Those names now have a story behind them for our young people and for generations into the future. I commend Susanne and Marilyn on an outstanding piece of work.

I was very proud of my Mateship Trekkers. The member for Blaxland and I have engaged in the Mateship Trekkers for many years now. The Cook Mateship Trekkers, Georgia Sargeant, Joel Eaton, Hayden Sawyer, Shae O'Dowd, Matthew Read, Mitchell Palmer, Kimberley Short, Timothy Boland and Aaron Lovell all read first-person accounts of Sutherland Shire soldiers who served. Kane Hughes read the account of Private Benjamin Cook, who took part in the Battle of Sari Bair and the Battle for Hill 60. Private Cook was an original member of the Cronulla RSL Sub Branch. Emma Cullen told the story of Private Joseph Hayes, who was also part of the assault on Hill 60. His great-granddaughter was present at the service and she, with Emma, planted a poppy in his honour.

One hundred years ago, families all across Australia were receiving the terrible news that their loved ones had been killed in action. In 2009, our community received the terrible news that Sergeant Brett Till had become our 10th soldier killed in Afghanistan. Sergeant Brett Till, a highly respected explosive ordnance disposal technician from the Incident Response Regiment in Holsworthy, was killed by an explosion that occurred during a route clearance task in Southern Afghanistan on Thursday, 19 March 2009. A brave and courageous 13-year-old Taleah Till, his daughter, delivered a poignant and heartbreaking account of her father's service and his ultimate sacrifice. Taleah was joined on stage by Bree, Brett's widow, her older brother Jacob and her younger brother Ziggy, who was unborn when Brett was killed. Together they honoured their father in a deeply moving tribute, reminding us all of the sacrifice of Anzacs from 100 years ago even to the present time.

The service concluded with the recital of the Ode for the Fallen, by the three local RSL presidents, whom I wish to thank—Warren Thomas, Shirley Smith and Bruce Grimley. Afterwards there were performances and a great community coming together. I thank in particular Sutherland Shire Council Mayor Kent Jones, as well as CEO John Rayner, Kathryn Lord, Lynn Hoyle and others for their work in bringing together this very special day, and Meredith Laverty, and my own team, Louise De Domenico and others in my office, for supporting this very special day in our nation's history and very much in our shire's history.

I want to conclude by reading a poem written by one of the young people in our community. Just before the commemoration I attended the Cronulla South Public School.
Kody Shute, a year 6 student, had written a beautiful poem which deserves to be read here in this place. He wrote:

Gallipoli, early morning,
Cold, frightened, and far away from home,
Boats heading towards beaches,
Crashing in surf and foam,
Running with bullets screaming past my head,
Mates not so lucky, falling beside me dead.
We fight for our families to be free,
We are the ANZACS and we will never flee,
Young and old fight side by side,
Back home our countries are full of pride,
100 years have passed and with a poppy and a stem,
When the sun goes down, we will remember them.
Lest we forget.

My great-aunt Dame Mary Gilmore, would be very proud of Kody Shute. He captured our feeling as poignantly as she did over her long life as a great lady of Australian letters.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: It is just on 1.30 pm and so the debate is interrupted in accordance with standing order 43. The debate may be resumed at a later hour.

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

Australian Broadcasting Corporation

Ms PARKE (Fremantle) (13:30): This morning the Parliamentary Friends of the ABC hosted a briefing by ABC Managing Director, Mark Scott, and ABC Regional Director, Fiona Reynolds, concerning the creation of a new ABC regional division ahead of its launch on 1 July. The ABC has, of course, been delivering content to and about regional Australia for 82 years, reflecting the diversity of regional Australia and sharing its many stories at a local, state and national level.

But my main purpose in talking about the ABC today is to defend it against the despicable, over-the-top attacks by News Corporation media and by senior members of the government. Tony Jones and the ABC were quick to apologise for the decision by *Q&A* producers to have Zaky Mallah as an audience member on the show this week. This is more than the government has done for its extreme negligence in the handling of the Man Haron Monis letter to the Attorney-General asking for advice regarding contacting Islamic State.

Firstly, the letter was not passed on to the police and then it was not provided to the review of the Sydney siege. And what is the government's excuse for this grave error? Because it was on the second tab of a spreadsheet. Monis was a man with known extremist views and past violent actions, who actually went on to commit terrible crimes, including murder, during the Lindt Cafe siege. Where is the government's apology for its repeated negligence in the handling of this matter? Where is the government's apology for having allowed parliament to be misled over the inclusion of the letter in the review for days longer than necessary?
I wait, without much hope, for more confected outrage from News Corp about this and other matters, such as the government having paid people smugglers to turn boats around.

**Bonner Electorate: Small Business**

Mr VASTA (Bonner) (13:31): I rise today to acknowledge the hard work of small businesses in my electorate of Bonner.

Bonner is home to over 12,317 small businesses. This is a significant portion of my constituents who either have a small business or who are employed by small businesses. This week I had the pleasure in speaking to Mr Mark Betz from Bartons Bayside car dealership in Wynnum. Mark is selling more cars than ever to small business owners, who are jumping at the opportunity to take up the instant asset write-off. Mark told me that this budget measure alone is worth around $6,000 or $7,000 to small businesses come tax time. That is real businesses, making real savings and adding to the value of their business.

Each and every day small businesses across Bonner put their own skin into the game and rely upon nothing but their own ingenuity, ideas and hard work to see a future for themselves and for their families. Measures such as the instant asset write off and the reduction in the company tax rate support business and aim to make what at times can be the risky venture of opening and operating a small business a little easier.

This government is the government for small businesses. Many of us on this side of the House understand small business because we come from small business. We understand that real, lasting jobs come from the expansion of small- and medium-sized businesses.

Once again, thank you to the small businesses in my electorate. I commend them to the House.

**Assyrian People**

Mr BOWEN (McMahon) (13:33): On many occasions in the past this House has considered the plight of the Assyrian people of Iraq and Syria and today, unfortunately, I have to rise again and update the House on their plight.

The Assyrian people, of course—Christian by religion—are the indigenous people of Iraq and Syria. They have been targeted by the cult, Daesh. Daesh has many enemies, of course, but the Assyrian people are primary amongst them. Just between June 2014 and July 2014 alone 45 Assyrian churches were destroyed. Clergy have been targeted and murdered, and many thousands of Assyrians in Mosul, the Nineveh plains, Kubu and the Al-Hasakah province have been forced to flee.

It is the case that the Assyrian people are the subject of what is an attempt by Daesh at genocide. It is important that the world not allow this to occur. This has been one of the reasons the opposition has provided bipartisan support to Australia's efforts and will continue to do so.

The Assyrian people are a great people. They have suffered continual persecution at successive hands both in Iraq and Syria. They deserve to be in the thoughts, prayers and considerations of this parliament and parliaments, congresses and democratic forums throughout the world because they are a good people who have been persecuted for far too long and they deserve not only to be in our thoughts but in our actions as well.
Mallee Electorate: Sunraysia Gang Show

Mr BROAD (Mallee) (13:34): I would just like to associate myself with the words of the shadow Treasurer. They were very wise words.

One of the great things about the people who live in the electorate of Mallee is the creativity of our young children—our young boys and girls. Over the next few weeks there is going to be a great event that will take place. It is called the 'Sunraysia Gang Show'. It is run by the Scouts and the Guides, and it builds their capacity as they present eight performances. I will be there on Saturday 4 July and really look forward to what they are going to do.

It is so important that we celebrate the arts and it is so important that we celebrate the creative ability of the young Australians that I know every member here has across their electorates. I want to pay tribute to the organisation of Scouts and the organisation of Guides as they build strong, robust and competent young citizens. I want to pay tribute to the leaders, to the volunteers, to the parents and to the production team, and I encourage people across my electorate—and more broadly, encourage people in their own electorates—to remember the creativity of our young Australians. Get along, encourage them and support them as they present things that highlight just how fantastic our communities are.

I will be there at the Sunraysia Gang Show and, if anyone wants to come to the Mallee, it is on in July and it is certainly worth a look!

National TAFE Day

Ms BRODTMANN (Canberra) (13:36): This morning I had the great pleasure of joining with the opposition leader and the shadow minister for vocational education at a visit to the Canberra Institute of Technology down in Fyshwick—which is not in Eden-Monaro! It is just down the road here in my electorate.

Today is National TAFE Day and it was fantastic to meet with really inspiring teachers and students in my electorate. I want to thank Brian, Fiona and Steve, who are the teachers and administrators there, for organising the visit. I would also like to say ‘Hi’ to the students of all ages—there were students of all ages. There was even a family group there—a father and son who are both studying motor mechanics. So thanks again to CIT TAFE for having us.

It is appalling that today of all days, National TAFE Day, that on this day, when we should be celebrating the success of vocational training, we learn that the Abbott government is seriously considering walking away from national responsibility for the vocational education and training of the future in its federation green paper. That is after the government has already cut more than $2 billion from skills and training including $1 billion from apprentices. This is just another move by a government that has absolutely no vision for this country. We should be encouraging more Australians, including mature-age Australians, to gain qualifications and keep them up to date with the skills that they need for the jobs of the future. Under Labor from 2007—(Time expired)

Green Army Program

Mr BUCHHOLZ (Wright—Chief Government Whip) (13:37): I rise to compliment the government on its vision and its direction—in particular its investment into the environment via the Green Army projects. I have no less than nine Green Army groups run throughout my area run by the PCYC groups of the Scenic Rim Council. I recently had the opportunity to
visit a particular group in the community of Canungra. They had been working in a creek bank. You can envisage grass well and truly over the top of head, inundated with a quite aggressive weed similar to a rubber vine which is a Madeira. No chemical can break this down; it has to be pulled out by hand. With the recent floods that we have had through our area, it was quite an eyesore. I compliment all of the participants of the Green Army for the amazing transformation that they have done in that creek bed in clearing it and putting steps down for a walk way. It is truly amazing. But not more an amazing transformation has been the personalities of those young people and the contribution they have made to the community. I would like to share worldwide, with the House there names: Anthony Hope, Locklen Robinson, Ridge McKay, Graham Cole-Waters, Natalie Page, Alison Neil, Travis Bryman-Mimica, Kerwin Malone, Jackson McCormick, Hayden Schwarz, Katisha Cordingley, Kieran Rice, Sheree Nicol, Stevie Lee Robinson and Sean McKay. To each of them, our community owes them a debt. *(Time expired)*

**International Aid**

Ms RYAN (Lalor—Opposition Whip) *(13:39)*: The number of out-of-school children is on the rise at the same time as financing for education is in decline worldwide, and it is no surprise that the feeling of that echoing in Australia is certainly home to me. But today I do not want to talk about education in Australia. Yesterday, I met with representatives from RESULTS Australia about the Australian government's cuts to foreign aid. We discussed the importance of targeting education assistance towards early childhood education, increasing opportunities for marginalised children to complete primary education and, indeed, for there to be a global commitment to lifelong learning for all.

Previously the foreign affairs minister has referred to education as a 'central pillar' of the aid program. In September this year, the General Assembly of the United Nations will build on the Millennium Development Goals. Goal 4 is to ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and to promote lifelong learning opportunities for all.

I met with these people and gave them an assurance that I supported these goals and that I would urge this parliament to support us joining in with these goals. I also commend to the chamber the work of the Global Partnership for Education, where former Prime Minister Julia Gillard is now board chair. I call on the government to support the Incheon Declaration and to ensure that our education funding for aid remains above 20 per cent in the overall aid budget.

**Infrastructure**

Mr WILLIAMS (Hindmarsh) *(13:41)*: South Australia is benefitting from the federal government's record spend on infrastructure. The government is investing $2 billion to build infrastructure in South Australia, including $435m for infrastructure in addition to what was previously promised by the federal Labor government. This includes $1 billion for the upgrade of the South Road—which the member for Boothby and I are fighting hard for—and also additional funding for black spot programs with a record commitment of $500 million in the budget to improve black spots. This is good news for local road projects like West Beach Road in my electorate, where the council and local residents, in particular Leon Williams, have been working together to get a good outcome. As part of this announcement, Hindmarsh received $1.2 million to ensure local roads are safer for motorists. These include projects such as Sir Donald Bradman Drive; Baggett Avenue; Brooker Terrace, Parendila; the intersection of Wainwright Street and North Parade, Torrensville; the intersection of Sherrif Street and...
Norman Street, Underdale; and finally the intersection of Holbrooks Road, Hartley Road and Beattie Street, Flinders Park, which I visited recently with Assistant Minister Briggs and the local councillors of Charles Sturt, including Mick Harley and Edgar Agius. I thank Mick and Edgar for their interest in this project and their good work in their local community. I encourage individuals and community groups to nominate black spots for consideration with the process currently open and due to close on 31 July. I close in saying that we got record infrastructure which will help motorists and help safety and help local communities. (Time expired)

Turner, Mr Stan

Ms ROWLAND (Greenway) (13:42): Since 1945, Stan Turner, the only surviving founding-member of the Transport and General Workers' Union, has campaigned in every British election. Of the heroic Attlee generation that saw in the National Health Service and the great post-war rebuild and reimagining of England, he was for twenty years secretary of the TGWU, now Unite, and for decades town councillor in Sheldon, who with his beloved wife of 72 years, Joan, produced twelve children—six boys and six girls—and over a hundred subsequent descendants, one of them Ben Turner, the Cardiff footballer. He went aggressively doorknocking in the meantime for Attlee, Gateskill, Wilson, Callahan, Foote, Kinnock, Blair, Brown and Miliband, who in 2014 gave him a dedicated award for his tireless and unstinted service to the party. He started as a wartime co-op van driver and recounts Nye Bevan as the great inspirational Labour leader of his youth. He was still undauntedly doorknocking and leafleting for Labour in May at the age of 92 and has been an enthused example to five generations. It is a pleasure for me to mention him in this House, and I also acknowledge the presence of his daughter Janice, who is with us in the gallery, Stan Turner, the undiminished local Labour hero, continues to believe in our cause to this day, and we salute you.

World War II Veterans

Dr SOUTHCOTT (Boothby) (13:43): A couple of weeks ago, I attended an event at the Brighton RSL in my electorate, organised so that members could be presented with certificates under the Australian government's Saluting Their Service commemorations program. It was a great privilege and honour for me meet the 21 veterans of the Second World War who attended, hear their stories, present them with a certificate of appreciation and thank them for their service on behalf of the Australian government.

In the room were former members of the Australian Army, the Royal Australian Navy, the Royal Australian Air Force and the Women's Auxiliary Australian Air Force. The youngest was 87, most were around 93, and they still looked in great shape. They served in New Guinea, Borneo, Timor, Morotai, India, Japan, the United Kingdom, Canada and around Australia. There were Darwin Defenders, pilots who flew Kittyhawks and rear gunners from Bomber Command. There were soldiers who served as part of the Japanese occupation forces; even a nurse who served at the Army hospital that was later to become the repatriation general hospital in my electorate. I would like to thank the Brighton RSL for organising the event, and I would like to thank those who attended—for their service and for sharing their stories with us.

At the time of the Second World War Australia had a population of seven million people; one million of those were in uniform. To know some of them has been one of the great privileges of my life.
Armstrong, Mr Leo

Mr WATTS (Gellibrand) (13:45): Earlier this week, Leo Armstrong—'Uncle Leo' to me—passed away at the age of 92. He lived a life that seemed impossibly dramatic to me as a child. Leo was a navigator in the 'G for George' Avro Lancaster Bomber on display in the Australian War Memorial.

It is hard to imagine today what it must have been like to be one of the Lancaster men—one of the most dangerous jobs in World War 2. Leo completed 32 operations from RAF Bomber Command. 'G for George' was often considered a lucky plane, returning from 89 missions from Bomber Command. However, not all were so lucky. Fully 44 per cent of all Bomber Command air crew lost their lives, and a further 10 per cent were injured or taken as prisoners of war. Of the 7,377 Lancaster bombers built, 3,932 were lost in action. We should not forget their contributions in this House.

However, Leo did survive and he lived a full life of service to his community and family. He was elected as the president of his beloved Penrith Panthers Leagues Club in 1980 and served as the club chairman for 16 years, from 1984 to 1999, including the club's first premiership in 1991. Leo was afforded life membership of the Penrith Panthers, and it was a passion he held for his whole life.

He is survived by his wife, Joan, and by many loving family members. We remember his service in this House.

La Trobe Electorate: Monash Freeway

Mr WOOD (La Trobe) (13:46): When the Labor government announced the completion of the Monash Freeway many years ago in Victoria, claiming it was built under-budget and early, they conveniently forgot to mention they cut off one lane in order to save time and money. So now we have a road unaffectionately known as 'Monash car park'. There are a number of suburbs in my electorate that have been greatly affected—including, Narre Warren, Narre Warren North, Narre Warren South, Berwick, Beaconsfield, Officer, Emerald, Cockatoo, Gembrook, Dandenong Ranges, Ferntree Gully, Upper Gully, The Basin and Boronia.

From personal experience and the feedback I have received, including on social media, the Monash Freeway is absolutely atrocious. And what is Labor's plan at the state government level? Nothing. All this is happening while Daniel Andrews has cancelled pick-ups on the VLine service from Pakenham. This goes on top of Daniel Andrews and Bill Shorten opposing the East West Link and costing Victorians $900 million. I am firmly committed to seeing the widening of the Monash Freeway, not by one land but by two lanes. That is what we need, especially around the Berwick-Beaconsfield area. We need to see the federal and state governments working together to make this happen, and that is a challenge I will take up. My big concern is that, with the western distributor, Bill Shorten and Daniel Andrews are only concerned with the western side of Melbourne and are continuing to ignore the outer eastern suburbs.

We have not given up on the East West Link. We have committed $3 billion to this. This is still on the table. (Time expired)
Indi Electorate: Leadership

Ms McGOWAN (Indi) (13:48): It gives me great pleasure to acknowledge, honour and thank all the young people in my electorate who take on leadership roles. I would particularly like to welcome to the parliament today, representatives from Galen College in Wangaratta. To Olivia, Aaron, Rebecca and Blake; and to staff, Laurie and Kirsty, I want to say: thank you for what you do.

They tell me that Galen is a great school: because of the community, because of the teachers, because of the choices in the curriculum and, most importantly, because of the opportunities it offers, including opportunities to volunteer. For example, there are opportunities to volunteer in Santa Teresa, Central Australia; opportunities to go to East Timor; opportunities locally to be part of the 'care van'; opportunities to go on exchange to Italy opportunities to be part of building an arts and cultural community in Wangaratta. I am told that last night Galen ran a talent contest 'Anything goes', where Blake was the MC. It was a very successful fundraiser for Santa Teresa and East Timor.

There are many students in my electorate who take on a leadership role. I would particularly like to acknowledge today: Sean O'Neill, a graduate of Galen College; the Victorian Premier, Daniel Andrews, who is also a graduate; and some of the wonderful O'Hagan family. To all the people of Indi, particularly those who take on leadership roles, I want to say: I am very proud of you and very happy to be your representative in this place. Thank you.

Forde Electorate: Youth Mental Health

Mr VAN MANEN (Forde) (13:49): I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate the hardworking team at headspace Meadowbrook for the official opening of their new centre on Friday. Facilities such as headspace are so important in communities like Forde with a large population of young people. The team at headspace Meadowbrook, whom I have met on several occasions already, have done a tremendous job establishing this new facility.

According to the Mental Health Council of Australia, almost half of Australia's total population experience a mental health disorder at some point in their lifetime. Among our young Australians aged 12 to 25, depression is the most common mental health problems; and around one in 10 young Australians experience an anxiety disorder in any given 12 month period. Statistics such as this show why facilities such as headspace are so important.

This new headspace centre will allow young people in Meadowbrook and surrounding suburbs to have access to a range of support services during what can only be described as one of the most difficult times in their lives. Any young person who needs support, advice or just someone to talk to, will be able to simply walk in to the centre and be treated with respect, compassion and confidentiality. Whether it is general health problems, mental health concerns, drug or alcohol related issues, the fact that young people have a place where they feel supported, and not judged, is so vital and important.

Perth Electorate: Broadband

Ms MacTIERNAN (Perth) (13:51): The member for Canning is aggrieved that I asked questions about the broadband proposed to be laid out in Armadale and Kelmscott. He asks: How dare I? This is not my electorate. Firstly, having represented this community for 17 years, I have an enduring interest in their welfare. Secondly, in my shadow parliamentary
secretary role I have responsibility for infrastructure across Western Australia. The fibre-to-the-node rollout will attempt to utilise an ageing, degraded, copper wire to deliver internet. Download and upload speeds will be massively less than those delivered under Labor's fibre to the home. And it is likely to be as expensive as fibre-to-the-home. NBN Co. has admitted it has no idea about the state of the copper network. We have pictures here of the copper—complete rubbish that will have to be replaced. Yes, Labor's rollout took time to build up steam but the rollout had begun in earnest. 'Fraudband' was promised as a dumbed down alternative which could be delivered everywhere by 2016. Now we know that that date has blown out to 2021.

The people of Armadale and Kelmscott have been duded. They were on the superfast fibre rollout plan in 2013 and now they are only going to get the dud copper option.

Gilmore Electorate: Youth

Mrs SUDMALIS (Gilmore) (13:52): Last weekend we saw a celebration of Gilmore youth. On Friday I had the privilege of opening the new Southern Youth Community Hub in Warilla. Narelle Clay, the dynamo champion of disadvantaged youth, had achieved a long-term goal with the opening of this facility, which will be of enormous benefit to young people in the region. Narelle's energy combined with the advocacy of my parliamentary colleagues, Stephen Jones and Sharon Bird, plus the vision of the coalition government in allocating more than $2.5 million for the hub has produced an outstanding achievement.

On Friday night Amy Evison's dance students shone at their half-yearly concert in the Shoalhaven Entertainment Centre. The cadets of TS Shoalhaven and TS Jervis Bay were on inspection parade on Saturday morning. I congratulate Leading Seamen Kyle Douglas and Harmony Brown, and also Leading Seaman Natasha Cook, who joins the Navy next week. Petty officers Kimberley Cotterill and Glen Matheson were terrific. It was an impressive display and one I never tire of being able to attend.

The stars of the Shoalhaven Eisteddfod were really shining on Saturday afternoon where dance, instrumental and speaking acts were all showcased. That night the members of the Shellharbour Surf Lifesaving Club were honoured. Many youngsters gained awards for surf rescue, surf bronze medals, and more than 67 members gained recognition for 100 per cent in surf patrol duty. These were all great contributions by youth in our community. Their talents and diverse interests are an asset for Gilmore. I am honoured to recognise them all today.

Pensions

Mr ZAPPIA (Makin) (13:54): The Abbott government's changes to the asset limits and taper rates of pensioners will cut the income of 327,000 Australians. Ninety-one thousand people will lose all of their part pensions and on average will be $4,900 a year worse off. And 236,000 people will lose part of their pension, making them on average $3,380 per year worse off.

Whilst initially some 170,000 people will benefit from the changes, within 10 years 50 per cent of all pensioners will be worse off. The effects are confirmed by the Abbott government's own budget figures, which show that the changes will save the government $2.4 billion over the next four years—that is, $2.4 billion that will mainly come out of the pockets of older Australians. Within my electorate, there are around 24,000 people who rely on a pension, of which about 10,000 are on a part pension and they will be affected.
The government knows these changes are unfair and that is why only a handful of government MPs were prepared to even speak in support of this legislation and why the government then chose to close down the debate on the changes. The government treats pensioners as easy targets. Since coming to office, it has brought in one measure after another which adds to pensioners' cost of living. Older Australians do not deserve to be treated so disrespectfully by their government, who, before the 2013 election, promised that there would be no changes to pensions.

**Mining**

Mr WHITELEY (Braddon) (13:55): Labor has sided with the Greens to block legislation in the Senate that would see a potential major mining project on the north-west of Tasmania up and running sooner while maintaining high environmental standards. The Hodgman government's decision to grant a new mining lease to Forward Mining for a mine near Burnie is great news for the north-west Tasmanian economy. It shows the state government is just as committed as the federal Liberal government to a strong mining industry in my state.

If it proceeds, the proposed Hampshire mine will employ over 200 workers in the construction phase and 100 full-time employees when fully operational. Unfortunately, this mine runs the risk of being further delayed because the ALP continues to side with the Greens to block legislation in the Senate that would cut red tape for environmental approvals. Today, I have a message for all Labor senators: cut the Greens loose and back the Liberal government's one-stop shop environmental approval legislation.

Anything we can do to save time in the approval process for the proposed mine will help local workers struggling to find work following the recent closure of other mines on the west coast and the Caterpillar factory in Burnie. If Labor senators are on the side of the Greens and not workers, not small businesses and not greater employment, they should at least have the courage to stand up and tell voters their position and why they needlessly delay important major projects.

**National TAFE Day**

Ms HALL (Shortland—Opposition Whip) (13:57): Today is National TAFE Day, a day when we recognise the work that is done by TAFE colleges throughout Australia. I met with TAFE teachers today and I thank them very much for coming to Canberra to talk with me. Unfortunately, this government is preparing itself to vacate the space of vocational training. I say that is not good enough. When you couple it with what has happened in New South Wales, where the Baird government's Smart and Skilled program has led to the loss of 2,000 jobs, I would say once again it is not good enough. In TAFE there are fewer students, fewer teachers and higher fees and that is not what the Australian people expect.

I am very concerned about rumours I have heard circulating within my community that the Baird government is moving to close Belmont TAFE—a TAFE that has been well supported by students, well supported by people in the area for many years. I hear the reason that this is being considered is because the government wants to look at the economic return on a TAFE college. Well news for the New South Wales government: every $1 you spend on education and TAFE, you get an $8-return—and that is according to the Boston Group's report.
McMillan Electorate: China-Australia Free Trade Agreement

Mr BROADBENT (McMillan) (13:59): Jobs, jobs, jobs and more jobs—that is what the China free-trade agreement means to the dairy farmers of McMillan. It provides unprecedented access to what is already the nation's top overseas agricultural market. Yannathan dairy farmer and Australian Dairy Council chairman, Noel Campbell, knows a good deal when he sees one. He has welcomed the agreement. Our dairy exports are worth $501 million across a $13-billion industry. This morning 6,700 farmers got up and milked the cows that gave us the milk we have in this Parliament House.

It is a level playing field for Australia for the first time. For the people down in McMillan, there is a positive outlook for producers such as Fonterra in Darnum, Burra Foods in Korumburra, Devondale Murray Goulburn in Leongatha, Viplus Dairy at Toora and Gippy Milk at Longwarry, which the Prime Minister has written his bike through. These areas are renowned for the quality and the purity of their milk, and Noel Campbell and the Dairy Farmers community will benefit greatly from this agreement. Gippsland feeds China's babies.

The SPEAKER: It being two o'clock, the member's statement is interrupted. In accordance with standing order 43, the time for members' statements has concluded.

MINISTERIAL ARRANGEMENTS

Mr ABBOTT (Warringah—Prime Minister) (14:00): I inform the House that the Minister for Justice will be absent from question time today while he attends a community event in Sydney to mark Ramadan. The Minister for Foreign Affairs will answer questions on his behalf. And, as I indicated yesterday, the Minister for Defence is also away for today and tomorrow.

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

Attorney-General

Minister for Foreign Affairs

Ms PLIBERSEK (Sydney—Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (14:00): My question is to the Minister representing the Attorney-General. I refer to the letter the Attorney-General received from Man Haron Monis on 9 October 2014. According to Senate testimony last night, the Attorney-General's Department knew on Monday, 1 June that the department had not provided the letter to the Martin Place siege inquiry. Given that the Attorney-General knew on Monday that both he and the Minister for Foreign Affairs had misled the parliament, why wasn't the record corrected before Thursday, 4 June?

The SPEAKER: I would remind the member for Sydney that, if one wishes to say that the parliament has been misled, it requires a substantive motion. Perhaps she would like to rephrase.

Mr Burke: I raise a point of order, Madam Speaker. Just to clarify: the question that was asked quotes the date on which it was realised, that being after the misleading occurred.

The SPEAKER: This is argument, so it is not a point of order.

Mr Burke: No, it goes to why it is not intentional and it is not being asserted as such.

The SPEAKER: Well, I am sorry; I am just inviting the member for Sydney to rephrase her question.
Ms PLIBERSEK: Madam Speaker, I will say that I did not say that the parliament was deliberately misled, but to assist you I will say: provided false information to the parliament.

Ms JULIE BISHOP (Curtin—Minister for Foreign Affairs) (14:02): The record was corrected at the earliest opportunity after receiving formal confirmation—

Opposition members interjecting—

The SPEAKER: There will be silence on my left!

Ms JULIE BISHOP: from the Secretary of the Attorney-General's Department on—

Opposition members interjecting—

The SPEAKER: There will be silence on my left!

Ms JULIE BISHOP: I thought they wanted to hear the answer.

Mr Bowen interjecting—

The SPEAKER: The member for McMahon is warned.

Ms JULIE BISHOP: May I start again, Madam Speaker?

The SPEAKER: Indeed. The minister has the call.

Ms JULIE BISHOP: I have not been able to hear myself, let alone anybody else hear the answer. I thought they were taking this seriously.

The SPEAKER: The minister has a point. We will reset the clock.

Ms JULIE BISHOP: That information was received in writing at 2.43 pm. The advice was that the earlier advice from the department was wrong. Katherine Jones, Deputy Secretary of the Attorney-General's Department, on 4 June, by email to the committee, advised the committee at 2.55 pm. I received information during question time, after 3 pm, that the record had been corrected as far as the committee was concerned, and at 3.09 pm, minutes later, at the end of question time, I corrected the record. The Attorney-General sent a letter to the committee on 4 June at 3.15 pm, again hand delivered.

The initial advice to the Attorney-General on 1 June was that it appeared that the evidence was wrong. He immediately asked the Secretary of the Attorney-General's Department to conduct a review, and the outcome of that review was the information provided to the Attorney-General on the afternoon of 4 June, as I have just outlined. Prior to 4 June, I was in Paris.

Mr Dreyfus interjecting—

The SPEAKER: The member for Isaacs will desist.
Abbott Government

Mr VAN MANEN (Forde) (14:04): My question is to the Prime Minister. Will the Prime Minister inform the House how the government is delivering on its plan to build a strong, safe and prosperous future for all Australians?

Mr ABBOTT (Warringah—Prime Minister) (14:04): I thank the member for Forde for his question. Yes, the task of this government—and indeed, the task of this parliament—is every day to deliver its very best for the people of Australia. I can inform the member and I can inform other members of the parliament that this has been a pretty good fortnight when it comes to the parliament and the government delivering for the benefit of the Australian people.

In the last parliamentary fortnight, the parliament has passed the small business company tax cut and instant asset write-off, which will put more money into the pockets of Australian small businesses to help them to get ahead and create jobs. I thank members opposite for their support in getting the instant asset write-off legislation through the parliament.

Also, the parliament has passed the government's fairer and more sustainable pensions plan, which will mean that 170,000 pensioners with modest assets will receive an extra $30 a fortnight on average from January 2017.

Ms Macklin interjecting—

Mr ABBOTT: Again, I thank the Greens, in this case, for their assistance. We passed legislation last night—the parliament passed legislation last night—to reform the renewable energy target, and that will put downward pressure on electricity prices while also providing certainty for the industry. I want to congratulate the Minister for the Environment and the Minister for Industry and Science for their hard work, particularly the Minister for the Environment. I thank the Labor Party for their support for most of this legislation, and I also thank the Senate crossbenchers for their support for critical elements of this legislation.

Importantly, this parliament has in the last few days passed more than $10 billion worth of budget savings through the Senate. This will make our services more sustainable for the long run, and this is helping the government to deliver our country on a sustainable path to a surplus. We are delivering half a percentage point of GDP in deficit reductions over each of the forward estimates. So good things are happening, this government is delivering and, I have to say, in the last fortnight this parliament is delivering as well for the people of Australia.

Attorney-General

Minister for Foreign Affairs

Mr SHORTEN (Maribyrnong—Leader of the Opposition) (14:07): My question is to the Prime Minister. The Attorney-General and the Minister for Foreign Affairs knew on Monday, 1 June that they had provided false information to the parliament. Prime Minister, why did no-one in your government correct the record for four days?

Mr ABBOTT (Warringah—Prime Minister) (14:08): My understanding is that on the relevant Monday, within the Attorney-General's Department, there was concern that misleading information had been given to the Senate the previous week and that, based on
that misleading information given to the Senate, misleading information may have been given to the House. My understanding is that on Monday, 1 June a full investigation was ordered. That investigation established the facts. It reported on 4 June. And on 4 June, which was in fact the first day when the Minister for Foreign Affairs, representing the Attorney-General, was back in the parliament, the record was corrected. So there has been nothing untoward here. There has been no impropriety here. If members opposite are trying to suggest that in some way possession of that letter would have averted the atrocity in Martin Place in December, I think that suggestion, if it is being made, is fanciful to say the least.

**Infrastructure**

Ms LANDRY (Capricornia) (14:09): My question is to the Deputy Prime Minister and the Minister for Infrastructure and Regional Development. Will the Deputy Prime Minister update the House on how the government is helping to build productive infrastructure in regional Australia? How will an expansion of the Roads to Recovery program assist local communities in my electorate of Capricornia?

Mr TRUSS (Wide Bay—Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Infrastructure and Regional Development) (14:10): I thank the honourable member for her question—

*Mr Perrett interjecting—*

The SPEAKER: The member for Moreton will desist.

Mr TRUSS: She knows that the government's $50 billion infrastructure program is delivering road works right across the nation. It is building the Bruce Highway in her electorate and right up the east coast of Queensland. It is building the Pacific Highway, the Princes Highway, the Western Highway, The Midland Highway, the North West Coastal Highway, the Great Northern Highway and countless other roads in regional Australia. It is building WestConnex, NorthConnex, Gateway North, the Tullamarine Freeway, South Road, the Perth Freight link, NorthLink and countless other projects in our cities. This is a government that is delivering roads right across the country—

*Mr Albanese interjecting—*

The SPEAKER: The member for Grayndler will be quiet.

Mr TRUSS: In our Northern Australia paper we announced another $700 million for roads—no doubt some of it also in the honourable member's electorate—including $100 million for beef roads. This is a government that is getting on with building roads.

The restoration of the fuel excise indexation was a key budget repair measure. The agreement reached by the parliament to pass this legislation will mean that there will be more money available for Roads to Recovery. Indeed, the Roads to Recovery program will be boosted by $300 million in the next financial year, beginning in just a few days, and by $800 million in the following year. That will mean over a billion dollars in each of those years for local councils to spend on roads and streets of their choice—roads and streets that can make that last-mile connection from the school to the town, for the produce to the market, for people who want to go to the hospital or daily services. These are important local projects, and this commitment that has been made now through the fuel excise indexation will provide work and road projects not just in the big cities but also in regional communities.
Indeed, in the honourable member's electorate, the announcement of the expanded Roads to Recovery program means that the councils in Capricornia will receive almost $45 million from the Roads to Recovery program during the five years that it covers. We have got an increase, therefore, of $15.5 million to spend on vital local roads. That is good news to the people of Capricornia, but it is good news that will be repeated in every federal electorate in Australia as there is more money for local roads and more money to fix those last-mile local issues.

Attorney-General
Minister for Foreign Affairs

Ms PLIBERSEK (Sydney—Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (14:13): My question is to the Minister representing the Attorney-General. Today, the minister said she was informed during question time after 3 pm on Thursday, 4 June that the letter written by Man Haron Monis had not been provided to the Martin Place siege inquiry. Why did the Attorney-General say in this statement, 'The foreign minister was advised shortly before Question Time.'

Mr Bowen interjecting—

The SPEAKER: There will be silence on my left, and that includes the member for McMahon, who has been warned—once more and he will leave.

Ms JULIE BISHOP (Curtin—Minister for Foreign Affairs) (14:13): As I indicated, I was informed in writing that the evidence that had been given in the Senate inquiry was wrong—

Mr Perrett interjecting—

The SPEAKER: The member for Moreton.

Ms JULIE BISHOP: I will read it out again: 'We received formal, written confirmation from the secretary of the Attorney-General's department on 4 June 2015 2:43 pm.' That is after question time has begun. Question time starts at 2—2:43. Catherine Jones sent an email to the committee at 2:55 pm. After question time—that is 14 minutes later—at 3:09 pm I corrected the record. I had no earlier opportunity to correct the record, as I was in France until 4 June.

Telecommunications

Ms McGOWAN (Indi) (14:14): My question is to the Minister for Communications. Minister, as you know, mobile phone telecommunications infrastructure is essential throughout Australia but particularly in regional Australia. Could you please give me an update on the mobile phone black spot program and how it is progressing in Indi?

Mr TURNBULL (Wentworth—Minister for Communications) (14:14): I thank the honourable member for her question. I have to give her full marks for a very good try and full marks for audacity. As the honourable member knows, in the dark six years of Labor government, which have been well chronicled on the ABC—and this is one of the things that were left out of The Killing Season—not one cent was spent by Labor on dealing with mobile phone black spots. There was so much other material of course that you cannot really blame the producers.

Ms Owens interjecting—
The SPEAKER: The member for Parramatta is warned.

Mr TURNBULL: So under the Howard government we spent money on remediating mobile phone black spots, and under the Abbott government we have done so again. The honourable member will be pleased to know that she and other honourable members do not have long to wait because, thanks to the diligence of the parliamentary secretary, the member for Bradfield, and hard work with state governments, the telcos and other stakeholders, tomorrow there will be a very significant announcement about the mobile phone black spot program that will show yet again that the Abbott government, unlike Labor, delivers for people in regional Australia.

Budget

Mrs McNAMARA (Dobell) (14:16): My question is to the Treasurer. Will the Treasurer outline the importance of fixing the budget? What does this mean for my constituents in Dobell?

Mr HOCKEY (North Sydney—The Treasurer) (14:16): I thank the member for Dobell for that question. I can say to her constituents that if we can fix the budget mess that we inherited then we strengthen the Australian economy. It means more jobs and more opportunity for everyday Australians. The budget repair task is well underway. As the Prime Minister identified a little bit earlier, $10.8 billion of savings over the next four years have passed through the parliament in the last two weeks. That is a good start—building on the efforts that were previously made, $30 billion of savings from last year's budget. So we are well underway in our task of addressing the shortfall left behind by Labor. When we came to government the budget was haemorrhaging $133 million a day. That means that we would have to borrow $133 million every day just to pay the bills. We have only got that down to $96 million a day. We have made progress but there is still much to be done.

I call on the Labor Party to be consistent now and continue to back the budget improvement initiatives laid down by the Abbott government because they now realise, as we realise and have since the day we were elected, that the best thing we can do to strengthen the Australian economy is to help to get the Australian government back to a position where it lives within its means and at the same time do everything we can to reduce the taxation burden and the regulatory burden on everyday Australians and Australian businesses.

At the same time we are delivering more jobs. Next door to the member for Dobell's electorate on the Central Coast—and she is a key contributor in this regard—there are 600 new Public Service jobs associated with the Australian Taxation Office going in there. That is hugely important for Gosford. We are opening up new opportunities. That is hugely important as well, not just because we have an infrastructure Prime Minister and an infrastructure infrastructure minister but because we also have new trade agreements with Korea, Japan and China. Those new trade agreements, which cost the budget $6 billion, are an investment in opening the doors.

Opposition members interjecting—

The SPEAKER: The cackling will cease.

Mr HOCKEY: The Minister for Foreign Affairs and I have announced today that Australia will be joining the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank. We will be doing so because it provides massive new opportunities for Australia to join with 56 other countries as
founding members in building the essential infrastructure for Asia, which will facilitate more trade in agriculture, in resources and, ultimately, in services that will be to the great benefit of everyday Australians.

Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet

Mr BURKE (Watson—Manager of Opposition Business) (14:19): My question is to the Prime Minister. Can the Prime Minister confirm that on 1 June at 5.30 pm his own department sent an email to Attorney-General's to indicate that Minister Bishop had referred to provision of the Man Monis letter in parliament and to ask about the need to correct the record?

Mr ABBOTT (Warringah—Prime Minister) (14:20): I can confirm that the secretary of my department has said that the provision of the letter in question to the inquiry would have made no difference to its findings.

Mr Dreyfus: That is not answering the question.

The SPEAKER: The member for Isaacs will cease.

Mr ABBOTT: I can also confirm that the Director-General of ASIO has said publicly that the letter in question was handled perfectly appropriately by the Attorney-General. I do suggest to members opposite that any proposition that they might be advancing implicitly, if not explicitly, that somehow more attention to this letter would have prevented the Martin Place atrocity is simply fanciful.

Mr Burke: No, it is about misleading the parliament.

The SPEAKER: The member for Watson will desist.

Mr ABBOTT: Let me make it crystal clear—

Mr Giles interjecting—

The SPEAKER: The member for Scullin will leave under standing order 94(a).

The member for Scullin then left the chamber.

Mr ABBOTT: As far as I am concerned, our system bent over backwards for this individual far too often. At every step in the way this individual was given the benefit of the doubt, and he should not have been. At every step our system was too soft and this government is determined—

Mr Burke: Madam Speaker, I rise on a point of order. I do not doubt at all the significance of what the Prime Minister is saying right now but the question goes to whether or not the parliament was misled. That is what was asked, not any other issue.

The SPEAKER: The member is indulging in debate. The member will resume his seat. The Prime Minister has the call.

Mr ABBOTT: At every step of the way, this disgraceful individual, this despicable individual, was given the benefit of the doubt. That is wrong. Our system needs to be toughened up and, as far as this government is concerned, toughened up it will be. We cannot continue to give those who will take advantage of us the benefit of the doubt—and we will not, as far as this government is concerned.

The question is suggesting that there has been some inappropriate conduct by ministers; there is no evidence whatsoever for that. The review was ordered on the Monday, once it became apparent that misleading information may have been given to this parliament. The
review reported on the Thursday, and as soon as that report was received it was acted upon. At the earliest possible opportunity, the Minister for Foreign Affairs, representing the Attorney-General, corrected the record in this parliament, as she should and as she has.

**Agriculture**

Mr CHRISTENSEN (Dawson—The Nationals Deputy Whip) (14:23): My question is to the Minister for Agriculture. Will the minister inform the House how the government is assisting agriculture and farmers in Australia to prosper, both in my electorate of Dawson and elsewhere?

Mr JOYCE (New England—Minister for Agriculture) (14:23): I thank the honourable member for Dawson for his question, and might I say the member for Dawson has a strong involvement, especially in the cane industry, being from a third generation cane farm family and also a person who was a member of the Mackay City Council—so he has a strong involvement in the great sugar city of Mackay. He is also a person who I have known has been involved with the National Party since he was 15 years old. If there is one thing that I can say about the member for Dawson, it is that he is no wallflower. He is certainly a person who has an opinion, and for all my knowledge of him he has always let people know what it is. I commend him for the work that he is still doing today, especially in the sugar industry.

One of the issues that we have brought about, especially with the Japan FTA, was the allowance of high-polarity sugar. We did not sell any high-polarity sugar into Japan at all. We have now sold in excess of 100,000 tonnes, just since March. This is what happens when you have a government that is focused on outcomes, focused on getting a better return back through the farm gate. To the north of the member's electorate is Townsville, which is quickly heading toward becoming the biggest live export venue for cattle. Since we have been in government we have had a 77 per cent increase in the number of cattle that have been exported annually, and a 78 per cent increase in the value. What this is doing is putting real upward pressure on prices.

I want to refer you to an article today from ABC Rural, which said:

A grazier from the drought-stricken Winton district has achieved a record price for lightweight weaner steers at the Roma saleyards in Queensland. It bolsters industry sentiment that is already riding high on the record-breaking Eastern Young Cattle Indicator, which is currently sitting at 507 cents per kilogram. But it was in Roma where the Angus cross steers hit 306 cents per kilogram and while it is a record specifically for those saleyards, the price is still behind those in the south.

In the south, the price has gone up to 319 cents a kilogram.

We could talk all the time about cattle, but we could also talk about blueberries. Since September 2013 there has been a 78 per cent increase in the price of blueberries. We could talk about cherries: a 25 per cent increase in the price of cherries.

*Mr Snowdon interjecting—*

The SPEAKER: The member for Lingiari will desist.

Mr JOYCE: We could talk about nectarines, where we have had a 133 per cent increase. We could talk about peaches, where we have had a 159 per cent increase.

Mr Fitzgibbon: Madam Speaker, I raise a point of order. Can I assist the minister by asking him what is happening with the lamb price?
The SPEAKER: No, you can resume your seat. One more of those and you will leave under 94(a). I call the honourable the minister.

Mr JOYCE: This is why last night, after a certain program, I actually stayed back and watched The Business. Dr John Edwards, RBA board member, said one of the reasons that we have got a great turnaround is that farm exports are at a new high.

Minister for Foreign Affairs

Mr BURKE (Watson—Manager of Opposition Business) (14:27): My question is directed to the Minister for Foreign Affairs. I refer to evidence given by Deputy Secretary Tony Sheehan, where he referred to advice that stated the following: PM&C had checked the index of A-GD documents for the Martin Place review very carefully. The letter is not there.

That was advice sent at 12.15 on 1 June. When will the foreign minister be returning to the House to correct the record on the answer that she gave today?

Ms JULIE BISHOP (Curtin—Minister for Foreign Affairs) (14:27): I made a statement to this House based on the evidence of an official given to Senate estimates. When that official provided confirmation in writing that the evidence she gave was wrong, I corrected the record at the earliest opportunity. The official gave that written confirmation at 2.43 pm on 4 June. I corrected the record at 3.09 pm on 4 June. Senator Brandis corrected the record at 3.15 pm that day. That gave Senator Wong the rest of the afternoon in Senate estimates to ask questions of the Attorney-General about this matter.

Mr Burke: I seek leave to move the following motion:

That the House censures the:

(1) Minister for Foreign Affairs and Attorney-General for:

(a) misleading the Parliament over important questions relating to national security and the safety of Australia;

(b) breaching the Prime Minister’s own Statement of Ministerial Standards by failing to:

(i) correct the record in the Parliament at the earliest opportunity in relation to matters of national security;

(ii) be honest in the conduct of public office; and

(iii) take all reasonable steps to ensure that the public or the Parliament is not misled; and

(2) Prime Minister for allowing his Ministers to:

(a) mislead the Parliament over serious and legitimate questions relating to national security and the safety of Australia; and

(b) breach his own Statement of Ministerial Standards.

Mr Pyne: There is no smoke let alone fire in this story and so leave is not granted.

MOTIONS

Minister for Foreign Affairs, Attorney-General and Prime Minister

Attempted Censure

Mr BURKE (Watson—Manager of Opposition Business) (14:29): I move:

That so much of the standing and sessional orders be suspended as would prevent the Manager of Opposition Business moving the following motion forthwith:
That so much of the standing and sessional orders be suspended as would prevent the Member for Watson from moving the following motion forthwith—that the House censures the:

(1) Minister for Foreign Affairs and Attorney-General for:
(a) misleading the Parliament over important questions relating to national security and the safety of Australia;
(b) breaching the Prime Minister’s own Statement of Ministerial Standards by failing to:
   (i) correct the record in the Parliament at the earliest opportunity in relation to matters of national security;
   (ii) be honest in the conduct of public office; and
   (iii) take all reasonable steps to ensure that the public or the Parliament is not misled; and

(2) Prime Minister for allowing his Ministers to:
(a) mislead the Parliament over serious and legitimate questions relating to national security and the safety of Australia; and
(b) breach his own Statement of Ministerial Standards.

The parliament has been misled today by the foreign minister.

Mr PYNE (Sturt—Leader of the House and Minister for Education and Training) (14:30):
I move:
That the member be no longer heard.

The SPEAKER: The question is that the member be no longer heard.

The House divided. [14:35]

(The Speaker—Hon. Bronwyn Bishop)

Ayes ......................83
Noes ......................50
Majority .................33

AYES

Abbott, AJ  Alexander, JG
Andrews, KL Baldwin, RC
Billson, BF Bishop, JI
Briggs, JE Broad, AJ
Broadbent, RE Brough, MT
Buchholz, S Chester, D
Christensen, GR Cobb, JK
Coleman, DB Coulton, M (teller)
Dutton, PC Entsch, WG
Fletcher, PW Frydenberg, JA
Gambharo, T Gillespie, DA
Goodenough, IR Griggs, NL
Hartsuyker, L Hawke, AG
Henderson, SM Hendy, PW
Hockey, JB Hogan, KJ
Howarth, LR Hunt, GA
Hutchinson, ER Irons, SJ
Jensen, DG Jones, ET
Joyce, BT Kelly, C
Laming, A Landry, ML
Laundy, C Ley, SP

CHAMBER
A YE S

Macfarlane, IE
Markus, LE
McCormack, MF
Morrison, SJ
O'Dowd, KD
Porter, CC
Price, ML
Ramsey, RE
Robert, SR
Ruddock, PM
Scott, FM
Smith, ADH
Stone, SN
Sukkar, MS
Tehan, DT
Tudge, AE
Van Manen, AJ
Vasta, RX
Wicks, LE
Wilson, RJ
Wyatt, KG

NOES

Albanese, AN
Bowen, CE
Burke, AE
Butler, MC
Byrne, AM
Champion, ND
Clare, JD
Collins, JM
Danby, M
Ferguson, LDT
Griffin, AP
Hayes, CP
Jones, SP
Macklin, JL
Marles, RD
Mitchell, RG
O'Connor, BPJ
Owens, J
Perrett, GD
Ripoll, BF
Rowland, MA
Shorten, WR
Swan, WM
Vamvakinou, M
Wilkie, AD

Marino, NB
Matheson, RG
McNamara, KJ
Nikolic, AA
Pitt, KJ
Prentice, J
Pyne, CM
Randall, DJ
Roy, WB
Scott, BC
Simpkins, LXL
Southcott, AJ
Sudmalis, AE
Taylor, AJ
Truss, WE
Turnbull, MB
Varvaris, N
Whiteley, BD
Williams, MP
Wood, JP

Question agreed to.

The SPEAKER (14:40): Is the suspension motion seconded?
Ms PLIBERSEK (Sydney—Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (14:40): I second the motion. This is a cover-up of a cover-up—

Mr PYNE (Sturt—Leader of the House and Minister for Education and Training) (14:41): I move:

That the member be no longer heard.

The SPEAKER: The question is that the motion be agreed to.

The House divided. [14:42]

(The Speaker—Hon. Bronwyn Bishop)

Ayes ...................... 83
Noes ...................... 50
Majority ................ 33

AYES

Abbott, AJ
Andrews, KL
Billson, BF
Briggs, JE
Broadbent, RE
Buchholz, S
Christensen, GR
Coleman, DB
Dutton, PC
Fletcher, PW
Gambaro, T
Goodenough, IR
Hartsuyker, L
Henderson, SM
Hockey, JB
Howarth, LR
Hutchinson, ER
Jensen, DG
Joyce, BT
Laming, A
Laundy, C
Macfarlane, IE
Markus, LE
McCormack, MF
Morrison, SJ
O'Dowd, KD
Porter, CC
Price, ML
Ramsey, RE
Robert, SR
Ruddock, PM
Scott, FM
Smith, ADH
Stone, SN
Sukkar, MS
Tehan, DT
Tudge, AE
Van Manen, AJ
Vasta, RX

Alexander, JG
Baldwin, RC
Bishop, JI
Broad, AJ
Brough, MT
Chester, D
Cobb, JK
Coulton, M (teller)
Entsch, WG
Frydenberg, JA
Gillespie, DA
Griggs, NL
Hawke, AG
Hendy, PW
Hogan, KJ
Hunt, GA
Irons, SJ
Jones, ET
Kelly, C
Landry, ML
Ley, SP
Marino, NB
Matheson, RG
McNamara, KJ
Nikolic, AA
Pitt, KJ
Prentice, J
Pyne, CM
Randall, DJ
Roy, WB
Scott, BC
Simpkins, LXL
Southcott, AJ
Sudmalis, AE
Taylor, AJ
Truss, WE
Turnbull, MB
Varvaris, N
Whiteley, BD
Question agreed to.

The SPEAKER (14:44): The question is that the suspension motion be agreed to.

Mr PYNE (Sturt—Leader of the House and Minister for Education and Training) (14:44):
I move:

That the motion be now put.

The SPEAKER: The question is that the motion be agreed to—that is, that the motion be put.

The House divided. [14:46]

(The Speaker—Hon. Bronwyn Bishop)

Ayes ......................84
Noes .......................49
Majority ..................35

AYES
Abbott, AJ
Andrews, KL

CHAMBER
AYES

Billson, BF
Briggs, JE
Broadbent, RE
Buchholz, S
Christensen, GR
Coleman, DB
Dutton, PC
Fletcher, PW
Gambaro, T
Goodenough, IR
Hartsuyker, L
Henderson, SM
Hockey, JB
Howarth, LR
Hutchinson, ER
Jensen, DG
Joyce, BT
Laming, A
Laundy, C
Maefarlane, IE
Markus, LE
McCormack, MF
McNamara, KJ
Nikolic, AA (teller)
Pitt, KJ
Prentice, J
Pyne, CM
Randall, DJ
Roy, WB
Scott, BC
Simpkins, LXL
Southcott, AJ
Sudmalis, AE
Taylor, AJ
Truss, WE
Turnbull, MB
Varvaris, N
Whiteley, BD
Williams, MP
Wood, JP

Bishop, JI
Broad, AJ
Brough, MT
Chester, D
Cobb, JK
Coulton, M (teller)
Entsch, WG
Frydenberg, JA
Gillespie, DA
Griggs, NL
Hawke, AG
Hendy, PW
Hogan, KJ
Hunt, GA
Irons, SJ
Jones, ET
Kelly, C
Landry, ML
Ley, SP
Marino, NB
Matheson, RG
McGowan, C
Morrison, SJ
O'Dowd, KD
Porter, CC
Price, ML
Ramsey, RE
Robert, SR
Ruddock, PM
Scott, FM
Smith, ADH
Stone, SN
Sukkar, MS
Tehan, DT
Tudge, AE
Van Manen, AJ
Vasta, RX
Wicks, LE
Wilson, RJ
Wyatt, KG

NOES

Albanese, AN
Bowen, CE
Burke, AE
Butler, MC
Byrne, AM
Champion, ND
Clare, JD
Collins, JM
Danby, M
Ferguson, LDT

Bird, SL
Brodmann, G
Burke, AS
Butler, TM
Chalmers, JE
Chesters, LM
Claydon, SC
Conroy, PM
Dreyfus, MA
Fitzgibbon, JA

CHAMBER
Question agreed to.

The SPEAKER (14:49): The question now is that the suspension motion be agreed to. The House divided. [14:50]

(The Speaker—Hon. Bronwyn Bishop)

Ayes ................... 48
Noes ................... 85
Majority.............. 37

AYES

Albanese, AN
Bowen, CE
Burke, AE
Butler, MC
Byrne, AM
Champion, ND
Clare, JD
Collins, JM
Danby, M
Ferguson, LDT
Griffin, AP
Hayes, CP
Jones, SP
Macklin, JL
Marles, RD
Neumann, SK
O’Neil, CE
Parke, M
Plibersek, TJ
Rishworth, AL
Ryan, JC (teller)
Snowdon, WE
Thomson, KJ
Watts, TG
Zappia, A

Bird, SL
Brodtmann, G
Burke, AS
Butler, TM
Chalmers, JE
Chesters, LM
Claydon, SC
Conroy, PM
Dreyfus, MA
Fitzgibbon, JA
Hall, JG (teller)
Husic, EN
Leigh, AK
MacTiernan, AJGC
Mitchell, RG
O’Connor, BPJ
Owens, J
Perrett, GD
Ripoll, BF
Rowland, MA
Shorten, WR
Swan, WM
Vamvakou, M
Wilkie, AD
Question negatived.

**National Security**

Mr PITT (Hinkler) (14:55): My question is to the Minister for Foreign Affairs. Will the minister update the House on the threat posed to Australians by foreign fighters such as Elomar and Sharrouf? What is the government doing to combat this threat?

Ms JULIE BISHOP (Curtin—Minister for Foreign Affairs) (14:56): I thank the member for Hinkler for his question. The government is taking steps to combat the threat posed by the...
foreign terrorist fighters. Members would be aware of the yet to be verified reports that
foreign fighters and Australian citizens Mohamed Elomar and Khaled Sharrouf have been
killed in Syria while fighting for Daesh. Both men had had their passports cancelled. There
are warrants out for their arrest. I am device there is a high degree of certainty that Mohamed
Elomar has been killed, joining about 30 other Australians also believed to have been killed
fighting in Syria and Iraq. Like many of the 120 or so Australian terrorist fighters in the
Middle East, Khaled Sharrouf and Mohamed Elomar have had deeply troubled pasts
involving gang violence and drug abuse. In joining Daesh, they inflicted their anger, hatred
and violence at the world and these two men have not been fighting for a noble cause; they
have been violent and deranged criminals and boasting online of their depraved activities in
an attempt to recruit others. This government is making every effort to prevent foreign
fighters from reaching back into our communities directly or through social media to incite
violence or to plan terrorist attacks.

I can update the House that about 120 Australian passports have been cancelled to stop
people from travelling to the conflict to become hardened terrorists or from travelling to third
destinations to carry out terrorist attacks. We have frozen the assets of terrorists, including
those of Elomar and Sharrouf, by listing them under United Nations Security Council
resolution 1373, making it a serious criminal offence to use or deal with terrorist assets or to
provide them with material support. I can inform the House that other people are to be listed
under this resolution.

We are strengthening our international partnerships. The new Federal Police liaison
positions in Turkey and Jordan announced today form part of the AFP international network
across 29 countries, in addition to our 16 bilateral counter-terrorist cooperation agreements.
Community support is vital to our efforts. Around 30,000 calls have been made to the
national security hotline—that is, 18123400—over the last 12 months. I welcome the efforts of the
Muslim community leaders in tackling the extremist threat and publicly rejecting those
extremists who claim to speak for all Muslims. Around 40 community organisations have
been awarded grants to run programs that counter violent ideologies and protect those at risk.

We have already had an impact on disrupting the flow of foreign fighters and finance to
Daesh, but while ever this threat remains, this government will continue to take strong action
to keep Australians safe from acts of terrorism.

DISTINGUISHED VISITORS

The SPEAKER (14:59): I advise the House that we have in the Speaker's Gallery the
former Senator for Queensland, Mr Russell Trood. We make him most welcome.

Honourable members: Hear, hear!

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

Minister for Foreign Affairs

Ms PLIBERSEK (Sydney—Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (14:59): My question is to
the Minister for Foreign Affairs. Can the minister explain why, when the Attorney-General's
Department and the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet were discussing the need for
the foreign minister to correct the record as early as 5.30 on 1 June, why it took until after
question time had finished, when no further questions could be asked of her and broadcasting
had ceased, for her to correct the record?
The SPEAKER: I presume the honourable member for Sydney is asking the Minister for Foreign Affairs in her capacity as representing the Attorney-General? I will give her the call in that capacity. She might remember that next time.

Ms JULIE BISHOP (Curtin—Minister for Foreign Affairs) (15:00): It is quite clear that the caucus meeting was so volatile today that they forgot to prepare for question time! I refer to my previous answers.

National Education Standards

Mr CRAIG KELLY (Hughes) (15:00): My question is to the Minister for Education and Training. Will the minister update the House on the steps the government is taking to ensure that our young people are adequately prepared for the jobs of the 21st century?

Mr PYNE (Sturt—Leader of the House and Minister for Education and Training) (15:00): I thank the member for Hughes for his question. I know that he is very interested in how we are expanding science, technology, engineering and maths in the school curriculum to ensure that our young Australians are prepared for the jobs of the 21st century.

In fact, 75 per cent of jobs in the fastest-growing industries in our economy require science, technology, engineering or mathematics qualifications these days. It is quite an extraordinary factoid to remember because it highlights how important it is for us to have a focus on science, technology, engineering and maths right across our curriculum, both in schools and in higher education.

That is why the government is putting in place a number of really important measures: a number of important programs but also two very long-lasting reforms that will have a big impact on science, technology, engineering and maths in our economy. The first of those is to change teacher training in Australia, which is an area we can have a great influence over, to ensure that the colleges that train teachers in Australia do not graduate primary school teachers who are generalists anymore, that they will only be accredited if the primary school teachers have a science, maths or language specialty, because we need more specialist science and maths teachers if we are going to encourage young people to take up science and maths in school and then on into university.

The second thing we are doing is reforming the Australian curriculum. With the cooperation of the states and territories we are changing the national curriculum to give a lot more space in the primary school curriculum to give teachers the opportunity to focus on science, maths, English and the basic foundational requirements of a good education.

Recently, of course, we announced the appointment of Professor Stephen Schwartz from Macquarie University. He was the vice-chancellor there. He is the new chairman of the Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority. He and his team will have the responsibility of ensuring that by the beginning of next year the national curriculum has been de-cluttered, to give teachers the time to do more depth rather than breadth. This is so that when their classroom has not grasped a concept in science and maths they can take the time to make sure that they do.

We are also supporting mathematics by inquiry with programs like PrimaryConnections and Science by Doing and the P-TECH education facility pilot in Geelong, which is supported by the member for Corangamite. We are bringing back summer schools for STEM students this year, and we are putting funds into ensuring that coding across the curriculum is
ventilated. Of course, coding has been in the curriculum and we are ensuring, with $3\frac{1}{2}
million dollars, that we are ventilating—

\textit{Opposition members interjecting—}

\textbf{The SPEAKER:} I would remind those people who have been warned!

\textbf{Mr PYNE:} what is already in the curriculum, which the Leader of the Opposition missed
when he read it.

\textbf{Minister for Foreign Affairs}

\textbf{Mr DREYFUS} (Isaacs—Deputy Manager of Opposition Business) (15:03): My question
is to the Minister the Foreign Affairs, representing the Attorney-General. Yesterday, the
Deputy Secretary of the Attorney-General's Department, Mr Tony Sheehan, told the Senate
that the Attorney-General's Department contacted the office of the Attorney-General by email
at 1:54 pm on Monday 1 June 'to describe the handling of the Monis correspondence', Why
then did it take the government four more days to correct the false information given by the
foreign minister to the parliament?

\textbf{Ms JULIE BISHOP} (Curtin—Minister for Foreign Affairs) (15:04): I have
comprehensively answered this question.

\textbf{Green Army Program}

\textbf{Mrs WICKS} (Robertson) (15:04): My question is to the Minister for the Environment.
Will the minister update the House on the progress of the Green Army program? What
outcomes is this program delivering for the environment and for the young people involved in
my electorate of Robertson and, indeed, across the nation?

\textbf{Mr HUNT} (Flinders—Minister for the Environment) (15:05): I particularly want to thank
the member for Robertson, who is a tremendous Green Army ambassador.

I am delighted to inform the House and to say to the member for Robertson—and, in
particular, to the electors of Robertson—that today we have announced three Green Army
projects in her electorate of Robertson. These include the national parks reserve restoration
and conservation program, protection of Putty Beach Reserve and the Five Lands Walk and
the restoration project at Winney Bay.

This is about giving young people in her electorate the opportunity to work and to do
something positive for the environment: removal of invasive species, restoration of riparian
areas and restoration of foreshore. This is practical work in the environment and job training
for the future.

In fact, this morning I was able to visit the member for Canberra's electorate. There is a
Green Army project underway there right now at Red Hill, removing invasive species. Four
new Green Army projects were announced today in the electorate of Canberra. One hundred
and fifty-six Green Army projects were announced right across Australia. These Green Army
projects are building on—

\textit{Ms Claydon interjecting—}

\textbf{The SPEAKER:} The member the Newcastle will leave under 94(a)!

\textit{The member for Newcastle then left the chamber.}
Mr PYNE: the more than 311 projects which have been commenced or completed this financial year. We said that we would deliver 250 projects this year. Instead, we are delivering 311 projects this year and we have announced 156 going forward.

But just in case anybody wonders whether it is being done on an even-handed basis, it is. Two hundred and thirty projects announced to date will be in either ALP seats or seats from independents, so this is a project for all Australians right across the country where you have local people engaged in local projects. We would say to the member for Maribyrnong, 'We would love you to come and visit one of the Green Army projects in your electorate'—I think there are eight now. In fact, I visited a project which is shared with the member for Maribyrnong and the member for Calwell. I did not see the member, but you are welcome to attend one of these projects. I do thank the opposition; they did provide bipartisan support for the Green Army, and it is running magnificently.

Mr Brendan O'Connor interjecting—

The SPEAKER: The member for Gorton is warned.

Mr HUNT: When you think back to pink batts, green loans, cash for clunkers and the citizens assembly, you see now how real environmental programs can help young people do the right thing by the environment and the right thing by the economy. We are thrilled to have bipartisan support—(Time expired)

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

QUESTIONS TO THE SPEAKER

Questions in Writing

Ms ROWLAND (Greenway) (15:08): Madam Speaker, in accordance with standing order 105(b) I ask that you write to the Minister for Defence seeking reasons for the delay in answering a question in writing. The relevant question appears as No. 720 on the Notice Paper and is now 72 days overdue. This is the fourth time I have asked about this question.

The SPEAKER (15:09): I will so write.

COMMITTEES

Report

The SPEAKER (15:09): Before I call the Leader of the House, I have to advise that I present report No. 29 of the selection committee relating to the consideration of private members' business on Monday, 10 August 2015. The report will be printed in the Hansard for today, and the committee's determinations will appear on tomorrow's Notice Paper. Copies of the report have been placed on the table.

The report read as follows—

Report relating to the consideration of private Members' business.

1. The committee met in private session on Tuesday, 23 June 2015.

2. The committee determined the order of precedence and times to be allotted for consideration of private Members' business on Monday, 10 August 2015, as follows:
Items for House of Representatives Chamber (10.10 am to 12 noon)

PRIVATE MEMBERS’ BUSINESS

Notices

1 MS RYAN: To move:

That this House:

(1) places on the record that the:

(a) recently completed 2015 ANZ Championship has taken on new importance on the Australian sporting calendar;

(b) ANZ Championship cross Tasman competition has been significant in increasing the profile of the sport through live television coverage and internet streaming; and

(c) Netball World Cup is happening in Sydney throughout August, involving 16 international teams in 64 matches over 10 days at Sydney Olympic Park; and

(2) congratulates:

(a) the Australian Diamond players, coaching and medical staff on their preparation and performance in this tournament;

(b) the Trans Tasman Netball League for the innovations they have delivered to netball;

(c) the International Netball Federation; and

(d) Netball Australia for its impact in boosting the profile of women in sport, providing its members with valuable leadership skills and supporting world class athletes.

(Notice given 16 June 2015.)

Time allotted—30 minutes.

Speech time limits—

Ms Ryan—5 minutes.

Other Members—5 minutes each.

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

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

Orders of the day

1 MR VAN MANEN: Resumption of debate (from 15 June 2015) on the motion of Mr van Manen—

That this House:

(1) notes that:

(a) 96 per cent of all of Australian businesses are small businesses, employing more than 4.5 million people and producing more than $330 billion of the nation’s economic output;

(b) in 2013-14 Australians started more than 280,000 small businesses;

(c) the Coalition Government has developed and started to deliver as part of the budget, the largest small business package in the nation’s history—the Jobs and Small Business Package—worth $5.5 billion; and

(d) as part of the Jobs and Small Business Package, all small businesses will get an immediate tax deduction for each asset they buy costing less than $20,000; and

(2) acknowledges the work of the Prime Minister, the Treasurer and the Minister for Small Business in putting together a package that will deliver for small businesses now and into the future.
Time allotted—30 minutes.
Speech time limits—
   All Members—5 minutes.
   [Minimum number of proposed Members speaking = 6 x 5 mins]
The Committee determined that consideration of this should continue on a future day.
Notices—continued
2 MR HAYES: To move:
   That this House:
(1) notes that:
   (a) chronic gastroenterological disorders affect the lives of hundreds of thousands of Australians;
   (b) inflammatory bowel diseases affect 61,000 people, including 28,000 suffering from Crohn’s disease and 33,000 with ulcerative colitis;
   (c) inflammatory bowel disease often develops between the ages of 15 and 30, but it can start at any age; increasingly it is being seen in children;
   (d) it is estimated that 120,000 Australians have the functional gut motility disorder gastroparesis; and
   (e) gastroenterological disorders require urgent attention; and
(2) calls on the Government to:
   (a) address funding to patient support, medical research and treatment in gastroenterological disorder; and
   (b) consider the call by the University of Western Sydney to establish an Australian Translational Gastroenterology Centre to:
      (i) facilitate community awareness of gastroenterological disorders across Australia through community workshops, seminars and symposiums;
      (ii) promote support for gastrointestinal disorders at hospitals and primary health networks across Australia;
      (iii) develop a gut tissue bank for research;
      (iv) initiate and maintain a patient registry of gastrointestinal disorders; and
      (v) support local strategies to enhance treatment of gastrointestinal disorders in rural and remote areas and in Indigenous populations.
(Notice given 15 June 2015.)
Time allotted—20 minutes.
Speech time limits—
   Mr Hayes—5 minutes.
   Other Members—5 minutes each.
   [Minimum number of proposed Members speaking = 4 x 5 mins]
The Committee determined that consideration of this should continue on a future day.
3 MR NIKOLIC: To move:
   That this House:
(1) recognises:
(a) the release of the Teacher Education Ministerial Advisory Group (Advisory Group) report, 'Action Now: Classroom Ready Teachers' on 13 February 2015;
(b) that the Advisory Group, comprised of eight educational experts, was established in 2014 to provide the best possible informed advice and guidance on how teacher education could be improved to better prepare new teachers for the classroom;
(c) that the credentials, expertise and contribution of the Advisory Group was of world-class quality;
(d) that the Advisory Group conducted its review with consistent impartiality, dedication and objectivity, to the benefit of all Australians;
(e) the critical contribution made by this report to optimising teacher development for all Australian schools of the 21st century; and
(f) the truly comprehensive and wide ranging nature of the Advisory Group's investigation and subsequent report;
(2) acknowledges that:
(a) this report is both far ranging and innovative and includes a total of 38 key recommendations;
(b) the recommendations have at their core a central unifying element and thread—the educational interests of children, first, foremost and always;
(c) current and new teachers should also welcome this report, which will further enable and support both individual teachers and school communities as a whole, in both the foreseeable future, and over the longer term;
(d) overall, this report will affect constructively the lives of a majority of Australians, including most particularly teachers, parents and students;
(e) the impact of this report will be impartial in nature, being blind to both the demographic and economic circumstances of teachers, parents and students, alike;
(f) this report:
(i) is underpinned by both balance and merit, for example, it readily acknowledges the existence of both current high performing teacher performance and contribution, as well as identifying the need and scope for other performance to be significantly improved, together with a range of mechanisms and strategies to achieve this key objective; and
(ii) will act to further affirm the significance and centrality of school education within Australian society;
(g) by improving overall teacher performance, this report will likely support the retention of more students at school for longer, including most desirably, the completion of Year 12 by as many students as possible; and
(h) this report:
(i) will exert a long term and positive impact on current and future Australian workplaces and work performance; and
(ii) signals the intended ongoing future emphasis which the Government will continue to give to education and education related matters, for the benefit of all Australians, in an increasingly competitive region and world; and
(3) calls on the Parliament to endorse the Government's strong response to implementing this report as both a key milestone and critical policy initiative in shaping Australian school education and performance (for both teachers and students) for the early 21st century.

(Notice given 23 June 2015.)

Time allotted—remaining private Members’ business time prior to 12 noon.
Speech time limits—
Mr Nikolic—5 minutes.
Other Members—5 minutes each.
[Minimum number of proposed Members speaking = 6 x 5 mins]
The Committee determined that consideration of this should continue on a future day.

Items for Federation Chamber (11 am to 1.30 pm)

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

Notices

1 MR PITT: To move:
That this House:
(1) acknowledges that the Australian Defence Force Parliamentary Program (ADFPP) has enjoyed bipartisan support since its formation in 2001;
(2) recognises the importance of providing an opportunity for Parliamentarians to experience life working alongside Australian Defence Force (ADF) personnel;
(3) notes that the ADFPP provides ADF personnel with direct access to Members of Parliament in their own workplace or as a part of the exchange program to Parliament House; and
(4) expresses gratitude to ADF personnel who make ADFPP a great success.
(Notice given 26 May 2015.)

Time allotted—20 minutes.

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

2 MR CHAMPION: To move:
That this House:

(1) notes:
(a) the recent media reports and the Fair Work Ombudsman (Ombudsman) finding about the abuse of employees, including Working Holiday visa holders (subclass 417) and Temporary Work (Skilled) visa holders (subclass 457) by Baiada Poultry Pty Limited (Baiada);
(b) complaints against Baiada included that employees were being underpaid, forced to work extremely long hours and required to pay high rents for overcrowded and unsafe employee accommodation;
(c) Baiada and its Jabour-hire contractors failed to work with the Ombudsman during the inquiry into its employment practices, including:
   (i) refusing permission for Fair Work Inspectors working on this inquiry to access the factory floor at its worksites;
   (ii) failing to provide the inquiry with any 'significant or meaningful' documentation on the nature and terms of its labour contract arrangements; and
   (iii) producing inadequate, inaccurate and/or fabricated records to inspectors;
(d) the findings of the Ombudsman are damning of the governance and employment practices of Baiada; and
(e) that these reports and the employment practices of Baiada have caused significant community concern which must be addressed; and

(2) calls on the management of Baiada to immediately address the findings of the Ombudsman and bring its employment practices up to community expectations.

(Notice given 22 June 2015.)

Time allotted—30 minutes.

Speech time limits—
Mr Champion—5 minutes.
Other Members—5 minutes each.

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

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

3 MRS PRENTICE: To move:

That this House:

(1) notes that the Pacific Women’s Parliamentary Partnerships Forum (Forum) is funded by the Australian Government and is designed to support women in the region in politics and to assist Pacific parliaments in addressing gender equality issues;

(2) recognises that the Pacific region has the lowest regional average of women parliamentarians in the world, currently 13.1 per cent female representation in single or lower houses across the region, including Australia and New Zealand;

(3) recognises that the third annual Forum was held from 29 April to 1 May in Suva, Fiji, with the focus on addressing family violence in the Pacific region; and

(4) notes that reducing family violence will require a coordinated approach, and that the Forum agreed on a list of priorities for Pacific parliaments to pursue that will raise awareness and encourage action to address the issue.

(Notice given 28 May 2015.)

Time allotted—20 minutes.

Speech time limits—
Mrs Prentice—5 minutes.
Other Members—5 minutes each.

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

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

4 MR ZAPPIA: To move:

That this House:

(1) notes that:

(a) the Government spends around $40 billion each year on procuring goods and services;

(b) the Commonwealth Procurement Rules provide considerable flexibility to Government departments when making procurement decisions;

(c) considerable economic, social and environmental benefits arise from the Government buying Australian products and services; and

(d) domestic Government procurement encourages innovation and investment;

(2) expresses concern at the level of goods and services that are being sourced from overseas by the Government; and

__________________

CHAMBER
(3) calls on the Government to apply a comprehensive value for money test which includes all national benefits which accrue when goods and services are procured locally.

(Notice given 23 June 2015.)

Time allotted—30 minutes.

Speech time limits—

Mr Zappia—5 minutes.

Other Members—5 minutes each.

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

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

5 DR STONE: To move:

That this House:

(1) recognises the courage and sacrifice of the young Australian men who actively served in Bomber Command in World War II;

(2) requests the creation of a medal for Royal Australian Air Force men who served in action in Australian and British squadrons in Bomber Command in World War II;

(3) notes that:

(a) over 10,000 Australians served in Bomber Command, in which over 4,000 of these airmen lost their lives;

(b) Bomber Command had the highest casualty rate in Australia’s military history;

(c) a Bomber Command crew member had a worse chance of survival than an infantry officer in World War I; and

(d) there are fewer than 100 Australians remaining who flew in Bomber Command; and

(4) calls on the Government to, as a matter of urgency, create a medal to recognise and honour Australian airmen who served in Bomber Command in World War II.

(Notice given 4 June 2015.)

Time allotted—20 minutes.

Speech time limits—

Dr Stone—5 minutes.

Other Members—5 minutes each.

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

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

Orders of the day

1 MARRIAGE AMENDMENT (MARRIAGE EQUALITY) BILL 2015 (Mr Shorten): Second reading—Resumption of debate (from 22 June 2015).

Time allotted—10 minutes.

Speech time limits—

All Members—5 minutes.

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

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

6 MRS GRIGGS: To move:

That this House:

(1) notes that:

(a) the Boeing E-7A Wedgetail, an airborne early control and warning aircraft, has reached its final operational capability; and

(b) this aircraft is a significant enhancement for our Australian Defence Force (ADF) and has been a vital asset on Operation Okra in the Middle East region; and

(2) acknowledges the excellent work done by ADF personnel in carrying out their roles of protecting Australia and its national interests.

(Notice given 16 June 2015.)

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

Speech time limits—

Mrs Griggs—5 minutes.

Other Members—5 minutes each.

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

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

DOCUMENTS

Presentation

Mr PYNE (Sturt—Leader of the House and Minister for Education and Training) (15:09):
Documents are tabled in accordance with the list circulated to honourable members earlier today. Full details of the documents will be recorded in the Votes and Proceedings.

MATTERS OF PUBLIC IMPORTANCE

Economy

The SPEAKER (15:09): I have received a letter from the honourable the member for Cunningham proposing that a definite matter of public importance be submitted to the House for discussion, namely:

The Government failing to prepare Australians for the jobs of the new economy.

I call upon those honourable members who approve of the proposed discussion to rise in their places.

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

Ms BIRD (Cunningham) (15:10): I start my contribution by wishing everybody a very happy National TAFE Day today. I know that many TAFE colleagues are out and about in the parliament meeting with members and senators to talk about the importance of TAFE in all of our communities.

The reason that I put this matter of public importance on the record is because, sadly, on National TAFE Day we have discovered through the release of government’s federation green paper that they are giving serious consideration to abandoning any federal responsibility for vocational education and training in this country. The reality is that in an area of public policy where one would think that the national interest would require an active supportive federal
government we have actually got a federal government that in their very first budget in this place decimated the budget of the skills portfolio. Secondly, they included in their Federation white paper serious consideration of throwing their hands up and saying, 'It's all too hard. We will just buck-pass it back to the states.' The result of that is the that the remaining $1.8 billion in the skills budget would be gone—absolutely gone.

This morning, with the Leader of the Opposition and the member for Canberra, we visited the Canberra Institute of Technology—a fantastic facility. I am sure it is replicated in TAFEs in many of our seats across this country. We met with apprentices who were studying in the automotive section. It was a great cross-section of apprentices who told us some fabulous personal life stories. In particular, I would report to the House that probably a third were mature-age apprentices who had had an original career and had made a decision they wanted formal qualifications and wanted to enter into a trade area. There was one young woman doing automotive and she made a plea to all of us to get out and support more women into the traditional trades and into apprenticeships. She was doing really well. This was a great opportunity. I know members do visit their TAFEs and I would encourage everyone to continue to do so.

The serious problem that TAFEs are facing across this nation is as a result of significant withdrawal of funding across conservative state governments. Indeed, we have only just recently seen the New South Wales budget. The implication that has come out of that, with the loss of jobs in the TAFE sector, is a 30,000 decrease in the number of students enrolled in TAFE as a result of what has been happening in that state alone.

It is absolutely critical at this point in time, if we do not want to lose what is a national asset, that all governments, including the federal government, get active on finding ways to support our public TAFE and also to make sure that they remain available across the nation. I noticed the member for Herbert is here paying attention to my contribution. The member for Herbert chaired with the member for Perth as co-chair and produced an excellent report on TAFE: TAFE:an Australian asset—a bipartisan report. What we found in that report—I was a member of the committee—was that TAFE indeed provides education and training across the nation, in particular in what would be called thin markets, which are areas where it is not able to turn a profit for anybody else.

Mostly that is in our regional and rural areas. The minister at the table, I am sure, would be well aware of that.

TAFE is actually the only serious player in town for so many of those communities. If we do not want to see rural and regional Australia slip further behind, then I think every one of us in this place—whether we are based in regional areas, as I am, or rural areas or indeed in cities—has a responsibility to ensure that TAFE continues to prosper and be the backbone of our vocational education and training system.

The other thing that we found was that there is a range of areas that are very capital intensive to provide training for. We saw an example of that this morning in the automotive industry. It costs a lot of money to put the equipment in, to keep it updated; as we know, technology across the trades is expanding at a rapid pace. The jobs of the future in the trades as much as in the ICT sector are changing at a rapid rate. And we were looking at some of the computer technology that people were being trained on for mechanical repairs only today. That is expensive investment. It is investment by governments over a long period of time. I
am pleased to say that Labor at the federal level in government uses significant proportions of capital investment in the post-secondary sector to put money into TAFEs. That needs to be utilised and taken advantage of.

We need premises in place. We need them in there, getting the training. But the Abbott government has taken away $1 billion of support for apprentices. The mature apprentices we met, who quite often have to take a significant drop in their income to undertake an apprenticeship, have lost the mature age incentive payment that they previously got to help them manage the cost of doing an apprenticeship. I have to say: we are not very happy about that at all. It was a decision by the government in MYEFO last year. We need to keep apprentices training in those facilities. We have seen about a 20 per cent decrease in commencements over the last 12 months and a 20 per cent decrease in completions. How is that training people for the jobs of the future?

I also want to make the point that that capital investment is only ever going to be done by public providers to that extent. I do not want anyone to get a mistaken impression; I have met many really excellent private providers out there in the sector doing great work. But the reality is our public providers need to be the backbone of our system, and that sort of facility is really significantly important for so many communities and for their training efforts. That is another particular reason why the uniqueness of our public provider has to be supported.

The other thing I want to draw the House's attention to in the development of the new economy is that many people—we had people talking to us about it at the facility today—are coming to the understanding that they may have trained in their trade or their profession over recent decades but now the technology that is intrinsic to just about every job, no matter what job you do, is requiring them to upskill, to add to their skills base, in order to be more effective at their job. And a lot of these people are small business owners, looking to get the modern skills they need to keep their businesses flourishing. So often, TAFE is the option that allows them to access the right sort of training, and at the quality they want. So, TAFE is critically important for the upskilling effort, for the expansion and innovation in many of our small businesses across the nation.

I want to make the point, on National TAFE Day, that this is absolutely the wrong time for the federal government to even consider an option that says: 'We are going to abandon the vocational education and training sector—nothing to do with the national effort, nothing to do with national productivity, no role in national participation, nothing to say about national innovation, nothing to contribute to growth and new job opportunities in this country. The whole vocational education and training sector can just be passed back to the states and we do not have to take any responsibility.'

It is wrong to even allow it to sit out there in discussion. I think the government needs to take immediate action on the back of that federation green paper to make it clear to the over-one-million Australians who are participating in vocational education and training in any year that they are not about to abandon them. The government need to make it clear that they are not about to walk away; because people with those kinds of qualifications are, unsurprisingly, mobile. They want to move across state borders; they want to move between industries; they want to upskill and be part of the modern national economy. To do that, they need an active federal government. They need a federal government that understands the sector and they
need a federal government that absolutely invests their TAFE and public providers as well, as part of that mix.

Mr FLETCHER (Bradfield—Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Communications) (15:20): It is a pleasure to have the opportunity to speak on the third MPI debate raised by the Labor Party in the last three or four weeks. We had the member for Blaxland putting up: 'The importance of planning for the jobs of the future'. We had the Leader of the Opposition putting up: 'The government's failure to plan for the jobs of the new economy'. And now we have had the shadow minister talking about: 'The government's failure to prepare Australians for the jobs of the new economy'. It seems that in the future, in the new economy according to Labor, there will be extensive use of the 'copy' key and the 'paste' key. It seems we are coming back to the same topic time after time.

Labor seems to think it has discovered the new digital economy. It seems to think it is on to some massive new insight that our economy is transforming at an extraordinary rate. Of course our economy is transforming. According to a paper released by Deloitte recently, over five per cent of Australia's GDP, some $79 billion, can be attributed to the digital economy. They estimate that the digital economy has increased in size some 50 per cent since 2011. We are seeing a transformation in every sector.

Of course it is important that we have technology-based companies, particularly in the start-up sector, doing the best that they can. According to the OECD science, technology and innovation scorecard, some one-third of job creation in the business sector comes from young firms with fewer than 50 employees, even though they make up only 11 per cent of total employment.

So the key issue is: how do we develop and implement a plan across all of the end-to-end elements—education, supporting the start-up businesses that are so important and, most importantly, stimulating and supporting the private sector—recognising that private sector jobs are created by the private sector, not by government. It seems that Labor still clings to the fiction that government can solve everything with just more government spending.

Let us look first at education. I want to welcome Labor. They are a bit late to the party on education but it is very important that we have a set of education policies designed to recognise and respond to the transformation of our economy. On this side of the House, we have a set of policies with a very clear focus on STEM—science, technology, engineering and mathematics—subjects, which are so important. Indeed the Minister for Education highlighted some of the initiatives that we are pursuing in an answer to a question just today. We are working to change the requirements for the training of primary school teachers so that they must have a specialty in languages, in science or in maths. We are reforming the Australian curriculum to de-clutter it, to give more capacity to engage in depth on core areas such as science, maths, English and other foundation subjects. The minister mentioned that Steven Schwartz, the former vice-chancellor of Macquarie University has now been made the chairman of the Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority.

We heard the education minister talking about the way technical education needs to be responsive to the new economy. Of course that is right. That is precisely why we have announced a pilot P-Tech school, which is designed to offer a pathway into careers in technology as a form of vocational education. That is a major commitment that has been made by the Abbott government. The education minister talked about our commitment to summer
schools for STEM students, so students with the capacity and an interest in science, technology, engineering and mathematics can be brought together and encouraged to deepen their skills and pursue this vital inquiry. The minister mentioned that we have allocated significant funding to coding so school children can learn programming skills, which are a critical part of any modern economy. While we welcome Labor's interest in this important area, this government has a plan. We are focused on preparing people for the new economy, and there is a lot of work going on in the education portfolio.

Let us talk about start-ups, which are an absolutely critical part of a modern digital economy. There is an inexorable link between start-up companies and the digital economy. Look at Google, the world's third-largest company by market capitalisation, which has been going only 17 years. There are many stories of start-ups achieving remarkable success within a short time. The Australian company Atlassian was founded by two men, Scott Farquhar and Mike Cannon-Brookes, who are both now only about 35. They met at the University of New South Wales and together they founded a company with a market value of well over $3 billion, which employs some 1,000 people in Australia and around the world—high-paid, high skilled jobs.

Start-ups are key, and an important part of encouraging start-ups is having a tax framework which allows them to remunerate talented employees and attract them through employee share ownership plans, which are a standard form of remuneration used in the tech sector around the world. Yet Labor, in 2009, changed the tax law to make it fundamentally unattractive to offer or to receive options under an employee share option plan. They shifted the taxing points so the moment you would issue the options, you attracted a tax liability even though the options might prove to be worthless.

Because Labor does not understand the nature of risk, it does not understand the idea that people might be prepared to take a risk and if things come good, if the company goes well then the individual employee will share in that prosperity and in that growth. The member for Lilley unfortunately completely destroyed the attractiveness of employee share ownership plans as a tool to encourage and support start-ups. We are fixing that with legislation that has been taken through by the very energetic Minister for Small Business. That is one of the many areas in which we are working to get policies in place which support private sector businesses and particularly start-up businesses.

The third and most fundamental point, our friends on the other side of the House in their DNA do not grasp. In the modern technical digital economy as in other parts of the economy, it is the private sector that needs to generate the prosperity, the growth, the opportunity and the jobs. Labor's approach as a default is that government can and will do everything. When you look at their approach to the technology sector, their instinct is to have massive publicly funded behemoths that are designed to drive out the private sector, not to stimulate it. Labor put $10 billion into the Clean Energy Finance Corporation and $43 billion of public money into the national broadband network.

Our approach is very different. What we want to do is encourage the private sector in advanced manufacturing, in technology and in so many other areas, and that is the key focus of many of the policies that we are pursuing. The Industry Growth Centres Initiative is a $225-million policy supporting key sectors like food and agribusiness, mining equipment, technology and services, medical technologies and pharmaceuticals, advanced manufacturing,
oil, gas and energy resources, which is driving action across the sectors on industry collaboration with researchers, on commercialisation, on market access and on global supply chains.

There is a tremendous change towards global supply chains. McKinsey and the Business Council of Australia put out some terrific work on this last year. They pointed out, for example, that one of Australia's largest manufacturing exporters is Boeing, which exports components made in Australia which then go to the US to become assembled into a completed aircraft. That is the future of modern manufacturing. That is something that our friends on the other side of the House seem to completely fail to understand. In all of their rhetoric about the automotive industry, for example, they do not seem to be aware of modern trends in advanced manufacturing.

This government has a whole series of policies. The $100-million Entrepreneurs' Infrastructure Program supports key issues like assisting businesses to get access to researchers to help re-engineer the operations of those businesses to develop new ideas with commercial potential. Just recently, 18 grants were issued to accelerate commercialisation. In the Manufacturing Transition Program, 19 projects received funding.

Australia has some great tech sector businesses emblematic of the modern economy: Cochlear; Atlassian; ResMed; Campaign Monitor, a young Australian company which recently raised $250 million from a US venture capital fund; seek.com.au; and REA, the online real estate portal. We need to support private sector businesses to create the jobs in the modern digital economy. We need to back that up with education and other elements of the end-to-end system. The Abbott government has a plan to do this. We are executing that plan. The future is coming. We are working to make sure that our workforce and our economy are ready for it.

Ms RISHWORTH (Kingston) (15:30): The member for Bradfield asked why we continue to raise this issue of jobs for the new economy as a matter of public importance. Unlike those on that side of the House, we think it is important. We think that preparing our workers and our workforce for the jobs of the new economy is important. We are not going to rest on our laurels as they on the other side have done. We have put out an important policy announcement—there have been a number of policy announcements by the Leader of the Opposition—to highlight how we are going to take steps to prepare our workforce for the jobs of the new economy.

I have to say that, while our policy, I think, is a very sensible and important step forward, we have seen those on the other side just ignore this issue. They were not content in their first budget to rip close to $2 billion out of skills. That is right; believe it: $2 billion out of skills. If that is not abandoning those who are looking to skill themselves up to take on the new jobs of the new economy then I do not know what is. They have ripped money out of universities. They have a plan—and they have not got their plan through yet, because Labor is standing against that plan—to charge exorbitant fees to attend universities. They have a plan to rip money out of universities. And of course we have seen them rip money out of schools. We know that young people need a good education to ensure that they can pursue further education. This side of the House will stand up for a good education. Those on the other side rip money out.
This is what they have already done, but we now know, with the release of their secret plan, that they intend to walk away from all of these areas—walk away from funding our school students, walk away from funding vocational education and walk away from funding preschool. I really wish those on the other side would pay attention to education and the importance of an early education. If they did, they would not be walking away from funding preschool. It really shows, I think, that those on that side of the House have already done enormous damage, but their secret plan will do more damage and will walk away from ensuring that we invest in our most important resource—that is, our human capital. They are ignoring this fact and continue to ignore it.

We heard the Minister for Education and Training today talk about his great digital plan. Of course, he was forced into releasing this because Labor announced a policy. The Leader of the Opposition announced an ambitious policy. What we found out in Senate estimates is that the digital technologies curriculum has been sitting on the desk of the minister for education since November 2013. That is a long time, Minister. If we are talking about coding, as the member for Bradfield is, and talking about how we prepare our young people for the jobs of the new economy, sitting on the digital technologies curriculum for—I think it is—almost two years now is appalling, absolutely appalling. It has taken Labor announcing our policy to force this minister's hand, and, in a lacklustre way, he sneaked it out of his office. This was agreed to by all the state and territory leaders, but once again he has ignored it.

Labor, as I said, have a plan in which we will ensure that we are preparing our workforce for the jobs of the new economy. But that group on the other side has no plan. I would say that the shadow minister for vocational education really highlighted the importance of investing in vocational education. It is not about abandoning the field of vocational education; it is about investment—investment in our people and investment for those jobs that come along.

On National TAFE Day, I would like to wish those on the other side a happy National TAFE Day, but I would like more to ask them to put their money where their mouth is and actually fund vocational education. Bring back the money for the trades training centres in schools because they are doing a great job in our local schools, getting vocational skills in. Bring back the money. Ensure that we are skilling apprentices. Ensure that we are supporting the workforce of the future, not continually trying to dumb down Australians, which is what their plans seem to do time and time again. Please, Member for Bradfield, take notice of this matter of public importance, because it is important, even if you do not think it is.

Mrs ANDREWS (McPherson—Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Industry and Science) (15:35): Let me say that I am absolutely delighted to be speaking on this topic. I think it is one of the most important topics that we could and should be debating here in the House. This is the third time that I have spoken on it, and I think it is a wonderful opportunity.

Mr Conroy: You might get it right this time. Third time lucky!

Mrs ANDREWS: I think it is interesting that we hear interjections from the other side, because I have been filled with hope that maybe we might be inching our way forwards to a collective view on what we should be doing in the future to make sure that our kids have jobs—that they have good jobs, that they have an opportunity to go out there and earn and support themselves. Unfortunately, that is not a commonly held view, but it is one that I certainly am happy to advocate for because I think that the jobs of the future are critical. You
will not hear me making snide remarks and asides and criticising any comments or any discussions or any debates on what is clearly a very important issue for us into the future.

What I can say is that there has been a report released recently by CEDA, the Committee for Economic Development of Australia. That was released in June, only a couple of days ago. It is titled *Australia's future workforce?*

One of the things that I think was disappointing about the portrayal of that was that there was a lot of focus on changes to some industries that are clearly declining here in Australia and, with getting so caught up in the negative parts of industry, we overlooked some real opportunities in there to celebrate our successes and certainly to look at what we could be doing to build that into the future.

One of the chapters of the report that particularly took my attention, and one that I am very focused on, was chapter 2.1. It is titled Australia's Shifting Economy and it was written by Tim Bradley, who is the General Manager of the Industry Economics Branch, at the Department of Industry and Science. For those who have not read this report, I really do commend it to you and ask you to have a look at it and particularly to have a look at chapter 2.1, because it is very insightful and, I think, paints a very clear picture of what has happened in the past and how we can use some of that to predict what may be about to happen in the future.

I have said in previous debates that we have to be very careful about making predictions about the jobs of the future, because we simply do not know exactly what they are. We have to put into perspective some of the opinions that have been given of the CEDA report, particularly on job losses and declining industries. What Tim Bradley says in his introduction is:

> While it is easy to focus on the industries and jobs lost, there is a bigger story at play. In the decade to 2013–14, Australian manufacturing employment decreased by around 92,000 jobs. In that same decade however, employment in healthcare and social services increased by 462,000 jobs, by 314,000 jobs in professional services and by 222,000 jobs in construction.

I am not saying that job losses are okay under any circumstances, because quite clearly they are not. But what this is painting is a picture of hope that certainly there are some industries that are declining and have declined over the years but there are other industries and other jobs that are being created here. We need to look very closely at this report and what the jobs of the future will be and focus on what we can and should be doing into the future.

In the closing seconds of this debate, I would like to remind everyone of what we know already, which is that about 75 per cent of future jobs will require people to have skills in science, technology, engineering and maths. We should as a whole work together to encourage students to take up those studies in those fields so that they are well-equipped for the jobs of the future.

Mr CONROY (Charlton) (15:40): It is my pleasure to follow the parliamentary secretary, and I do not doubt her commitment to this very important topic. I do not doubt her earnestness and her wish to grow jobs in this economy. Unfortunately, I doubt the intent of the government she is a member of. So far the government has shown an appalling record on job creation and planning for the jobs of the new economy. There can be no higher duty, other than national defence, for a federal government than to support the employment prospects of Australians.
The previous speaker picked figures and was absolutely right. Some industries will move up and some will move down, but let's look at the national figures as a whole—and they are very concerning. We have unemployment at a 12-year high. We have got record underemployment. We have got more people underemployed in terms of the percentage than during the eighties recession or the nineties recession. We have 190,000 people classified as long-term unemployed—the highest number ever. We have got 25 per cent of people who are unemployed in this country classified as long-term unemployed. That is also the highest ratio for that figure. By any measure, we have a jobs crisis in this country that is occurring under the lazy government opposite.

In my home region, we have got youth unemployment at 18.6 per cent. Just picture that for a moment. Almost one in five young people in my region who are looking for a job cannot find a job. We are facing a lost generation of young people with the enormous societal consequences that will have. The general unemployment rate in my region is over 10 per cent, so we are facing a jobs crisis. We urgently need action. We urgently need a government that is genuinely committed to growing the jobs of the future and planning and equipping job seekers with the best possible skills. We need a government that, in short, is supporting innovation, education and training, and unfortunately—despite all the rhetoric on the other side—their actions do not match their words.

Since coming to power, we have seen a $2 billion cut in support for innovation programs—and I will return to that in a minute—and we have seen a $2 billion cut in skills and training programs, including a billion-dollar cut to apprentices. The one that really sticks in my craw is the egregious cut to trade training centres. These centres were doing great work around Australia. They were doing great work in the high schools in my electorate and they have now been cut off. I have got five or six high schools that will not have the opportunity to get a trade training centre. I have got five or six high schools that will not have the opportunity to get a trade training centre. I will note that the last one that opened—guess who opened it? Senator Arthur Sinodinos. He was very happy to go along, announce it and get a photo op in a local paper, but unfortunately he is a member of a government that is not supporting this great program.

Ms Bird: Did he mention that?

Mr CONROY: He did not mention it member for Cunningham. I would have respected him more if he said, 'I'm opening this great centre, but it's the last one in your region because we have cut the funding.' But no; sadly, he did not.

We find out in the federation green paper that they have got a secret plan to cut another $1.8 billion in vocational and education training by withdrawing all federal funding to this area. It is a great tragedy, and that is why it is so important to be debating this on National TAFE Day. I say happy National TAFE Day to everyone.

Hunter TAFE in my home region is the largest regional TAFE. It has got 60,000 enrolments across 15 campuses. Unfortunately, it is under real pressure. Glendale TAFE in my electorate has had all its metal trades training centre courses stripped out even though my electorate is the centre of metal trades in the region. The member for Shortland was commenting before question time on the threat that Belmont TAFE is under, which would be a most egregious decision if that TAFE was closed because of the short-sightedness of the state New South Wales Liberal government and the federal government.
This government has an appalling record not just on training but on providing the jobs and supporting the jobs for people to come into. They killed the automotive industry—50,000 direct jobs gone and another 200,000 indirect jobs gone. They are killing the naval shipbuilding industry. We saw another 160 jobs go at Forgacs in Tomago yesterday—a tragic story. BAE in Williamstown is under threat.

This government does not care about jobs. It will mouth that it does, and I accept that individual members over there have a genuine commitment to growing jobs in this economy. Unfortunately, they are members of a government that has lost its way. They are members of a government that does not show a commitment to job creation. Unfortunately, they are not the ones who will suffer. It will be the young people in this country who will suffer. It will be the TAFE students. It will be the 18.6 per cent of young unemployed people in my region.

It is a great tragedy that we are having to have this debate. It should be a unity ticket. We should be talking about coding. We should be talking about skilling up teachers. We should be talking about venture capital. That is all in Labor's plan. Instead, we have excuses and blame shifting from the government—a government that is not genuinely committed to job creation.

Mr LAUNDY (Reid) (15:45): It has been a frustrating week. On Monday, we had, I think, a secret plan on education. On Tuesday, we had a secret plan on hospitals. Today, according to the member for Kingston and now the member for Charlton, we have a secret plan on jobs. Is it jobs? Yes, jobs and vocational training.

The frustrating part is that we are having a review into Federation. It is a green paper. It is actually a discussion paper. It is a process. It needs to be dealt with with state and local governments. This Federation of ours is 114 years old. It needs to be reviewed. We have structural budget deficit issues. We have massive duplications of resources occurring at all three levels of government. Our resources are finite. Hence the fact that we have the structural budget deficit. Instead of ruling things in and out and playing games, we need to have a sensible conversation between all three levels of government on a very simple concept—who does what and who pays for what. I would like to add a third—who regulates and monitors compliance.

After 23 years of employing people and bouncing around between all three levels of government in this country, I can tell you that it is tough to employ people. The topic of the debate is the government failing to prepare Australians for the jobs of the new economy. Here is a newsflash: I believe this topic should be the government failing to prepare Australians to create the jobs of the new economy. This House does not understand enough, in my humble opinion, that it is not government that creates jobs; it is today's employers who become tomorrow's small business operators and make their way through to become medium-sized and large business operators. That is hard. I do not know how to do it. I do not have the answers. I am not an educator. But we need to better target our education to foster, find and promote the entrepreneurial flair that sits inside tomorrow's small business operator.

How are we as a government trying to do that? We heard the parliamentary secretary for communications talk about employee share schemes. The reality of the changes that the former government made was that a vehicle that could be used to give ground level entry to an employee and ownership in a potential business of the future, a great transitioning tool, was taxed upon issue rather than upon redemption. Guess what? If an employee on $55,000 or...
$60,000 a year who is given options in a business does not have the capital to pay the capital
gain on them in year 1, they will not do it. Hence the changes we have made are sensible. It
was how the system was and will always be. It is how today's employees can use a tool to
become tomorrow's entrepreneurs. It is a good system.

I like this term 'new economy'. A job is a job is a job. Our economy changes every day.
There are opportunities every day. Our job as government is to get out of the way and allow
people to take risks. This goes back to why the green paper is so important and why the
monitoring and compliance side of the green paper is so important. Just like any regulatory
burden you add has to be paid for by a business and is actually a disincentive, the more you
can take out of the way of business the more incentive there is for it to have a go.

Among the budget initiatives is the small business package. Irrespective of what that small
business is, it can take advantage of a decrease in company tax rates and instant asset write-
offs. The member for Cunningham mentioned TAFE. In my former role I worked with RTOs
to make our own cert III and cert IV hospitality courses that we could offer to our staff
because TAFE did not fit our business model. These are all things that we should do. This is a
most worthwhile debate to have. Today's employees are tomorrow's entrepreneurs, and we
need to foster and inflame their passion—(Time expired)

Ms Ryan (Lalor—Opposition Whip) (15:50): I, too, rise today to speak on this matter of
public importance—the government's failure to plan for the jobs of the new economy. I will
open my comments by sharing an observation I have made about some of the things we have
heard this week. Today I came into the chamber to prepare for a 90-second statement to hear
Minister Morrison, the member for Cook, berating the Leader of the Opposition in his
absence, suggesting that the shuttle bus from the school gate to Centrelink will not run under
this government. I was appalled. I was absolutely offended. The member for Cook needs to
know that the young people in my electorate are very much looking forward to the tour of a
life in poverty that he is planning with the social services changes! He has no plans for the
future of the young people in my electorate. He has no plans to train the young people in my
electorate.

I will share another observation. I have spoken to many educators and students across the
course of my life, having spent so much time in a place where learning occurs, and I think
those opposite misunderstand the drivers for learning. They believe that competition
motivates people to learn. I have always found in my life and those of my students that a clear
purpose for learning generally motivates people to learn, and what we have here is a
government that has no clear purpose around jobs, education or training. We know this by its
actions. We know that it does not have a clear purpose that young people can latch onto,
saying, 'This government understands what I need and this government has a plan for my
future, and this government's going to create things in my community that will help me get to
that future.' The government does not want to engage with communities like mine; it wants to
punish the young people in communities like mine, and they have punished even those who
are at work. There is lots of rhetoric about those who perhaps have lost their jobs, but what
about those who are at work? The cuts to the apprenticeship programs are heartbreaking. The
member for Cunningham and I have stood with apprentices in my electorate, and we heard
from them firsthand what the Tools for Your Trade program meant for them. We heard from
them firsthand that they had no intention of taking out a loan that would put them into debt so that they could continue their indenture to complete their trade.

There is a mindset that comes across the chamber that just does not seem to understand the importance of education and training, not to mention that today we had the Minister for Education and Training on his feet at question time, highly amusing me. He has appointed a new person on his curriculum review team whose first public statements were about 'back to basics', backed up by Minister Pyne today: 'We're going to do more numeracy and more literacy, with more time. We're going to do maths and science by inquiry. We're going to do code.' He did not even blush at the fact that you cannot do all those things at once. He did not even blush at the fact that you cannot create time in the curriculum out of thin air to do all of these things. He was going to do more of everything. There is no plan for education. This government's minister for education does not care about education. I have said seven times this week that, if he showed as much passion for education as he does against the CFMEU, every schoolkid in this country would have a set purpose.

There are other really important examples. The member for Kingston, who was on her feet today, came to my electorate, to the Little River Primary School, and there we met a young mother with two children who was engaged in education and training through programs set up by the former Labor government. She was standing there, trying to fight a cut to out-of-school-hours care that was being imposed on her community. She told us the story of how many cuts she had faced as a single mother in a TAFE program—slash, slash, slash, with no concern and no care.

This government needs to get serious. This government needs to get to work. It needs to get a purpose. It needs to think about jobs of the future. It needs to identify the disruptors. It needs to do some work. Its new paper just suggests pushing that work onto somebody else, whether it be states, families or the individual.

Mr HOGAN (Page) (15:55): Talking about jobs, I was thinking earlier of a children's nursery rhyme which I am sure you have heard, Deputy Speaker. I am sure most people in the chamber would have heard the rhyme about the butcher, the baker and the candlestick maker. Wouldn't we love it if there were some butchers and some bakers—the Greens are not here; otherwise there might be some candlestick makers—on the other side? What do we have on the other side? We do not have the butcher; we have the union official. We do not have the baker; we have the political staffer. We do not have the candlestick maker; we have the lawyer. There is nothing wrong with those three professions, but wouldn't it be lovely to have a bit of diversity? Wouldn't it be lovely to have a butcher, a baker and a candlestick maker instead of the union official, the political staffer and the lawyer? That would help them have a bit of creative thought about new jobs and creating the jobs of the future.

The new jobs of the future are important, as history has shown. If we go back 100 years, there were no jobs in our economy that would have had anything to do with electricity. Electricity was being invented; it was a new concept. If we go back 20 or 30 years, there were no jobs that had anything to do with personal computers. If we go back just 15 or so years, there were not that many jobs that had anything to do with the internet. So jobs disappear, but jobs are created. How we prepare our students and incentivise our private sector today for the jobs of the future is very important. The other thing is that every student now at school will probably have four to five different careers over their life. No, they will not go from being a
union official to being a staffer to being an MP. Those careers will transcend lots of different things.

So how do we prepare the education system and our private sector for these jobs? Unfortunately, it does not come from the 'in the box' thinking we get from the other side, where it is all about regulation and government solutions. Someone mentioned the curriculum earlier. It is not about content. It is not necessarily about teaching our students content all the time. I know a lot of teachers, and what we are doing with the new curriculum is not about what teachers teach students; it is about how we teach our students and our young people, because content can quickly become superseded and irrelevant. So we want to teach our students and our children about critical thinking. We want to teach them about problem solving. We want teachers who are delivering their content in an array of different ways, whether it be auditory, for the students who like to hear things; visual, for the student who is visual and likes to see how things are happening; or kinaesthetic, for students who just have to be doing things physically. So this is what we are about. We are about the fact that we want to engage our young students and our children and we want to teach them skills. It is not about content or regulation; it is about teaching them to be thinkers, and that is what we are doing.

Of course, we want to encourage private enterprise and business people to be involved in the jobs of the new economy. Others have mentioned the employee share ownership plan that was created by the previous government. What they did by killing off entrepreneurs in this country was just outrageous. As I think an earlier speaker suggested, we do not know what the jobs of the future are. Government does not know what the jobs of the future are. But we want to encourage our entrepreneurs, we want to encourage our private sector, to have a go because they will find out and they will fulfil the needs and wants that are created as our community and society changes.

Again, this is not about regulation. This government is not about regulating job creation; we are about liberating the private sector and they will do what they do best—they will create the jobs and the wealth that this country needs.

Ms CHESTERS (Bendigo) (16:00): Today, as we have heard, is National TAFE Day. I want to take a moment to recognise all of the hardworking teachers who work in our TAFE sector. These are proud AEU members—that is right, they are members of a union—and they have worked really hard for many decades to ensure that our young people or people looking to upskill, to transfer careers, get the quality education that they need. It has been hard for a lot of people who have worked in TAFE over the last couple of years. There have been some massive cuts and attacks on people working in TAFE. Today I want to acknowledge that, despite the challenges, these good people, these great teachers, are still committed to TAFE and they are still going to work every day to ensure that people have the opportunity to get a vocational education.

In my state of Victoria the attacks by the former Liberal-National government have been savage. They have completely smashed TAFE in the state of Victoria, particularly in regional areas. We have seen in areas like my own electorate of Bendigo campuses close and courses disappear—fundamental courses that you would think would never disappear such as cabinet making, construction and bricklaying, and automotive courses. Do you know why? Because the former government changed the funding formula and said that courses need to turn a profit; they need to have at least 30 people in the classroom before the course can be run. That
argument, like the current argument, was that they needed to be put to the market and they needed to turn a profit. In some parts of regional Australia they simply do not have that many students. The changes that have occurred in our TAFE sector have disproportionately affected people in regional areas. They have meant that those young people needing skills have to travel further. An example from my electorate concerns apprentices who work at Barker Trailers. They have to travel an hour and a half to get to their course at TAFE—an hour and a half because their campus closed. The boss and the company have done the right thing—they hire a bus to drive their apprentices across the country so that they can get the TAFE experience they need for their leadership.

This government's attacks on the VET sector have compounded the problems that we have in our state-based TAFE sector. There are cuts to the VET program, there are cuts to Tools for Your Trade, there are cuts to apprenticeships, there are cuts to skills—this is not regulation; this is purely a matter of funding. This government has cut from the VET sector, making it almost impossible for young people to get the skills they need for the jobs of the future. This MPI is important because not only do the government have to put money back into TAFE and money back into VET and money back into the regions to ensure that we are skilling up young people for the jobs that exist today but also they are denying the opportunity for businesses to work with a functioning VET sector to develop the jobs of the future.

I still have a very strong manufacturing area in my region, and when I meet with the Bendigo Manufacturing Group and ask the simple question, 'What do you most need from the federal government?,' they say 'Support with recruiting young people.' They need young people with the skills that they need for future careers and for the jobs for today. One job I am talking about is pattern making. The old school pattern maker might have used a pencil and paper. Today's pattern maker uses a computer—they use coding and programs. They are looking for the TAFE courses where they can train a young person to do a practical, skilled job on a computer. The employer is now looking to bring people over here on 457 visas because there just are not the people trained locally. The reason is not because we do not have any young people who want to go into these jobs but because the TAFEs do not have the courses and this government has failed to invest to help the VET sector run these courses.

Another example in my electorate is Jimmy Possum, a boutique furniture maker. They have a high number of adult apprentices as well as new apprentices. This government's cuts to the adult apprenticeship program mean that they cannot cross-skill. This government does not understand what we need to do to help create the jobs for the future because it is not investing in the first steps to skill up the work force and to provide the skills for the jobs of the future.

Mr IRONS (Swan) (16:05): I wholeheartedly thank the member for Cunningham for raising today's MPI, on the government's failure to prepare Australians for the jobs of the new economy. I see the member for Cunningham is leaving the chamber. I served on the education committee with her in the first term of this parliament and I know that her passion for education is genuine. But, as we just heard from the member for Bendigo, it is all about the AEU. She let that cat out of the bag—the process is all about the AEU. I did meet with the AEU today, she will be pleased to know, and I heard their stories about TAFE particularly in my electorate, with Polytechnic West. I know you, Mr Deputy Speaker Randall, are a former teacher, a proud educator, and you still spend plenty of time educating people in your electorate when you go doorknocking.
This discussion gives me the opportunity to highlight all the great things the coalition government is doing to prepare all Australians for the jobs of the new economy. The reason we have to have a new economy, as described by the member for Cunningham, is that the previous government spent six years wrecking the old economy—they absolutely ruined it. I am glad that the member for Cunningham has realised that there is a need for a new economy, because they spent six years destroying the previous economy. Every member on this side of the House, like every member of the public, knows the mantra: ‘A vote for Labor is a vote for waste and economic disaster.’ The former Labor government, Rudd-Gillard-Rudd government, proved that mantra. Colleagues, I was bemused when I was advised of today’s MPI topic.

Anyone with an ounce of economic know-how would be able to make the correlation between policies which encourage innovation, a strong economy and strong job growth. But, as we all know, those opposite cannot make that correlation, let alone how to boost employment. I am sure, Mr Deputy Speaker, that you would agree with me that over the last three weeks we have seen ample evidence on the ABC that they had no plans; they only focused on themselves. As former Prime Minister Gillard said, they lost their way. They certainly did lose their way and they destroyed the economy along the way.

Unlike those opposite, the coalition has a plan to create new jobs, drive innovation and support businesses. It is a plan that is working. Unlike the economic disaster and job-destroying disaster that those opposite created for this country, this coalition government, since the beginning of the year, has created over 111,000 new jobs, or more than 22,000 new jobs per month. The labour market has also continued to perform strongly in the first five months of 2015, after a strong 2014 with a jobs growth of nearly 4000 a week, which is quadruple the rate seen in 2013. In the 20 months since the coalition formed government, well over a quarter of a million jobs have been created. I think the numbers speak for themselves, but to ensure that the member for Cunningham and her colleagues understand just how it happened, I will explain it: it is all about good policies.

I know you are a bit dumbfounded because you are yet to create even one good policy of your own, but here are a few of ours that are preparing Australians for jobs in the new economy the coalition is creating. We are investing $2.2 billion in industry programs across the forward estimates with a $400 million competitiveness agenda, which is a core business focused element of the government’s broader economic action strategy. The agenda sets out clear ambitions that Australia must pursue: a lower-cost business friendly environment with less regulation, lower taxes and more competitive markets. We heard the same sentiment eloquently put by the member for Reid. The agenda also works to develop a more skilled labour force, better economic infrastructure and an industry policy fostering innovation and entrepreneurship. We heard from previous speakers from the other side how the coalition destroys things, but if we go back to 2007 there was a program run by the coalition called the Business Ready program, which made loans to fledgling businesses to create jobs. As soon as the Labor Party came in, they shut it down. I saw four industries in my electorate head...
overseas for offshore funding. This is about the coalition getting on with the job of creating a new economy, as the member for Cunningham said.

**BILLS**

Renewable Energy (Electricity) Amendment Bill 2015
Social Services Legislation Amendment (Defined Benefit Income Streams) Bill 2015
Excise Tariff Amendment (Fuel Indexation) Bill 2015
Customs Tariff Amendment (Fuel Indexation) Bill 2015
Fuel Indexation (Road Funding) Special Account Bill 2015
Fuel Indexation (Road Funding) Bill 2015

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

Migration Amendment (Regional Processing Arrangements) Bill 2015

First Reading

Bill—by leave—and explanatory memorandum presented by Mr Dutton.

Bill read a first time.

Second Reading

Mr DUTTON (Dickson—Minister for Immigration and Border Protection) (16:12): I move:

That this bill be now read a second time.

The Migration Amendment (Regional Processing Arrangements) Bill 2015 amends the Migration Act 1958 to provide express statutory authority which applies where the Commonwealth has entered into an arrangement with another country with respect to the regional processing functions of that country.

The amendment solely goes to:

1. enabling payments; and
2. enabling the fact of regional processing.

The legislation does not change or in any way expand the current situation in regional offshore processing.

The amendments made by this bill strengthen and put beyond any doubt the existing legislative authority to give practical effect to the substantive regional processing provisions inserted by the Migration Legislation Amendment (Regional Processing and Other Measures) Act 2012.

This is achieved by providing clear express statutory authority for the Commonwealth to provide assistance to other countries to carry into effect arrangements for the processing and management of unauthorised maritime arrivals who have been taken to regional processing centres. This also extends to the expenditure of Commonwealth money on these arrangements.

The substantive regional processing provisions came into effect on 18 August 2012. They provide for the transfer of illegal maritime arrivals, who arrive in Australia by boat without a visa, to be transferred to another country for assessment by that country of their claims to be
refugees. The only condition for the designation of a country is that the minister thinks that it is in the national interest to make the designation. Currently, the Republic of Nauru and the Independent State of Papua New Guinea are designated as regional processing countries.

The current regional processing framework was introduced by the previous Labor government.

The amendments were made to the Migration Act 1958 by the Migration Legislation Amendment (Regional Processing and Other Measures) Act 2012 to:

1. provide that an offshore entry person is a person who has, at any time, entered Australia at an excised offshore place after the excision time for that offshore place and became an unlawful non-citizen because of that entry;
2. allow a regional processing country to be designated without limitation by the international obligations or domestic law of that country;
3. provide that, subject to relevant limitations, an offshore entry person detained under section 189 of the Migration Act 1958 must be taken to a regional processing country as soon as practicable.

On 10 September 2012, the then Minister for Immigration and Citizenship designated Nauru a regional processing country.

On 9 October 2012, the then Minister for Immigration and Citizenship designated the Independent State of Papua New Guinea a regional processing country.

The bill confirms the ability of Australian officials, acting on behalf of the Commonwealth, to take action to assist the foreign government in the regional processing country, consistent with the law of that country.

The bill only seeks to ensure that there is express legislative authority for the Commonwealth to provide assistance to other countries to carry into effect arrangements for the processing and management of unauthorised maritime arrivals who have been taken to regional processing countries. It does not purport to have any effect in itself on the rights of those persons.

The bill applies where the Commonwealth has entered into an arrangement with a person or body in relation to the regional processing functions of a country. 'Person' includes a 'body politic' and therefore a country.

Specifically, the bill provides statutory authority for the Commonwealth to:

- take, or cause to be taken, any action in relation to the arrangement or the regional processing functions of the country;
- make payments, or cause payments to be made, in relation to the arrangement or the regional processing functions of that country; and
- do anything that is incidental or conducive to the taking of such action or the making of such payments.

In this bill, 'regional processing functions' include the implementation of any law or policy, or the taking of any action, by a country in connection with the role of the country as a regional processing country, whether the implementation or the taking of action occurs in that country or another country.

The bill also makes clear that an arrangement is a very broad term, and can apply to arrangement, agreement, understanding, promise or undertaking, whether or not it is legally binding.
The term 'action' explicitly includes exercising restraint over the liberty of a person. I wish to make it clear that Australia does not restrain the liberty of persons in regional processing countries. To the extent that the liberty of persons taken to regional processing countries is restrained in those countries, this is done by those countries under the respective laws of those countries.

These amendments do not otherwise provide authority for any restraint over the liberty of persons. The lawful authority for any restraint over liberty arises under the law of the relevant regional processing country.

To avoid any doubt about the intention of these amendments, the bill includes a provision to clarify that these amendments are intended to ensure that the Commonwealth has capacity and authority to take action, without otherwise affecting the lawfulness of that action. The purpose of this provision is to assist readers to understand the purpose of these amendments, which are limited to providing the Commonwealth with express legislative authority to take action to assist foreign governments in regional processing countries.

These amendments will apply from 18 August 2012. This has the effect of retrospectively and prospectively authorising Commonwealth actions and expenditure in regional processing countries. The date of 18 August 2012 is the date on which the existing legislative framework for regional processing under the Migration Act commenced. The retrospective operation of these provisions will provide authority for all activity undertaken in relation to regional processing arrangements for the entire period these arrangements have been in place.

The government wishes to ensure that there is a sustainable and solid framework for Australia's role in regional processing arrangements. To ensure the long-term viability of regional processing, the amendments in the bill seek to strengthen the existing legislative framework for regional processing activities.

There is no question that the regional processing arrangements are important to Australia's strong border-protection policies. Specifically, regional processing arrangements help combat people-smuggling. Offshore processing removes the attraction of engaging a people smuggler and taking a dangerous boat journey. Anyone who comes to Australia illegally by boat without a visa will never be settled in Australia. Regional processing is therefore an important regional solution for maintaining Australia's strong border-protection policies.

The government does not want the sustainability of regional processing weakened. The Australian people do not want to see a surge in people-smuggling ventures again. Nor do we want people's lives put at risk. We want a sustainable and solid framework for processing claims in regional processing countries. The Australian population deserves greater confidence in the integrity of the regional processing framework.

Regional cooperation is a key element of the government's approach to the protection of our borders. This bill will ensure that Australia is able to continue to provide the necessary support and assistance to regional processing countries to carry out these arrangements.

I trust this bill will have the support of all members, most particularly those with an interest in ensuring the continued success of regional processing arrangements.

I commend the bill to the House.

Leave granted for second reading debate to continue immediately.
Mr SHORTEN (Maribyrnong—Leader of the Opposition) (16:20): We understand that this is an urgent matter and that the government is seeking for it to be dealt with before the parliament rises for the winter break. We note the guarantee from the government that these amendments in the Migration Amendment (Regional Processing Arrangements) Bill solely go to enabling payments and enabling the fact of regional processing, and that the legislation does not change or in any way expand the current situation in regional offshore processing. Labor have been promised that this amendment bill does not empower new conduct and that nothing here is the basis for new action.

We should record that we are underwhelmed by this request for urgent action at one minute to midnight. Surely such important proposals and their timing can be allowed greater periods of preparation and debate. We flag that we will ask questions in the consideration-in-detail stage in the Senate to ensure the legislation is in fact what we have been promised.

But this legislation goes to, I think, deeper issues in the nation. Trust is in short supply in the 44th Parliament. Every question time, the government regularly attacks our patriotism, our love of this nation, our good faith and our sincerity on these important matters. But it is a very big wheel that does not turn, and sometimes in life the very people you attack are the very people you need to turn to. This is one of those times.

Labor will be supporting this legislation because it is our policy. Our policy is based on fundamental principles. How do we best ensure safety at sea? How do we stop people smugglers preying on the desperation of the persecuted, the vulnerable and the dispossessed? How do we make sure that genuine refugees get that second chance and that those who are not genuine are sent home? How do we ensure that Australian Navy and Customs officials never ever again face the grim task of pulling bodies from the water off Christmas Island?

I am sure that I speak for all of us in this place when I say that the devastating loss of life—the drownings, the perishing of vulnerable people, of children—is something that we cannot in good conscience ever accept. It is human tragedy we must do everything in our power to prevent. Labor stands resolutely to make sure that the dangerous sea voyage from Java to Christmas Island remains closed.

As I have said before, Labor learnt lessons from its time in government. At the end of the civil war in Sri Lanka, the movement of refugees in our region changed fundamentally and immediately. Australia was slow to respond and to change our approach. The consequences are well known; no-one supports them—no-one. Today, we support this legislation, which is consistent with the approach that we took in government, consistent with our policy and entirely consistent with the regional agreement that Labor settled in 2013.

So we come to this position today not, as some do, out of fear and not, as some do, in an attempt to pander to the worst instincts or the base motives of those who have never learned to accept, appreciate and value the reality of modern multicultural Australia. We stand here not as defenders of an inward looking fortress where the problems of the world are never ours; instead we stand here guided by our compassion, because our compassion demands that we prevent drownings at sea, just as our compassion demands the humane treatment of all those in our care.

For us as lawmakers, as leaders, as parents and as human beings, this is not an abstract debate where the loss of human life is lightly dismissed or conveniently overlooked. We
cannot limit our compassion to those in our line of sight. We never see the photos of the people who drown seeking refuge in Australia. We never hear their voices. We do not know their stories. But their life does not matter less because of this, their death is no less tragic because of this, and the duty that we owe them is no less. These are real people. The challenge before us is real, and the questions that we grapple with are as fundamental as life and death. If we sit here in the house of the Australian people with the power to pass laws which can save lives—laws which can stop some of the most desperate downtrodden people in the world from paying every last dollar they have for a cramped spot in an unsafe, possibly lethal, boat, for them and the people they love—then there is no choice: our compassion and our conscience demand that we act. We will vote for this bill because people's safety comes first. We will vote for this bill because there are some things more important than partisanship or political agendas. We will vote for this bill because we are guided by our compassion.

In voting for this legislation, we make it clear that there has been no more effective deterrent than the regional resettlement agreement introduced by Labor. I appreciate that the government, by moving this amendment bill, acknowledges the truth of Labor's policy. It acknowledges that there is no better method of preventing people from taking a dangerous voyage in unsafe vessels on a lethal journey than the arrangement that we put in place, and no better way of ensuring genuine refugees are prioritised and put ahead of those who are not; there is no more important act by an Australian government in reducing the flow of vessels than this.

Because of the agreements that Labor secured with the governments of Papua New Guinea and Nauru to have people found to be genuine refugees at the Manus Island Detention Facility and in Nauru resettled, but not in Australia, our country was unequivocally taken off the table as a permanent resettlement destination. News of these agreements spread rapidly through the people-smuggling network, despite a clear attempt by some now in government, and some of their supporters, to send a message to those very same networks that the arrangements that we put in place could be overwhelmed. The only possible outcome of such irresponsible public messages was to encourage people to continue to risk the voyage. These were messages which those opposite, and some of their backers in the community, stopped articulating the moment the election was complete.

But Labor understands, in opposition as we did in government, that it is essential that the people smugglers do not have a product to sell. This means settlement in Australia must be off the table. This is the clear, unambiguous message Labor sent from the first day of our regional resettlement policy. People would still be processed under the convention, but the people-smugglers could no longer advertise Australia as the destination. Under Labor, Australia increased our humanitarian refugee intake from 13,750 people to 20,000 people. Our policies were designed so that Australia would help more people, while ensuring that each individual got here safely. Within two months of the conclusion of Labor's Papua New Guinea agreement, vessel arrivals had dropped by 90 per cent. Following this, the new government did not put in place a single other piece of substantive policy until mid-December.

Labor believes in doing all that is necessary to bring an end to the loss of life at sea. We do support offshore processing at Nauru and Manus Island as a step which has saved lives, but this does not absolve the government from their fundamental responsibility to ensure that
people on Manus Island or Nauru are treated humanely, and with dignity. We do not believe the government are running offshore processing in the way we would, or in the way that Australians would expect. Genuine refugees are vulnerable people, fleeing persecution. It is not for us to demonise them, to vilify them or to seek to score political points from their misery. They are not illegals, and fleeing persecution is never a crime.

When asylum seekers are in an Australian funded facility even if overseas, Australia still has a duty of care. Languishing in indefinite detention is not a humane solution. There is no place whatsoever in Australian funded facilities for violent, inhumane or degrading treatment. Our responsibility is to process asylum seekers as efficiently and as rapidly as possible so that genuine refugees are not left in limbo and the people who are not genuine refugees are sent home.

Regional resettlement will always be at the core of Labor's approach to this issue. We know it works. We know it sends the message to the people smugglers that their days of profiting from those in dire need are over. We know that regional resettlement when properly administered is the strongest and most humane approach to asylum seeker policy.

When Labor were asked to support this amendment there was some considerable recollection in my party of Labor's first regional resettlement policy that centred on the Malaysian arrangement. Because of the High Court's decision in that case, the fate of this plan was left in the hands of the parliament, just as we are being entrusted now. It was a debate that captured, for all to see, the poisonous, obstructionist negativity of the Abbott opposition. We remember that, after years of slogans and scaremongering, they suddenly sought to lecture us on the rights of refugees. We remember the then shadow minister for immigration, the member for Cook—the man who said in 2011 that allowing relatives of asylum seekers who drowned at sea to attend the funeral of their loved ones and, for some, the funeral of their own child was not a reasonable use of money—lecturing us about being humane. We will never forget the crocodile tears from the Treasurer when he said:

I will never ever support a people swap where you can send a 13-year-old child unaccompanied to a country without supervision—never. It will be over my dead body.

We will never forget that when Prime Minister Gillard wrote to Tony Abbott asking for bipartisanship, seeking cooperation to reach a solution, he wrote back saying: 'This is a problem that you have created and it is your responsibility to solve.' That was his idea of leadership: 'This is your mess, you fix it.'

We will never forget the deal that the Liberals and the Greens did in teaming up to defeat the Malaysia arrangement. We will never forget the 689 souls that were lost after that vote. My fear is that the truth is that the coalition opposed the Malaysia arrangement not because they thought it would not work but precisely because they were afraid it would work. They played their politics hard.

It is precisely because we remember what I think was one of the saddest days in the parliament that Labor are determined to be better. When confronted with the same facts as Tony Abbott was when he was Leader of the Opposition I could not draw the same conclusion that he did. My job as Leader of the Opposition first and foremost is to put this country first. I am a very different person. There is the national interest. We do put that first. There is the safety of people. That certainly comes first.
We will not grind this parliament to a halt. We will not create or allow the uncertainty to continue. We will not ignore the consequences of our decisions in the pursuit of political gain. When hearing the problem it took me not even 10 seconds to work out the ultimate course of action that I believe Labor must take, and when the facts were put in front of my colleagues they arrived at that same conclusion. We will do the right thing. We will help you solve this problem. As we have said from the very outset, the government will continue to have the support of Labor in bringing to an end the flow of these vessels to Australia.

Too often this debate is conducted only at the highest temperature. Too often fear and suspicion rule. Too often straw men and slogans are substituted for argument. Too often refugees are demonised. Still too often the two-decade-old, toxic, malignant poison of Hansonism seeps to the surface of Australian politics. That genie needs to be put back in the bottle forever. We can I believe because I believe we are a bigger, better and more generous country than this. We live in a nation made great by migration. We are fortunate to count people from every faith, flag and culture as our own. In the future I believe we are capable of a better conversation of how we fulfil our obligations as an international citizen and as a peaceful, prosperous nation.

Labor's approach to this question is clear. We believe in being true to our international conventions. We believe in being true to the welfare of all people affected by our policies, whether or not they are in our line of sight. We believe that the pathway to a better life for genuine refugees should always be governed and supported by, and in working with, the United Nations and its agencies, not exploited by people smugglers and their criminal networks.

Our approach is to ensure that when we offer a place in our nation—the great privilege of being a part of this country—to some of the most vulnerable people in the world they come here safely. Consistent with this approach we offer our support to the government. But I say to the government: please do not take our support lightly.

It may well be, in the light of what we have done, that the government, in its question time attacks, will stop questioning our sincerity, our commitment to safety, our commitment to refugees and our commitment to the security of this country. It may well be that this is a new turning point that it may usher in an era where the government does not always resort to the baiting of the opposition and to the politicisation of an issue which is far more important than any speech any of us will ever give here. But that may not happen. We have not asked for that promise back from the government. But when the government do this, remember what every man and woman in Labor is thinking: when you needed us, in the national interest, we were there. When you feel like taking a shot at us to pull some lever, to push some focus message, to bring out the lesser angels of the Australian nature, all I say to you is: remember this moment, because every person on our side will. I have asked the Labor Party to take the government on trust on this matter, and we know that trust is in short supply.

But, even if nothing changes in the government's approach and the way in which they treat the politics of this issue in this parliament and outside, I will ask that we should make a decision that the moment of cooperation here could be a turning point in our national debate. These decisions are not reached easily; I understand that. But I can ask all of us, including the government, for no more dehumanising, inflammatory language, for no more false bravado or faux toughness. Let us no longer use some of the world's most vulnerable people as a prop for
politics. Take what we are doing, and let us commit to a parliament which we can explain to our children we were proud to serve in, because this is the right thing to do. Let us commit to a parliament worthy of our decent, civilised, humane country, a parliament which shows us for who we truly are. The nation that we want to see in the mirror should be reflected in the parliament of Australia: compassionate, strong, generous, secure, safe and fair.

We all love our country. We are all human beings who do not want to see anyone else suffer. But, because we all love our country, today let us vow to serve it better.

Mr LAMING (Bowman) (16:40): In the final hours of this parliamentary session we have witnessed an important address from the opposition leader, outlining his reasons for supporting the Migration Amendment (Regional Processing Arrangements) Bill 2015. Whether we view that as a measured and graceful capitulation or simply political opportunism, history will write that story. But, for those who were here, and for those on that side of the chamber who were accessory to the unpicking of our border control in 2008, history will remember not just one contribution today but seven years of Labor decisions that led to the tragedy in the first place.

Opposition members interjecting—

Mr LAMING: Many of you holding up props now were not here in 2008. Many of you were not here to see a systematic unpicking, in the most graceless of ways, of perfectly functional—

Mr Conroy interjecting—

The DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Whiteley): Order! The member for Charlton will put that document down.

Mr Fitzgibbon: Mr Deputy Speaker, I raise a point of order. I draw your attention to the standing order covering bad judgement.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: That is not a point of order; it was not even a good try.

Dr Chalmers interjecting—

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! Interjections of that nature are not appropriate. The member for Bowman.

Mr LAMING: I would ask the member to withdraw his unparliamentary remark.

Mr Mitchell interjecting—

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Rankin?

Dr Chalmers: I will not be withdrawing that.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: You will not be withdrawing it?

Dr Chalmers: On the advice of my colleagues, I withdraw.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: I think that was good advice. The member for Bowman has the call.

Mr LAMING: I would ask the colleague next to the member for Rankin to withdraw his unparliamentary remark, referring to being 'on the pills'.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Would the member assist the House by withdrawing that comment. I did hear it, and you are not in your own seat.
Mr Mitchell: If you heard it, then you would have done something, but you did not. I am not going to accept that someone over there wants to start ranting and raving and then try and get every member over here to withdraw things which he thinks he hears.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: I remind the member for McEwen that he is not in his seat and that he should not be interjecting anyway. I give the call to the member for Bowman.

Mr LAMING: What we will have is a history of seven years recorded and the speech today, representing an important convergence of views in this parliament. And that should be welcomed. But we witnessed a systematic unpicking in 2008, and the events since. Obviously, in parliamentary democracy two parties will take two very different paths, and history will remember the actions of both—often not in the purest of terms.

Let me reflect if I can on events from 1992, where I witnessed the results of actions in-country for the internally displaced and saw the efforts of many in these nations to make their home in these war-torn areas and to do their best. I and those of us on this side can never forget that the 30 million people internally displaced, and refugees around the world, are just as important as those who pay the people smugglers. That is something that can never be forgotten. For those who lost their lives clearing the land mines and allowing roads to be reopened, for those unable to find a people smuggler to pay off, for those who are unable to make their way across to South East Asia and then pay people smugglers, we must never forget that they are just as important and have just as much reason to seek our protection. Anything that undermines that and undermines that systematic approach deserves to have the resources of this nation directed towards it. I do not simply speak about work on the border, doing cross-border resettlement. I do not simply mean that we deploy our skills and expertise in these nations. But ultimately we need to remember that those most subject to political persecution, most deserving of protection under international treaty, cannot find their way to a people smuggler.

If there is one thing we should remember from this debate, as we see a convergence around the recognition on both sides of this chamber that we should support regional processing, it is: never forget that you simply crowd out those who need the help most if you are complicit in allowing our border protection to crumble away to nothing. At that point it becomes a commercial arrangement about who is brought here, and that is something we can never allow to occur. Now history has been written, and it is easy to bury in the past some of those events. Perhaps today it is reasonable to do that, given the concession that we have from the opposition. Now we have bipartisan agreement around a recognition that the Commonwealth needs a head of power to be able to fund, to be able to take decisions and to be able to effectively do anything that is conducive to allowing regional processing. Whether you call it ‘regional’ or ‘offshore’ processing, it does not matter today. What does matter is that after seven years of constantly traducing that solution, we finally do have bipartisan agreement.

The opposition leader talks about the desperate and the downtrodden. With that language he is effectively saying that this is a battle between logic and compassion. I have to disagree most strenuously. Both sides of this parliament make that very argument—though with potentially different methodologies. He concedes today that it is not compassionate to continue the flow of people across the Timor Sea. It is not compassionate to continue to allow them to ply their trade. And that is a reasonable concession, but it is a concession that could not be achieved for the eight years previously. The treaty itself identifies those with a well-
founded fear of persecution—not that you are desperate, not that you are downtrodden. With those words from the opposition leader we can see, almost microscopically, a misunderstanding of this issue. It is an inability to separate the need of that person directly in front of you from the need of the others whom they moved in front of through a commercial arrangement. It is that financial arrangement that has been stopped when we put an end to people smuggling. That is just a statement of fact. That does not mean that one lacks compassion. It is simply the reality that those who are able to monetise an arrangement are in a privileged position and are able to make their case; whereas those who do not have that access cannot.

I have sat for six hours in the back of an ambulance with a young man whose leg was blown off by a trip-wired landmine. He was engaged in clearing villages so that the displaced could return home. That is where they wanted to go. When he lost his leg and was unable to clear landmines, his brother enlisted the following week and said, 'I want to take the place of my injured brother to continue the work.' We often forget how much is done in these countries to turn them back into home. We have this generalised perception that anyone who flees has a legitimate call under a treaty. We would often feel that because there are two minority groups who are permanently at war with each other, the entire population has a claim. Ultimately there simply has to be a bar; if there is not, you are simply subscribing to complete population mobility worldwide—which is, at the moment, far from being considered.

What we do now is close a loophole opened up by the High Court. Today we are recognising the head of powers for the Commonwealth. Today we are witnessing that the other side, for whatever their political reasons, have finally come to the table on regional processing. Why that has occurred I will allow history to determine.

Opposition members interjecting—

Mr LAMING: The point that I started with—and despite the anger from those on the other side of this chamber—is: it will not matter what was said today. What will matter just as much is the interference and opportunism, the walking on both sides of the street on this issue, the winking at the group that said they all opposed offshore processing, and the reality of voting differently in this chamber. It is that change, whether it is done in good faith or otherwise, that will be remembered by the Australian people.

Mr MARLES (Corio) (16:49): The government comes to the opposition in relation to this legislation seeking bipartisanship and support. We will give that bipartisanship and support even though the fundamental bipartisanship around this issue—which had been in place for most of the history of this country since Federation—was fractured by the coalition in the way that it handled the boarding of the Tampa in the lead-up to the 2001 election and in the way in which it argued that case.

When John Howard said, 'We decide who comes to this country and the circumstances in which they come,' that was a statement which pushed a red-hot button and became a rallying call for the darker angels of humanity. That was the moment at which bipartisanship in this country, around a matter of enormous complexity, was fractured in a way which is yet to be resolved. We give our bipartisanship today notwithstanding that; and we give our bipartisanship notwithstanding the fact that, in speech after speech after John Howard made that statement, there was reference to asylum seekers as being 'illegals'—as if they are the
problem, as if these are people who mean to do us harm, who are seeking to come to this country to invade. And yet everyone knows that those who seek asylum, who flee persecution, are the most vulnerable people in the world today.

The government comes and seeks bipartisanship even though, during the time of the Rudd-Gillard governments, we saw time and again the then shadow minister relentlessly pursue this matter in the most political of ways, referring to the dedicated and dangerous work of our defence personnel and our Customs personnel on the Timor Sea as being equivalent to a taxi service.

The government comes to us seeking bipartisanship and we will give it, even though throughout the period of the Abbott government we have seen in question time after question time the government beat its chest and point to a political scoreboard—which is actually about the lives of people, the lives of the most downtrodden—seeking to leverage human misery to pursue a political result. The government comes to us seeking bipartisanship and we will give it, because this is a profoundly complex and difficult issue—an issue which, even if we were on the same page, would be difficult to solve. But in circumstances where this issue has been the subject of the most appalling partisan politicisation, it becomes an impossible problem to solve and, as a result, people die.

The government comes to us seeking bipartisanship and we will give it, even though four years ago in almost a precisely similar circumstance the then Gillard government faced the difficulty of a High Court which had struck down Labor's arrangement with the Malaysian government. At that moment, we saw the grubbies of deals, the unholiest of alliances, as the government sought to work with the Greens to make sure that no legislative remedy could pass this House and this parliament in order to deal with that High Court's decision.

The government comes to us and seeks our bipartisanship, even though the circumstance of this day is precisely the same to deal with the potential for such a decision. We saw Tony Abbott at the time say in this place:

It is not the opposition's job to save the government from a mess of its own making …

In a letter to the then Prime Minister, he writes: 'It is your mess. You can fix it.' The government seeks our bipartisanship and we will give it, even though we saw all of that, even though we saw arguments being presented at the time by the coalition, which, given what they have now done, no-one could possibly believe were sincere. We saw the teary shadow Treasurer at the time raising human rights concerns around children as a basis for opposing the Malaysian arrangement. We heard arguments around the fact that Malaysia was not a signatory to the refugee convention, even though our nearest neighbour, Indonesia, is not a signatory to that convention either. We have seen the tactics and the processes that have been undertaken by this government since.

It is worth understanding what the Malaysian arrangement would have done. The Malaysian arrangement provided for the virtual turnaround of 800 people. Because this government's turn-back policy happens under a shroud of secrecy, we do not know precisely how many people have been turned around over the period that the government has been turning back boats, but we can be certain that it is a number measured in hundreds. If that is the reason by the government's own logic that the flow of asylum seeker vessels has stopped
from Java to Christmas Island then, by their own logic, this is an issue which could have been resolved four years ago.

The government comes and seeks our bipartisanship and we will give it, even though four years ago when we asked for that cooperation they turned their back on us. And there has been so much in seeking to attribute blame for the past, in seeking to put on record a political scoreboard around this issue, but the one figure you will never hear from the coalition when it comes to this issue is the number 689, because that is the number of people that we know of who perished at sea after the Malaysian arrangement was blocked in this place by virtue of the agreement between the government and the Greens.

In seeking our bipartisanship, and we will give it, no-one should assume for a second that this represents the Labor Party condoning the manner in which this government has conducted offshore processing. Offshore processing has been critically important. Offshore processing has been the single most important decision that a government has taken in this country to see an end to the flow of asylum seeker vessels from Java to Christmas Island. But if Labor were in power we would not be doing offshore processing in the way in which this government is pursuing that policy, and our support for this legislation today should not be taken as condoning it. It should not be taken as condoning the decision of the former minister to not complete the hard-walled facilities on Nauru such that those people who remain in the detention facility on Nauru have been living in tents for almost the two years since the Abbott government came into power. They have been living in tents by virtue of an active decision of a government.

The literature around the world on how people are treated and how they survive and the human behaviour which occurs in refugee camps makes it clear that issues of domestic violence and issues of sexual assault are much greater when people are living in tented facilities than when they are living in hard-walled facilities. It is not rocket science. When you live in a tent, you do not have security. When you live in a tent, you do not have privacy. All of that literature was at hand for this government when it made the decision not to construct buildings on Nauru or not to finish the constructions of the buildings on Nauru and to keep people living in tents. For me, having that information at hand when that decision was made means that everything that has flowed since and that we have seen reported in the Moss review is conduct and behaviour which this government absolutely knew would flow from the decisions that it took.

We would not, in supporting this legislation, be seen to condone the fact that until the beginning of this month we have seen the most substandard medical facilities on the Manus Island detention facility—substandard medical facilities which saw a man, Mr Hamid Kehazaei, manage to contract septicaemia and that not be resolved and him pass away in a hospital in Brisbane. Not until his death do we see medical facilities being built, which are now coming into effect as of this month.

The fact that we are supporting this legislation should not be seen as any kind of absolution that you will never hear from this government the phrase that people in our facilities, which are funded by Australia, should be in those facilities in a manner which is safe, dignified and human. That is not a phrase which ever passes the lips of this government. What we see is an offshore processing network which has been conducted in a shroud of secrecy, which has left the fate of 2,000 people out of sight, out of mind and unresolved. The government sits here
today without any clear sense whatsoever about what the ultimate fate of those 2,000 people will be.

We supported offshore processing because offshore processing, as I said, was the most important step that any government has taken to see a reduction in the flow of asylum seeker vessels from Java to Christmas Island. We stand with resolution to ensure that that journey will never be reopened again. Labor in government made mistakes, and we have absolutely acknowledged that, since the beginning of our time in opposition. With the benefit of hindsight, it would have been better if offshore processing had not been closed. We made this acknowledgement more than a year ago and we did so because we believed that this is an issue of such import that we need both sides of politics to come forward to work out where, as a country, we have gone wrong and how we can move together down a path to make sure that we get it right.

The fact of the matter is—and people need to understand this—that what characterises the journey between Java and Christmas Island is criminal syndicates of people smugglers who prey upon the most vulnerable. In the process of their preying upon the most vulnerable, we have seen people die in their hundreds and, ultimately, their thousands, and that has to stop. That it has stopped is an unambiguously good thing, something which we in opposition support. We will never be a party to seeing that start again, because there is nothing moral at all about supporting policies which would see people smugglers put back into business to prey upon those vulnerable and which in turn would see those vulnerable die.

In ensuring that that never happens again, we stand from a position of compassion. In articulating that principle, we should not be seen as I think the government is seen. That closing of the journey for the government is a central piece of an architecture which is basically about turning our back, as a nation, on the world's problems. That is not how Labor views this issue. Labor sees that the world is going through the biggest humanitarian crisis since the Second World War. There are more displaced people, more asylum seekers, more refugees, on the planet today than there have been at any time since the Second World War. It is Labor's view that we need to be more engaged on that issue than we have ever been before, befitting a modern and civilised nation which, at its best, has a multicultural society which is genuinely the envy of the world, a multicultural society which sees that the heritage that people bring to this country enriches us as a nation but, importantly, becomes very much an instance of what it is to be an Australian. It is possible to bring your heritage here, for that to become a part of who we are, for that to define what modern Australia is.

This is a debate which since 2001, in our view, has torn at the very fabric of that idea, torn at the very fabric of a modern, multicultural society. We need to move beyond it. We need to move beyond and take the politics out of it—acknowledge where mistakes have been made but work together. We need to take the politics away from it so that we can ensure that we do not see people dying on our border, that we do not see a human tragedy unfold there ever again but that at the same time we remain a modern, civilised, multicultural country which celebrates diversity within our land.

On that basis: the government comes to us seeking bipartisanship and we will give it, because we know that the only way there is going to be an enduring resolution, and we will not see asylum seeker vessels coming from Java to Christmas Island, is if there is bipartisanship, and the only way we are going to be able to promote the multicultural, modern
Australia that we want is if there is bipartisanship, and it is Labor who will bring bipartisanship to this table.

Mr SIMPKINS (Cowan) (17:04): It is good to have this opportunity to speak on the Migration Amendment (Regional Processing Arrangements) Bill 2015 today. It is important. What I have heard, though, in what the Leader of the Opposition, the member for Bowman and the member for Corio have said is that, whilst there might be bipartisan agreement on this bill, there is still a world of difference in policy, and that is hardly a surprise. Obviously, political parties present a set of policies, a set of views, to the Australian people every three years, and the Australian people make a judgement about that. Then you see every three years what the Australian people think.

I find it disappointing, though, when people talk down the views of the Australian people. I think generally the people get it right. The member for Corio talked about the 'darker angels', reflecting on what John Howard said: 'We decide who comes here and the manner in which they come'. I like to think the Australian people are pretty smart. They supported the government at that time. Of course it was not on every policy. Not everyone in every Australian home supports one side with every policy, unless they are rusted on and all that sort of stuff. The majority of people think, 'I like that; I'm not so sure about that.' But the reality is that people had a considered opinion about those policies and probably about what John Howard said at the time, and I respect that. I think everybody in this place should respect that and not talk down to the Australian people in that way.

John Howard proposed that we—as in the government of the Australian people, the representatives of the Australian people—decide who comes here. The alternative to that is that anyone who wants to come can come. I do not think any person in this country agrees with that.

In Cowan, there are lots of people who were refugees—from Vietnam, Burma, the Karen, the Chin people. We have plenty of people in the Wanneroo Baha’i community as well. When we talked about our alternative policies, which are different from the former Labor government policies, a lot of the people who came here from refugee camps absolutely supported what we did because it was really about the integrity of the system whereby the desperate need of people in refugee camps was the priority. It was not about whether somebody could hop on a plane out of Lebanon, fly to Dubai, then on to Jakarta and to people smugglers. There is a big difference between those sorts of people who put themselves or their family on an aeroplane, compared to those who were stuck in refugee camps. The big difference is the ability to pay versus being stuck in refugee camps, waiting for your number to come up—a huge difference. I think that is why so many people supported us. I have plenty of former refugees who have helped on polling booths, influenced in no small part by a policy that put need before means.

I completely endorse the government's policy and the manner in which it has been implemented because we are seeing people who come from refugee camps on the Burma-Thailand border or from Syria. Christian refugees have been fiercely persecuted in Syria. There are 1,000 places for women at risk and children. These are the outcomes of a system with integrity.

What we are talking about here is the validation of regional processing arrangements and that is just one part of a successful policy. Turn backs have been highly successful as well.
Control has been exerted and not broadcasting or telegraphing the government's plans to people smugglers has been exceptionally useful, exceptionally effective. There is more to it than just Nauru and Manus Island.

A lot has been said about and I do not wish to linger on the former government's Malaysia plan. Interestingly the member for Corio mentioned the return of 800 people to Malaysia as part of that deal. That was not regional processing; that was a swap. Why did the member for Corio not mention the 4,000 who were going to come from Malaysia to here? That was an essential part of his plan. That was not 4,000 out a refugee camp like the ones I have been to up on the Burma-Thailand border; it was 4,000 people who had made it to Malaysia, but that is in the past. I do not wish to talk about the pluses or the minuses of that any more. It really is important that to a degree we look at the past. I encourage anyone who is interested in this debate not just to work off headlines on newspapers or on the internet but to look back to see what was said in 2008 and in 2009 and since then. Make your own judgement but make sure it is informed.

As I said before, I absolutely endorse the policies we have. I know that they are derided by many sectors but I absolutely endorse them. When I look around Cowan, I see the Karens and the Chins from Burma doing a wonderful job, fitting into the Australian society, working hard and doing jobs that are not that popular. They know how to work hard and they know how to be successful.

Looking back further, I have a very big Vietnamese population in Cowan with over 5,000 Vietnamese speakers—men, women and children. So many of them have come from that refugee background, the brutality that followed the end of the Vietnam War when North Vietnam had broken the Paris Peace Accords and public opinion in the US and even here had taken away support for the democratic dream that South Vietnam used to have, when the North Vietnamese soldiers were throwing desperately wounded soldiers out of hospitals and sending people to re-education camps. That resulted in a lot of people fleeing Vietnam. Most Vietnamese came to Australia from refugee camps and that is exactly the way it should be because, to alleviate the suffering of refugees, we should certainly concentrate on their circumstances to determine their need.

If you stop the boats, as Minister Morrison did and now as Minister Dutton is doing so successfully on behalf of the government and the Australian people, then you do have capacity to take people out of refugee camps and from circumstances in Syria, where women and children are at risk. These are the outcomes of a policy that works. I absolutely refute those who want to tear down this system. What we have built here tries to short-circuit and stop the possibilities of those people who want to return to a system where cash is more important than need, where they will try to take this system out in the High Court.

It is very great that this has bipartisan support across this chamber. This is the moment where we can lock in the arrangements that we currently have and end up with a system which, again, is all about need and not about cash, because it has integrity. It is not about people who can afford their airfares, whether those are on Emirates or Qatar or some other airline from the Middle East over to Indonesia. It is a good situation.

Absolutely, there have been problems with Nauru. I find it greatly disturbing that people who want to come here are capable of crimes against women and children. I think it is a good
thing in every way that people like that, who are capable of such things, will not ever come here. We know who is responsible for these crimes.

I suspect I have already gone on for too long, and I give my regrets to the minister! Again, without really going into the politics at all, I think this is a good moment, where both sides of parliament can work together to lock in an effective, working element of a policy that is working. As I said right at the start, there is a big difference in many aspects of policy in this area. The member for Corio made that very clear; he did not endorse a whole lot of the policy that we have in this area. But in my case, as someone who was here in 2008 and 2009 when this problem was being created, I say that what we have now under the leadership of Minister Dutton, as the Minister for Immigration and Border Protection, is exactly the right way to go. It is good for refugees in the region and it is a system that is endorsed by former refugees in the electorate of Cowan. I look forward to us being able to move past this bill and lock in procedures that are working as part of the bigger policy. Thank you.

Mr WILKIE (Denison) (17:17) : I rise to speak on the Migration Amendment (Regional Processing Arrangements) Bill 2015. The member for Cowan used words to the effect of, 'This is a good time,' or, 'This is a good moment'. Respectfully, I disagree. I disagree very strongly. This is a shameful moment. This is a very shameful moment. This is the point in time when the House of Representatives seems set to agree almost unanimously that it is okay to legalise offshore processing retrospectively. This is a shameful thing.

Mr Deputy Speaker, excuse me if I sound like a broken record in this place but I am going to say it again: we are a fortunate and a clever country. We are a signatory to any number of international agreements. It is beyond time that we started acting like a fortunate and clever country! That we start acting like a signatory to any number of international agreements, not the least of which is the refugee convention. When someone comes to our shores and claims to be fleeing for their life we are ethically and legally required in this country to give that person protection, to hear their claim and to give them permanent refuge if their claim is found to be accurate.

Yes, if their claim is fraudulent, put them on the first plane back home. But the fact is that most people who come to our shores claiming to flee for their lives are found to be fleeing for their lives. We are bound ethically and legally—ethically as a good people and as human beings who should act like decent human beings. We are bound legally by all the international agreements that we have signed up to, like the refugee convention and, I would add, like the Rome Statute—and I will talk about that in a moment. When people come to our shores, we should give them protection. We should hear their claims and we should give them refuge. There should not be mandatory detention. There should not be offshore processing. There should not be tow-backs. There also should not be any form of temporary visa. If these people are making accurate claims—and most are—they should be given permanent refuge so that they can start their lives again, often with their families, in our fortunate, clever and rich country.

In other words, the regime that has been in place now for a number of years under a number of governments, and which will be agreed to again tonight by the government and the opposition, it is downright wrong. We should get rid of it! And when that is a difficult decision to make then we should be strong. And when it is controversial in the community we should be leaders and we should explain to the community what we are doing and why we are
doing it. We should not be playing to the fault lines in the community. We should not be playing to racism and xenophobia and the other weaknesses in an otherwise great country. Where there are those weaknesses, we should be leaders and we should explain to the community why we are doing the right thing. We should explain to them how what they believe is wrong and how it can be so very different.

I refer to the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court. Of course, much of the attention up until now, quite rightly, has been about our obligations under the refugee convention. But there is no doubt that we are also in contravention of the Rome Statute, which is the international agreement which covers crimes against humanity. The fact is that it is a crime against humanity to hold someone indefinitely in detention without trial, and that is what goes on in these offshore places. It is a crime against humanity under the Rome Statute to forcibly transfer anyone to a third country, and that is exactly what we are doing under offshore processing. It is a crime against humanity to hold people in inhumane conditions, and that is exactly what we are doing with offshore processing.

This is why I have made a formal complaint to the International Criminal Court and asked them to investigate the behaviour of this government. Moreover, I would encourage them to investigate the behaviour of other governments, because much of what we do in response to irregular immigrants is the policy of the Liberal Party and the Nationals and also of the Labor opposition. I think there is a case to be made at the ICC. I think they should look into the behaviour of a series of governments, starting with this one, when it comes to crimes against humanity. The fact is—and I am pleased the point was made here tonight; I think it might have been by the shadow minister—that there are currently more people displaced and on the move than at any time since the end of World War II. I am pleased that point was made. I believe the figure is now past 50 million people. The fact is we have a global humanitarian crisis and we should be responding to it in those terms. It is not a border security problem and, frankly, I am sick and tired—and I think a lot of people are sick and tired—of hearing people stand up in this place and make out that irregular immigration by boat is a security problem, that somehow these boats are full of terrorists or would-be terrorists. They are not. They are full of desperate souls, most of whom are fleeing for their lives.

Competent terrorists do not take the rickety road through the people smugglers in Indonesia. They fly out here in their own name with a fresh passport and enter the country legally. That is what happened with 9/11. Not one of the terrorists who were involved in 9/11 entered the United States illegally. It is downright mischievous and downright cruel and nasty for people in this place to be continually talking about these boats being full of evildoers. Even just a moment ago, the member for Cowan was talking about these people who are coming out to Australia and abusing women and children as if ordinary people in our own community are not doing such heinous things. It is wrong to be demonising these people. The fact is, most of them are fleeing for their lives. When we hear their claims they are mostly found to be accurate. It is interesting; when people come up to me in the street and they start talking about irregular immigration and they start complaining about what they call 'illegals' or 'boat people', I look them in the eye and I say, 'Hang on, do you agree that if someone is genuinely fleeing for their life then it's the right thing to give them protection?' And just about every time—in fact, I think it might be every time—they say, 'Yes, of course we should give people protection who are fleeing for their lives.' It is about time the government and the
opposition explained to the community that most of these people are fleeing for their lives and we should respond in exactly that way: give them protection, hear their claim and give them permanent refuge.

If we want to deal with this global humanitarian problem, we need to stop thinking of it as a border security crisis or a border security problem. What we should be doing is putting in place a sophisticated policy to try and deal with this global problem starting with trying to calm things down in source countries and doing what we can to create peace in places like Afghanistan and Iraq. Instead, for example, what did we do in Iraq? We started a war that has gone on for 12 years that has created the circumstances for the rise of Islamic State and turbocharged people movements out of that part of the world. Instead of settling it down, all we have done is stirred it up, and then we wonder why there are so many people on the move. We should have a policy that gives genuine and effective assistance to countries of first asylum. What assistance do we give Iran, for example, that is host to millions of Iraqis and people on the move from other countries? What assistance did we give Iran? We set up a security relationship with them. How about we start giving them some aid and some know-how and steering them in the right direction and helping the Iranians to care for the millions of Iraqis who are currently in Iran? What assistance do we give to Pakistan? Next to none. What assistance do we give to countries like Bangladesh where people are coming across the border from Burma? We give these countries of first asylum next to none. And what about transit countries like Thailand, Malaysia and Indonesia? Sure, we cooperate to get the people smugglers, and I have no objection to that, but what other assistance do we give them to help them care for and effectively and humanely resettle the tens of thousands of displaced people in these transit countries?

This is not a security problem. It is a global humanitarian crisis. Being in breach of the Rome Statute, forcibly transferring people to third countries like the Republic of Nauru or Papua New Guinea and then dressing it up as some sort of regional processing arrangement that—I see in the title—is misleading in itself. This is not regional processing. These are like the hulks of 200 years ago. This is where we send our unwanted to be unseen and unheard. These are the modern-day hulks where we put the people we do not want to have around us. The fact is these are sovereign states and we are forcibly sending people to those sovereign states. That is a crime against humanity in accordance with the Rome Statute.

What is going on here with us trying to pre-empt an interpretation of the law by the High Court is, in my opinion, fundamentally undermining our system of democracy. The role of the court is to interpret the law and then our job—the community's job—is to say, 'Okay, we'll follow that interpretation and we'll do things differently because we respect the finding of the court.' But what is the government doing tonight? With the cooperation of Labor Party it is saying, 'Oh heavens, we've got a problem with the law, so we are going to pre-emptively and retrospectively change all of the laws.' In other words, 'We're going to cook the books.' Instead of letting the High Court have a look at the law, interpret it and make a judgement which we can respect, we are going to cook the books and keep changing this law until we can find our way around that troublesome High Court—instead of respecting what its role really is.

This is a shameful day. It is a really shameful day. Whether it be national security policy or our response to asylum seekers, it is more shameful and more troubling because it is done
with a virtual consensus in this place. I know there are people in this place who would agree with much of what I said tonight. I ask respectfully that, when I call for a division, they join me. That is what I think people should do. I have enormous respect for the people in this place who share my views, and I have no doubt that the member for Fremantle is going to express some concerns with what is going on here as well. I understand the limitations that are on party members, and it is unfortunate.

I do not blame the party members in situations like this; I actually blame the parties, for having such a tight control of their members. Frankly, when it comes to issues like this, whether it be the Liberal Party or the Labor Party, it would be the grown-up thing to do, the right thing to do, to let their members follow their consciences and represent their communities tonight. If there is a division in a little while—I hope there is; I will certainly try and make one happen, the fact is that some people will vote quite at odds with the majority wishes of their community. I do not blame them for it, because they are hamstrung by their parties. I blame the parties and the party system; they really should let their members follow their hearts and represent their constituents.

I make the point again: this is a shameful day. We are one of the most fortunate—maybe the most—fortunate, rich, clever and decent countries on the planet. We are a signatory to any number of international agreements. We signed them in good faith. The men and women who agreed to sign them and ratify them at the time did so genuinely. They saw the value in those agreements. Way back when we signed the refugee convention, the men and women who led this country then saw the value and the importance in that agreement.

Some years ago, when we signed up to the Rome statute, the men and women who agreed to do that saw the value in it. Our predecessors agreed back then that to hold someone indefinitely without trial, effectively in a jail, would be wrong, and that it would be so wrong that it would meet the definition of a crime against humanity. The people who signed the Rome statute knew back then that to forcibly transferring someone to a third country should be regarded as a crime against humanity. The people who signed the Rome statute realised then that to hold people who are effectively in our care in inhuman conditions would be wrong. We betray the men and women who signed up to those agreements—we betray them badly—by now saying: 'It doesn't matter. We know better. We can do things differently. We can have offshore processing.'

I make the point again that these are not regional processing centres. A regional processing centre is something that is set up and run by many countries to deal with a regional issue. These places are set up by the Australian government; they are funded by the Australian government; they are run by the Australian government. The phrase 'regional processing arrangements' in the title of this bill is downright misleading and it should be removed. It should be called any number of things. It is 'offshore processing in other countries'. It is 'forced deportation to a third country'. It is a crime against humanity. And the things should be shut down.

Mr CRAIG KELLY (Hughes) (17:32): I rise to speak on the Migration Amendment (Regional Processing Arrangements) Bill 2015.

From the outset, every sovereign nation has a decision about how they will handle their migration policy. One way is simply to have a policy of open borders; to allow anyone from any country to come at any time they want. I know there are those that advocate for that. In an
ideal world, perhaps that would be a noble goal. But we do not live in an ideal world. We live in a world where there are probably 50 million people or more that would qualify as refugees. We live in a world where hundreds of millions of people would love to come and live in Australia.

If I lived in another part of the world—Asia, the Middle East, Africa, even Europe or the Americas—and if I knew about the wealth, the prosperity and the lifestyle that we enjoy here in Australia, I would do everything I possibly could to get myself and my family to the country called Australia. But we do not live in that ideal world. So it is an obligation upon us to set the limits about how many people we will allow to come to this country.

If we set those limits, we also have to work out what the process will be for selecting those people, for how they will come and for how we will attempt to integrate them into society. That is the process we have to follow, because the alternative of having ideal borders is simply not a realistic situation in the world we live in.

Since the end of World War 2 we have had almost seven million people migrate to Australia through that process. They have made enormous contributions to this country. They have made this country wealthier and more prosperous. It was only a few days ago here in parliament that we commemorated the 40th anniversary of the fall of Saigon and the movement of 50,000 refugees from Vietnam to Australia. Most of them were processed through the United Nations Human Rights Council. Those Vietnamese citizens have made wonderful contributions to this country and they will continue to do so for decades to come.

But the words of former Prime Minister Howard, 'We will decide who comes to this country and the circumstances in which they come,' are fundamentally an exact description of how any government must run its migration policy. I know that the shadow minister for immigration seemed to have great concerns with those words. He seemed to disagree with those words, which was most concerning. That is how we have done it.

When we decided we would not do that, we simply subcontracted our migration policies out to people smugglers. Despite the warnings—if you unpick our border protection policies, if you turn your backs on those policies, it will lead to chaos, death and undue cost—we saw the policies of the previous Labor government do just that. And that is exactly what happened. We saw 50,000 people arrive at Christmas Island by boat, making that dangerous trip. Over 1,000 people were drowned at sea. And we saw an $11 billion blowout in costs. No sovereign nation can subcontract out their migration policy to the people smugglers. That is why this legislation is ultimately necessary.

We, through this legislation, send the message loud and clear that anyone who comes illegally by boat without a visa to Australia will never be settled in Australia. I know that is hard for some on the other side to take. I know they sometimes like to think that they have greater humane values. But going against those principles cost 1,200 lives. That is why this bill is important. I am glad that the opposition is supporting this bill and coming on board with us. I commend this bill to the House.

Ms PARKE (Fremantle) (17:38): It would be an understatement to say I am uncomfortable with this bill. There have been so many steps on the way to getting to what is widely viewed as this debased point in the asylum seeker debate—it is hard to say which has been the worst. I do not deny Labor's role in the re-establishment of offshore processing,
although I note that the caucus's and the party's agreement to such policy was predicated on guarantees of humane, respectful treatment of asylum seekers and compliance with international law. But the awful ugly illegal reality of the treatment of asylum seekers on Manus Island and Nauru under the present government, however much they have sought to hide behind secretive so-called operational matters, national security and commercial-in-confidence to deny independent oversight, is being revealed in report after report, inquiry after inquiry into the physical, sexual and mental abuse of vulnerable people and the calculated removal of access to human rights, freedom and even dignity. This is a matter of national shame for which there will one day be a reckoning.

The bill has been presented by the government as an amendment to fix a technical legal issue that has arisen because of the High Court decision in the Williams case concerning the lack of constitutional power for the Commonwealth government to make certain payments. But this bill is much broader than the Williams case. Through extremely broad wording allowing the taking of any action and the doing of anything incidental to such action, among other clauses, the government now seeks to retrospectively validate the detention of asylum seekers and indeed potentially all the actions and arrangements in offshore detention centres that have occurred since August 2012.

The bill also refers to 'action in a regional processing country or another country'. If this bill is primarily for the purpose of authorising payments to the PNG and Nauru governments, what is the reason for the reference in the bill to other countries? Perhaps it is to authorise payments to Cambodia. There are a number of such ambiguities in the bill.

The government claims the bill is urgent because of the case presently before the High Court involving families including children presently in Australia who are due to be returned to Nauru where they fear sexual abuse. As I understand it, the court is not due to hear argument until at least September. I therefore do not see any need for this matter to be railroaded through the House of Representatives today when it could be dealt with in the August sittings thus allowing more time to improve the bill so that it reflects the stated purpose rather than providing a blank cheque to government for past, present and future behaviour.

This may be a small bill but it is dealing with big and serious issues. It is a matter of profound disappointment that the government seeks to rush this open-ended legislation, the import and consequences of which are potentially far reaching, not only for the individual litigants in the present High Court case but for all of the unfortunate and vulnerable people caught up in the offshore detention system.

There is a better way forward that involves establishing a genuine regional framework, working constructively with other countries in the region to improve conditions in source and transit countries and negotiating resettlement with other countries, including of course a much greater commitment on Australia's part to taking more refugees. Refugees have contributed and are contributing enormously to our Australian community. Before they are found to be refugees, they are asylum seekers. We should be careful what we do to the refugees and citizens of tomorrow through our treatment of the asylum seekers of today.

Mr DUTTON (Dickson—Minister for Immigration and Border Protection) (17:42): I wish to thank all of those members who have contributed to this debate. This is a very
important bill that is before the House and we thank very much the sincere contributions made by most of the members in relation to this very important issue.

The success of Operation Sovereign Borders, the success of the government's approach to making sure that we can stop the people smugglers from recommencing their business is a very important priority for this government and it is very important priority for the Australian people. The prospect of the people smugglers recommencing their business is abhorrent to any decent Australian. The thought that lives at sea would again be lost if the smuggling trade was allowed to re-establish is unconscionable and this government will not stand for it. So I thank very much members who have contributed. I thank the opposition for their support of the bill.

Question agreed to, Mr Wilkie dissenting.

Bill read a second time.

Third Reading

Mr DUTTON (Dickson—Minister for Immigration and Border Protection) (17:44): by leave—I move:

That this bill be now read a third time.

Question agreed to.

Bill read a third time.

Social Services Legislation Amendment (Youth Employment and Other Measures) Bill 2015

Second Reading

Debate resumed on the motion:

That this bill be now read a second time.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Broadbent) (17:49): The question is that this bill be now read a second time.

The House divided. [17:49]

(The Deputy Speaker—Mr Broadbent)

Ayes .................78
Noes .................52
Majority...............26

AYES

Alexander, JG
Baldwin, RC
Bishop, JI
Broad, AJ
Buchholz, S
Christensen, GR
Coleman, DB
Dutton, PC
Fletcher, PW
Gambaro, T
Goodenough, IR
Hartsuyker, L

Andrews, KL
Billson, BF
Briggs, JE
Brough, MT
Chester, D
Cobb, JK
Coulton, M (teller)
Entsch, WG
Frydenberg, JA
Gillespie, DA
Griggs, NL
Hawke, AG

CHAMBER
### AYES

| Henderson, SM | Hendy, PW |
| Henderson, SM | Hendy, PW |
| Hogan, KJ     | Howarth, LR |
| Hutchinson, ER| Irons, SJ |
| Jensen, DG    | Jones, ET |
| Joyce, BT     | Kelly, C |
| Laming, A     | Landry, ML |
| Laundy, C     | Ley, SP |
| Macfarlane, IE| Marino, NB |
| Markus, LE    | Matheson, RG |
| McCormack, MF | McNamara, KJ |
| Morrison, SJ  | Nikolic, AA (teller) |
| O'Dowd, KD    | Pitt, KJ |
| Porter, CC    | Prentice, J |
| Price, ML     | Pyne, CM |
| Ramsey, RE    | Randall, DJ |
| Robert, SR    | Roy, WB |
| Ruddock, PM   | Scott, BC |
| Scott, FM     | Simpkins, LXL |
| Smith, ADH    | Southcott, AJ |
| Stone, SN     | Sudmalis, AE |
| Sukkar, MS    | Taylor, AJ |
| Tehan, DT     | Tudge, AE |
| Turnbull, MB  | Van Manen, AJ |
| Varvaris, N   | Vasta, RX |
| Whiteley, BD  | Wicks, LE |
| Williams, MP  | Wilson, RJ |
| Wood, JP      | Wyatt, KG |

### NOES

| Albanese, AN | Bird, SL |
| Albanese, AN | Bird, SL |
| Bowen, CE    | Brodtmann, G |
| Burke, AE    | Burke, AS |
| Butler, MC   | Butler, TM |
| Byrne, AM    | Chalmers, JE |
| Champion, ND | Chesters, LM |
| Clare, JD    | Claydon, SC |
| Collins, JM  | Conroy, PM |
| Danby, M     | Dreyfus, MA |
| Feeney, D    | Ferguson, LDT |
| Fitzgibbon, JA| Giles, AJ |
| Griffin, AP  | Hall, JG (teller) |
| Hayes, CP    | Husie, EN |
| Jones, SP    | Katter, RC |
| Leigh, AK    | Macklin, JL |
| MacTiernan, AJGC| Marles, RD |
| McGowan, C   | Mitchell, RG |
| Neumann, SK  | O'Connor, BPJ |
| O'Neil, CE   | Owens, J |
| Parke, M     | Perrett, GD |
| Fibberserk, TJ| Ripoll, BF |
| Rishworth, AL| Rowland, MA |
| Ryan, JC (teller) | Snowdon, WE |
Question agreed to.
Bill read a second time.

Message from the Governor-General recommending appropriation announced.

Third Reading

Mr MORRISON (Cook—Minister for Social Services) (17:56): by leave—I move:
That this bill be now read a third time.
Question agreed to.
Bill read a third time.

COMMITTEES

Joint Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade
Standing Committee on Economics

Membership

Mr PORTER (Pearce—Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister) (17:57): by leave—I move:
That:
(1) Ms Plibersek be discharged from the Joint Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade and that, in her place, Ms Parke be appointed a member of the committee;
(2) Ms O’Neil be appointed a supplementary member of the Standing Committee on Economics for the purpose of the committee’s inquiry into the review of the Reserve Bank annual report 2014; and
(3) Mr Giles be appointed a supplementary member of the Standing Committee on Economics for the purpose of the committee’s inquiry into home ownership.
Question agreed to.

MOTIONS

Centenary of Anzac

Debate resumed on the motion:
That this House:
(1) acknowledge that the 25th of April 2015 marked 100 years since Australian and New Zealand troops landed at Gallipoli;
(2) pay its respects to the 60,000 Australians who fought in the Gallipoli campaign, the nearly 9,000 who died, the 20,000 who were wounded and the thousands more who carried the unseen scars for the rest of their lives;
(3) remember the brave soldiers of Great Britain, France, India and Newfoundland who fought alongside the ANZACS 100 years ago;
(4) note that on the 25th of April, solemn services of remembrance were conducted at Anzac Cove and at Lone Pine in Turkey, attended by some 8,000 Australians, including the widows of Australian veterans;

(5) extend its thanks to the people and the Government of Turkey for their support of the centenary commemorations and their ongoing and faithful care of the Gallipoli battlefields; and

(6) note that on Anzac Day, millions of our fellow Australians gathered to remember the ANZACs and all those who have worn our uniform and serviced in the name of Australia, and that the people of every electorate represented in this Parliament have honoured this milestone, the Centenary of the landings at Gallipoli.

Mr BUTLER (Port Adelaide) (17:58): I thank the government and, I am sure, the cooperation of the opposition for continuing the debate on this important motion in this chamber rather than the Federation Chamber. I think it is an appropriate mark of respect for such an incredibly important occasion.

As we all know, a little more than 100 years ago thousands of Australian and New Zealand soldiers were pouring onto the shores of Gallipoli on the morning of 25 April 1915. The landing force on that day was dominated by battalions from the outlying states, including my state of South Australia, which had been joined with the New Zealand battalions to form the Australian and New Zealand Army Corps or ANZAC. Over the course of that single day, 16,000 Australian troops went ashore. More than 2,000 of them were killed or wounded before the day ended. And the carnage continued: 1,000 men of the 16th battalion, including my great-grandfather, landed on 25 April. Just eight days later, of the 1,000 men who had landed, fewer than 300 answered the rollcall.

These were not professional soldiers, as we understand that term today; these were everyday Australians who had walked off the farm and out of the factory to answer the government's call to serve their country overseas. Australia then was a nation not yet 15 years old and numbering fewer than five million souls, but over the course of that war more than 400,000 men answered the call to arms, almost half of Australia's men then between the ages of 18 and 44. For eight long months the Anzacs were thrown at machine guns and artillery with horrendous results. In military terms, the campaign was a catastrophic failure. I read that one Australian soldier from Gallipoli described it 'as the absurd sacrifice of young men by old men sitting in stuffed chairs in London'.

By the end of that year the Allies were forced to retreat. Almost 9,000 Australian troops had been killed and 19,000 were wounded. Those who survived, including my great-grandfather, were redeployed to face fresh horrors on the Western Front in Europe. In the face of all that carnage and adversity, the Anzac troops demonstrated qualities that came to define their two young nations. They fought bravely and they revealed a spirit of courage, persistence, mateship and even good humour—a character that the rest of the world associates with Australia today. It is because of that extraordinary spirit shown by those extraordinary men that Gallipoli is regarded as Australia's coming of age, but it was an awful coming of age.

The impact of the First World War on our country is hard to comprehend today. In a nation of fewer than five million people, 60,000 Australians were killed and 170,000 were wounded. Imagine Australia today losing 300,000 of our men in the prime of their life and a million or so returning home wounded. One in three women at the time never partnered. For a
generation known as the maiden aunts there simply were not enough men. Many of the families of returned servicemen, including my great-grandfather's family, welcomed home husbands and fathers who were physically and mentally broken, haunted by their experiences in the trenches. They often did not survive for more than a few more years.

This year there was an especially strong effort by the community of Port Adelaide and communities across our nation to recognise and commemorate the 100th anniversary of the landing at Gallipoli. The Port Adelaide community embraced the Anzac Centenary by organising a range of events, exhibitions and memorials. Many of them were underpinned by the centenary grants that were initiated by the Gillard government and continued, I am happy to say, by the Abbott government. Seventeen organisations in my electorate of Port Adelaide were successful recipients of an Anzac Centenary local grant. They included RSLs, schools, museums, churches and community organisations. There was an incredibly impressive variety of projects organised to commemorate the Centenary of Anzac. I will give just a few examples.

The Semaphore and Port Adelaide RSL and their President, Glen Murray, previous presidents and committee members delivered a re-enactment of the Gallipoli landing at the Semaphore dawn service. RSL member Daryl Mundy worked with a local filmmaking organisation, Living Stories, to create a moving tribute to those who landed at Gallipoli. The stories were taken from actual letters written by Adelaide servicemen who were there at the landing on 25 April. They were brilliantly narrated by Alberton Primary School students.

I have the honour of emceeing that event every year. The memorial service is across the road from my office. My great-great-uncle Charlie Butler laid the memorial stone in 1924 on behalf of the RSL, so it is a particular privilege for me to be able to emcee that event. Like services across South Australia, and I imagine across the country, the Semaphore and Port Adelaide service this year was the largest ever. Well more than 10,000 local community members attended that service. I talked to people who have been attending for decades and who remember that, 25 or 30 years ago, 20 or 25 people would rock up to a service. That service is now attended by thousands and thousands. It was not just an Australian memorial, I am happy to say. As happened last year, spontaneously New Zealander members of our community at the end of the service performed a haka ceremony that was incredibly well received by the local community.

In addition to the Semaphore and Port Adelaide RSL service, Mount Carmel College students worked with local artist Mandi Glynn-Jones to paint the extraordinary mural that I had the privilege of launching at that college. Whitefriars schoolteacher Amanda Taverna worked tirelessly, along with her husband—she was honest enough to say—to create a wonderful memorial garden for the school community. I know that other RSLs and other service organisations organised commemorative marches. The West Croydon and Kilkenny RSL, with the assistance of the South Australian Museum, unveiled a World War I time capsule that had been put in place in between the two world wars.

Other Anzac Centenary grants projects included the Salisbury RSL unveiling a silhouette of a World War I soldier. There were a number of moving World War I exhibitions and memorials organised by different parts of the Port Adelaide museum district, including the South Australian Maritime Museum, the South Australian Aviation Museum and the National Railway Museum, as well as other organisations like the Naval Association and the Merchant
Navy Association, which for understandable reasons are located in the port community of Port Adelaide, St Paul's Anglican Church, St Alban's Anglican Church and local schools, not just Whitefriars and Mount Carmel College that I have already mentioned but also the Alberton Primary School, Largs primary schools and Nazareth primary school.

In addition to memorials and events that were underpinned by the Anzac Centenary local grants program a number of other organisations organised off their own bat other wonderful projects to embrace the Anzac Centenary commemoration. They included St Bede's Church in Semaphore, which organised a service of remembrance and a World War I exhibition, with particular outreach to local primary schools I know. Local artist, and frankly local legend, John Ford, curated the *Lest We Forget – 100 Years of the ANZAC Spirit* art exhibition at the Port Community Arts Centre. The Salisbury Council, which was particularly active during this period, and the Salisbury RSL hosted one talk every month about different aspects of the Anzac experience, over the course of an eight-month educational campaign. The Vietnam Veterans Association, a very important part of the Port Adelaide community, also held a commemorative ceremony.

I particularly want to thank members of the Anzac Centenary local grants committee in Port Adelaide, who worked very closely with me, and with my office, to assess each application. Their advice and their knowledge of the local community and the events that we were commemorating were both invaluable. I would particularly like to thank Sue McKenzie from the Port Adelaide Enfield Council for her contributions and efforts towards the work of this community. Thank you to the many hundreds of people who volunteered their time and worked on the projects that commemorated the centenary of the Anzac landing. Without their ongoing support, many of the projects would not have come to fruition. Lastly, but certainly not least, can I thank all of those thousands of members of the Port Adelaide community who took time, whether it was on the day itself or in the surrounding weeks, to commemorate the extraordinary service and sacrifice of the Anzacs.

Mr RAMSEY (Grey) (18:08): The First World War broke out on 4 August 1914. It coincides with my birthday, as it so happens, but since I came along afterwards I do not think that I will take the blame for it! Thousands of young Australians volunteered and were dispatched to Cairo, awaiting deployment. In April they shipped out to the Gallipoli Peninsula with troops from New Zealand, Britain, and France. Winston Churchill, perhaps the most successful wartime leader of the 20th century, was appalled at the losses already accumulating on the Western Front and saw the imperative of opening up supply lines to Russia, keeping her, and consequently the Eastern Front, in the war. The plan was to land the allied task force to assist the British navy to break through the Dardanelles Strait, capture the Turkish capital Constantinople—now Istanbul—and support the Russians and the second front on Germany.

The landing at Anzac Cove on 25 April 1915, contrary to popular belief, was comparatively successful—with light casualties when compared with the British and French landings, which were virtual bloodbaths. The initial advances were strong; however, as Turkish reinforcements arrived throughout the day, the Anzacs were forced back and the scene was set for eight months of immovable trench warfare. In fact, on the first day they—that is, the Anzacs—came tantalizingly close to their objective, the third ridge, from where they could have commanded the peninsula. The landing, on the most inhospitable part of the coastline, either by design or accident, had surprised the Turks. Instead, poor communication...
and poor decision-making led to a decision to dig in on the second ridge. Ataturk was able to congregate his troops, occupy the high ground and force the Anzacs back.

Churchill's plan may have been overly optimistic, but had it been successful maybe the war would have been much shorter, maybe the peace with Germany more honourable. Maybe World War II could have been avoided. Maybe; maybe a lot of things, but we will never know. What we do know is that Churchill reflected in later life that maybe he had been overly obstinate, and his wife said at one stage that she thought he might die of grief at the losses that had eventuated. What is not in doubt though is the bravery and selfless dedication to country and mates displayed by the Anzacs—by the cream of the manhood of a nation only 14 years into its independence. It was when legend was born, where the nation proved to others it was to be relied on to defend democracy and battle oppression throughout the world. It is those traits and ideals that we remember and honour today.

It was right across the Grey electorate, an area about 10 per cent bigger than New South Wales, on Anzac Day—and not only on Anzac Day, but the whole week before and some days after—that the Centenary of Anzac was commemorated. In Port Augusta, two weeks before Anzac Day itself, we saw the passage of the eternal flame, through to the War Memorial in Canberra. It was received there by the mayor, and it was a wonderful thing to be part of that commemoration ceremony as it moved through Port Augusta.

In Ardrossan, the week before Anzac Day, we met for an Anzac march on behalf of the whole of the Yorke Peninsula. Later that day I had the honour of launching a World War I book that had been put together by Professor Don Llongo on Private Sidney King, a boy from Koolywurtie. He was a local lad. The war diaries were supplied by his granddaughter, Sandra Klopp. It was one of the projects that we were able to help out with the Anzac Centenary grants. As I said on the day, the war diaries of Private Sidney King, who had his war experience on the Western Front, were very much the story of an ordinary hero. Many times the history of war is written in the eyes and the words of the prominent participants, but Sidney King was an average footslogger who was out in the trenches, and he told the story of the disaster unfolding around him.

In Whyalla, the day before Anzac Day, I had the opportunity attend the vigil that is mounted by the young service groups there—the Navy cadets, the Army cadets, St John's, CFS volunteers and other groups. It is a wonderful thing to meet those young kids as they stand there for that 24-hour vigil. The dawn service was at Whyalla, and I thank the President of the RSL, Matthew McDonnell, and Warick Songer, for the wonderful service, and there were record crowds. I think this has been echoed right across Australia. In fact, with the Anzac Centenary grants we were also able to help out with the refurbishment of the gates to Memorial Oval in Whyalla.

Then my wife Teresa and I travelled to Port Lincoln, where we caught the 11 o'clock service. The RSL people down there—Garry Johnston and Dave Gaffe—gave a great hand in organising the event, along with the Port Lincoln City Council. It was during this time that, rather sadly, there was a medical evacuation and a helicopter landed on the main oval at Port Lincoln. The sound of the helicopter, for many of those who had experienced the war in Vietnam, would have brought back chilling memories.

From there, interestingly enough, we travelled to Gallipoli Beach, which is about 50 kilometres out of Port Lincoln, near Coffin Bay. Gallipoli Beach was, of course, where the
film Gallipoli, with Mel Gibson, was filmed all those years ago. A local group had put together a commemoration ceremony there on the cliffs, and it really was quite moving. In 2011, I had the honour of attending the dawn service at Gallipoli, and the landscape is remarkably similar. Following that, we attended a history presentation at the Wanderah hall, and we were back in Port Lincoln that night for an Anzac ball. So if the legs were not worn out, we did a bit of dancing to go with it.

The next morning, we continued to Gladstone where there was another project that we were able to assist with the Anzac Centenary grants. The community of Gladstone had previously had a World War I commemorative foundation which was vandalised back in the 1960s. It fell into disrepair and was eventually removed. They have rebuilt it and it looks fantastic. Full congratulations to Richard Stott, the driver in that community. It was wonderful to have the opportunity to open it and to see the enthusiasm in the community for the commemoration of Anzac Day.

There was one more event—as I said, it was a very long haul getting through Anzac commemorations. At the Wanderah hall we were able to assist with the Anzac Centenary grant helping to restore the stained-glass windows in the local hall. There was a wonderfully moving service on the Sunday afternoon, which really capped off the rest of Anzac Day for the local member—that is me, and my wife. I must say that I was well aware of other events and was invited to many others, from Ceduna in the west to Coober Pedy in the north and Eudunda and Yorketown in the south. Every one of them had the biggest crowds in at least 40 towns, and more towns than ever are pausing to remember those who have gone before us and given their all for this country. They have gone to the oddest places and the furthest reaches of the world to uphold the rights of citizens and the principles of democracy and to defend the principles that Australia is built on. I thank them for their wonderful efforts. As a nation we say those wonderful words at every Anzac gathering and every gathering of the RSL: Lest we forget.

Mr KATTER (Kennedy) (18:18): My great-granddad, Henley, and his brother both wanted to go to war—the First World War—but, as with so many other Australian families, one of them had to stay home to look after the family business. So they tossed a coin, and I am only here today because my great-granddad lost the toss. His brother, Bert Henley, went to Gallipoli. Fifteen days after the landing he was shot dead at Gallipoli. He is still at Gallipoli and will always be at Gallipoli. In a terrible twist of fate, Bert Henley's namesake, my grandmother's brother, joined up and went to Singapore with the 8th Division. He was captured and, whilst he survived the war, his health was wrecked and he died some years after the war.

I think the most poignant scene I have ever seen in a movie—and I love my movies—was in Saving Private Ryan. In the first scene the camera is behind the mother. She is standing in the doorway and two men pull up in a black car and walk up the driveway. They hand her a telegram telling her that three of her sons were dead. All that is in a person's body that keeps them upright dissolved out of her body and she crumbled into the floor. I cannot see that scene without thinking of my great-great-grandmother, who would have stood at the door and got the telegram. My great-grandmother also stood in a doorway and got the telegram.
One of my very good friends, Tommy McIvor, a famous roughrider, wrote a beautiful song called 21 Guns. I think it is probably one of the finest songs in recent years, published in Australia. The last stanza of the song goes:

Now the angel of death with his knock at the door.
The crumpled up telegram falls to the floor.

Her reason for livin is livin no more, as she cries for the pride of Australia.

There are a couple of excellent books out on the First World War and I am reading one at the moment. It says that it really answers the question as to why there was a First World War. I am halfway through it, and I cannot agree with the dust jacket. I am still at a bit of a loss as to why we were fighting in the First World War. There is no doubt that the Balkans were falling apart and the great land grabs of the colonial powers were on, and that had a lot to do with it.

One of the many great things about Napoleon Bonaparte was that he destroyed monarchy throughout the world. Monarchy made a sort of comeback, but what was left of it vanished in the maws and the jaws of the cannons of the First World War. I suppose in looking for some logic in the death of my great-grandfather's brother, my great-great uncle, at least we got rid of the dreadful system of monarchy. Either you believe that all people are born equal or you don't. Of course, if you don't then monarchy is a good idea. You want to have a look at the First World War if you think monarchies are a good idea. If you are really looking for a reason for that war then I think the base reason was the ego of the monarchs of Europe at the time.

In trying to find some sanity out of what is, of course, the ultimate insanity, I found the Second World War to be in sharp contrast to the First World War, because it was a war where you were fighting real, genuine evil. I personally could see no alternative than to fight that evil. Once again, in almost all the pictures from my family on all sides—my mother's side and my father's side—every single person was in uniform. There were about 20 or 30 cousins and brothers and sisters—even all the women were in uniform—and you think: all those people were under the threat of dying. Sadly, for my Great-Uncle Bert, it resulted in his death. If there is a sanity to come out this war then it is that we can learn some lessons from what took place there. To simply say, 'We are British and we will do what you tell us, Mother England,' was a dreadful mistake. It cost the lives of something like one in 40 of the entire Australian population. I do not have any doubts with that figure, because amongst the forebears of my own grandchildren there are five people who served at Gallipoli, and I think they should all be very, very proud of that.

In the Second World War, when we were at war with Indonesia, I was in the 49th Battalion. I was the unit historian. I had to write up the history of our battalion. We were one of three battalions that were sent up to stop the Japanese. I went to see the major, and I said: 'Look, Major, I have difficulty here. Every single reference to us in the Second World War is that we fell back, we failed to hold ground, we retreated, we were ill prepared, we were untrained. Every single comment is negative.' He said, 'Well, what are you going to do, Katter?' I said: 'I'm not prepared to write that down about my own battalion. I am going to try and cast around and see if I can find some positives.' I went down to the RSL and I said to an old digger there, 'Mate, do you know anyone in the 49th Battalion in the Second World War?' He said: 'No, I don't. But I'll tell you one thing about them. They were the ones that copped it worst. When they were on leave to Sanananda, after fighting their way across the Owen
Stanleys’—the Kokoda Track as most of us know it—’only 28 out of 1,000 men were able to walk out unassisted from their trenches.’ To this very day, I can feel the rage rise in me. For those of you who have played football or for those of you who have been in the army, you have a particular relationship with your platoon or your battalion. They were men just like me. In fact, my father and my Uncle Billy served in the 49th and 9th. Billy was in the 9th when it went to Milne Bay and imposed upon the Japanese the first defeat in 800 years of land warfare. As Australians, we can be enormously proud.

Let me just return to Kokoda. This is the situation: General Mackay goes into the cabinet room and says, ‘If they take Port Moresby there is no way of stopping the invasion of Australia.’ They were 10 days march from Port Moresby. We sent up three battalions that were completely ill trained and one Bren gun. In military terms, if there is no machine gun, you do not have a section. If you do not have any machine guns, you do not have a platoon or a battalion. So, technically, we did not exist. There was one Bren gun for the 9th Battalion when it went up there. So we are going to stop the Japanese with one Bren gun, were we? That was rather interesting. Here is the greatest military force the world had ever seen—800 years undefeated in land warfare. They had beaten the Chinese. They had beaten the Americans, outnumbered two to one. They had beaten the British, outnumbered three to one. And they were coming to take Australia.

Let there be absolutely no doubt about that. In my book, I was able to research it and say very definitively that they were on their way to Australia. I titled my book An Incredible Race of People. What an incredible race of people! Three battalions had been sent up with one machine gun to stop the Japanese. We did. We not only stopped them but turned them back, and they never moved forward again. So today we pay tribute to those great men. I am very proud to say and sad to say that some of my forebears were amongst them. None of those descendants are with us today. They died.

Mrs GRIGGS (Solomon) (18:21): On April 25, 1915 the young nation of Australia—a nation that had federated only 15 years earlier—sent soldiers onto a distant shore in the nation that we now know as Turkey. The plan was a simple one: Australian and New Zealand troops were to cross the narrow peninsula and knock out the forts guarding the waters leading to Constantinople and the Black Sea. As we all know, despite the spirited efforts of the ANZACs, things did not work out quite as planned. By this time 100 years ago, thoughts of a quick and decisive victory had faded and troops from both sides were digging in for a long campaign. Ultimately, the campaign would not achieve its objectives and, after eight months, Allied soldiers would slip out under cover of darkness.

All of this begs the question: why do we celebrate this campaign? What is it that makes the people of this nation, a people who have enjoyed 100 years of almost uninterrupted peace at home, crawl out of their beds in the pre-dawn gloom on 25 April each year and pause, as the sun comes up, to remember those soldiers and all of those who have since served? For a nation still finding its way in the world, the servicemen who fought at Gallipoli planted the seeds of our national identity, and those seeds bore incredible fruit. A young nation was looking for its own identity and, like any adolescent, we needed role models. As the stories of bravery, ingenuity, self-sacrifice and mateship filtered back, we realised that we could find our role models, define our identity and establish our self-worth as a nation by looking to the
way these men had conducted themselves under incredibly trying conditions and drawing our strength and defining our values from them.

As I have already mentioned, Australia is a peaceful nation. When we fight, we meet the enemy in distant lands a long way from the families, friends and homes our soldiers are sent out to protect. Given that so many of our young people have never had to meet a foe on a battlefield, I wanted to use my time here today to single out some of the values that were forged on that cold peninsula a century ago and show how, in my electorate, those values are alive and well.

The Prime Minister told the people of Australia that the Commonwealth would, if the next of kin request it, repatriate the remains of 25 Australian servicemen killed in the Vietnam War and buried in Malaysia and Singapore. That speech was the result of countless hours of organising and lobbying by the Vietnam Veterans Association of Australia and their Northern Territory president, Bob Shewring, who was one of the key people involved. Over past few years, Bob has written to me, met with me, called me and briefed me on how the campaign that he called 'Bring Them Home' was going. He has been in direct contact with the Prime Minister and the Minister for Veterans' Affairs. I have no idea how many hours Bob has put into researching and lobbying but I know why he did it—because Bob, as a former serviceman, treasures those values that the Anzacs left to us. Bob and his colleagues in the Vietnam Veterans Association know that it is not right to ask someone to put their life on the line for their country, for someone to sacrifice everything, without the nation honouring that sacrifice. Bob would not leave his mates behind. Thanks to the efforts of Bob and his colleagues, those who made the ultimate sacrifice can now rest in peace in Australian soil. Australia owes Bob a debt of thanks.

Just before Anzac Day, I spent some time in Afghanistan. It was a privilege to be there with our troops, and I got to see firsthand how they were going to commemorate this Anzac centenary in that theatre. Some of them were quite excited and very honoured to have the opportunity to commemorate the centenary in the theatre of war. Honouring those who served is not a tradition reserved to servicemen or ex-servicemen. In my electorate of Solomon, I had the honour of attending a series of events put on by schoolchildren across Darwin and Palmerston. On Friday the 24th, the last school day before Anzac Day, I attended a special school assembly at Palmerston Christian School. Led by the school captains, the Palmerston Christian team put on a heartfelt memorial assembly. Handmade floral tributes were laid, an Army chaplain addressed the students and there was a stirring rendition of *We are Australian* which, I much confess, brought a lump to my throat and a lump to the throats of many in the audience. The principal, teachers and students of Palmerston Christian School have much to be proud of.

Just down the road at Palmerston Senior College, the students hosted a combined assembly, with several surrounding primary schools also attending. A moving ceremony was held, complete with a combined service honour guard of local cadet units. Wreaths and books were presented in memory of the fallen, and a spectacular sculpture to commemorate Indigenous servicemen was unveiled on the school grounds. Participation was the cornerstone of the day’s events, with younger students submitting artwork in a series of Anzac themed displays and competitions, and the school library playing host to an exhibit of Australian military history. I was also fortunate enough to attend the commemoration at Larrakeyah Primary School, where
a sincere service was held. Students came together for a period of reflection, laid handmade tributes to the fallen and paid their respects.

Later in the evening, students from schools across Palmerston gathered at the town's cenotaph shortly after dark for the youth vigil. The youth vigil was organised by the Palmerston RSL and it gave students from around Palmerston a chance for some quiet reflection as they mounted an honour guard around the memorial from dusk till dawn. The students worked in shifts, symbolically guarding the memorial through the night leading up to the Anzac Day dawn service.

There were a number of fantastic initiatives throughout the electorate of Solomon in memory of those who served. As the federal representative of this fantastic area, I was privileged to assist some of these through the Anzac Centenary Local Grants Program, and the youth vigil was one of those. The Darwin RSL club put forward two awesome programs which are worthy of mention. The Borella Ride was the flagship event of the Northern Territory's commemoration of the Centenary of Anzac. The ride commemorated the journey made by Albert Borella, who walked, rode a horse and hitchhiked on a mail coach to get from Tennant Creek to Darwin and then travelled by ship to Townsville to enlist in World War I. The story of Borella is a fantastic one, and the re-enactment of his journey is a once-in-a-lifetime educational opportunity. But, because the story unfolds along one of the most remote highways in the world, the Stuart Highway, there would not be many people who could benefit from it if not for the work of the Darwin RSL. The Darwin RSL put together a documentary crew to film the ride and use it as the basis of a documentary that could be shared with the world. Because of their work, people around the globe can share in this most amazing of Territory stories and share the Anzac spirit.

Another measure put forward by the RSL, which I felt was particularly important, was correction to the roll of remembrance at the Darwin Cenotaph. It should go without saying that any nation prepared to put people in harm's way owes those people a duty of care after the last shots have been fired—to the survivors, the best of care and the benefits of the peace and prosperity they have defended. To those who fell, the least we can do is remember them—know their names and their stories and acknowledge their sacrifice. It is with this duty in mind that a team of voluntary researchers from the Darwin RSL—and I need to once again single out my friend Bob Shewring in that team—went through the rolls and found there were some errors and omissions on the lists of the fallen at the Darwin Cenotaph. Their tireless research meant that new brass plaques were able to be cast to commemorate those who fell and whose names were not recorded or were recorded incorrectly.

It was at that same Cenotaph that I attended the Dawn Service. I was honoured to read a message from the Prime Minister and lay a wreath on behalf of the Australian government and its people. The ceremony was solemn and very well attended. My husband, Paul, chose to attend the Palmerston service on my behalf and reported that that was also very well attended. It was a great honour to see the community rally together to mark this occasion and, in doing so, to demonstrate the tenacity, loyalty and mateship that the original Anzacs were so highly renowned for.

Ms PARKE (Fremantle) (18:39): A few weeks ago I made a constituency statement in which I spoke about the many moving events I attended in the Fremantle electorate for the Centenary of Anzac and the Gallipoli landings. I would like today to speak about an
extraordinary book that I launched in the week before Anzac Day at the WA Army Museum in Fremantle.

But first some context. Like many Australians, my family had direct experience in the Great War, with my grandfather and great-uncles among the WA Anzacs who left from Fremantle wharf and who, very fortunately, returned alive, although they died before I was born, so I did not know them. My great-uncle Gordon Parke served as a stretcher-bearer alongside Simpson and his donkey at Gallipoli. When he got home he named his orchard at Donnybrook Lone Pine in memory of his fallen colleagues, but otherwise, according to my family, he never said a word about his wartime experiences, and nor did my grandfather and so many others who experienced the war.

So it is only through historical accounts gleaned from letters, diaries, oral histories, stories passed down through families and photos such as those revealed in Andrew Pittaway's *Fremantle Voices of the Great War* that we can find out about the trials and tribulations these people faced during and after this most bloody of wars. In reading Andrew's book one discovers afresh in the soldiers' own words both the horrendous reality of this particular war and the national pride that drove our battered soldiers to keep on fighting, in the words of 11th Battalion Private Percy Cook, 'for King and Country and wife and child and everybody'. From the lively and raucous streets at the heart of young Fremantle to the ghastly trenches of Gallipoli, Palestine and the Western Front, to the army hospitals and prisoner of war camps, and to the return home, Andrew's book brings to life the incredible experiences of the Fremantle people who served our nation during World War I.

Just from the footnotes detailing the occupations of each of those mentioned throughout, I found myself imagining the wartime streets of Fremantle emptied of every kind of worker. I thought of the people left behind to hold the fort, a task which would never have ended for the many widows, parents, friends and children who suffered the losses and those whose loved ones returned home but were never the same afterwards. Given the loss of around one-third of its working age men at a formative time in its history, it is astonishing that Freo emerged from this period and went on to thrive. Of the 3,000-plus people who left Fremantle's shores—labourers, nurses, bar managers, blacksmiths, accountants, lumpers, grocers, market gardeners, pearlers, firemen, stockmen, journalists, timber workers, musicians, artists, students, clerks, marine engineers, locomotive drivers, a federal MP and just about every other type of worker you can imagine—we know that at least 853 were killed. We know that the permanent physical, emotional and mental damage done to survivors rendered many incapable of ever returning to a steady life course.

The simple words of 33rd Battalion Private John Luff penned in his final letter to his wife, Ruby, from the battlefield in Messines aptly sum up the reality:

It is a jolly hard life and no one knows—only us poor chaps that are here …

Now, 100 years on, Andrew Pittaway's clear and precise accounts of key events contextualise the sometimes chilling and sometimes achingly mundane and good-humoured letters and diary entries of many Fremantle servicemen like John Luff who may not have returned home but at last tell us their stories within these pages.

What continually strikes you while reading the book is the sheer arbitrariness of life or death, injury or disease—the sheer chance, fate or luck, good or bad, that determined whether
people died or ultimately returned home. Imagine thinking yourself lucky after having suffered at the Somme like 32nd Battalion Sergeant Walter Flindell:

I was hit on the face with shrapnel, and a few minutes after got hit on the hip, with a piece from a high explosive shell. I was very lucky as there were men all around me being killed, and others receiving terrible wounds … it seemed impossible to live through the machine gun fire and shrapnel and those who got back have to thank providence.

In the face of the horror, the ongoing thread of comradeship and humour was a lifeline for these men. Sergeant Ted Mofflin of the 11th Battalion describes the charge up the hills after the Gallipoli landing:

I was shouting and trying to keep my little section together, and about half way up the first hill I prodded Major Brockman in the seat with my bayonet, he turned around and started to go off at me. I said "Alright lad, don't get excited" and went off and left him. He must have got a shock as he was always wanting to be saluted and sirred.

Gunner Hector McLarty describes the gallantry of his 8th Battery, 3rd Field Artillery Brigade comrades:

This is how the men in this Battery die: When the smoke from the bursting shell had cleared away, Wallis ran up to see the damage. He found Mick Taylor crawling about on the ground covered in blood, and dazed. Bill said, "Are you hit Mick" "No Bill" he said, "I am only scratched, look after Doug and Stan." (We found subsequently that he was wounded in 14 places). Bill then picked Doug Lennard up. The poor lad had one arm off, one leg shattered at the thigh and internal wounds. He said, "I'm done Bill, look after Mick and Stan. Don't mind me." Stan Carter had a fearful wound in his side. He said "I'm sorry I'm moaning. I know it will upset Mick and Doug but I can't help it I can't help it." He died poor lad almost immediately. His last words were "Did they get the gun?"

In the midst of all the death, perhaps the most human of acts can be seen in soldiers pooling their funds to establish and take care of their friends' graves, or the Turks allowing the 11th Battalion to retire from a failed attack at Gaba Tepe without firing a shot at them. What is more, when the Red Cross went to help the wounded, they found all the wounded had been bandaged and the dead buried already by the Turks.

This book, Fremantle Voices of the Great War, is very aptly named as we see and hear about the war through the eyes and ears of the Fremantle people who lived it. Naturally, Fremantle is frequently mentioned in the letters and diaries of the men. Private Marcus Anderson of the 11th Battalion told of arriving in the north of France and marching through a town when he heard someone calling his name from a window above. It was Mort Allen, the son of Reverend Tom Allen, one-time minister at the Fremantle Wesley Church. Marcus notes:

I knew Mort very well. He was a pupil at Fremantle Boys School. I never saw Mort again. Another valuable life sacrificed on the bloody altars of Mars.

Gunner George 'Chitter' Brown describes how when they first arrived in France they were unlucky to be spotted by the Germans, who promptly sent over some shells:

I lost my best pal, Sergeant Henry Robinson from Fremantle. He was captain of the North Fremantle juniors and extremely popular with all who met him … he leaves a wife and child at North Fremantle.

It is worth noting that there were so many members of the North Fremantle Football Club who were killed or seriously injured in World War I that the club was ruled ineligible to remain in the West Australian Football League after the war, with collateral benefits to the
other Fremantle clubs, South Fremantle and East Fremantle, who picked up North Fremantle's best remaining players. Baden Pratt has written a wonderful book called *Hell for Leather: the Forgotten Footballers of North Fremantle*.

In *Fremantle Voices of the Great War* we read the diary notes of the son of CY O'Connor, Fremantle engineer, Corporal Roderick O'Connor, who was killed in action in France in 1917, 15 years after his father's tragic suicide. We also learn about one of my predecessors as the federal member for Fremantle, Reg Burchell, who not only enlisted in World War I but returned from the Western Front with a Military Cross for his bravery.

Through the chapters of *Fremantle Voices of the Great War* we garner a Fremantle-specific knowledge of the events and effects of the so-called Great War, and through this we can have a richer understanding of the human fabric that has made our beloved port city and our country what it is today. We see the way young Australians were spurred on to join a great effort, a great adventure, before having ground into them the gruesome waste and cruelties of the four-year campaign. We learn that for all the casualties on our side, the Turks, who were after all defending their homeland against invasion, suffered many more. And we come to see the common humanity of friend and foe alike. This reminds us that the most critical human condition is peace.

Now, with a century passed since the start of those dark years, *Fremantle Voices of the Great War* is a fitting testament to the service and memory of Fremantle's people. I hope that the personal histories revealed in this book and the centennial commemorations of Anzac Day inspire us always to continue working for the peaceful resolution of conflict. In the words of 10th Light Horse Regiment's Sergeant Herbert Ulrich:

I was in the thick of it often but, thank God, I came safely through. I saw many splendid young fellows pass out. It was heartbreaking, war is terrible! Pray God it may soon be over.

I extend my thanks and congratulations to Andrew Pittaway for his caring and skilful work in bringing these Fremantle voices to life.

Finally, I would like to mention that on Sunday 31 May I attended, along with around 200 other people, the South African memorial in Kings Park to commemorate the 113th anniversary of the signing of the Vereeniging Peace Accords marking the end of the Boer War. The keynote address was given by Brigadier Phil White, a military historian and Honorary Colonel of the 10th Light Horse Regiment. His theme was 'The Fathers of ANZAC,' specifically chosen in this Anzac centenary year to raise awareness of the fact that around 30 per cent of the 1st AIF were Boer War veterans and that they made a significant contribution to our national effort in the Great War.

There were an impressive number of floral tributes laid at the service, including a wreath dedicated to the horses and transportation animals sent from Australia for service in South Africa. It was thought that this could be an Australian first. The wreath was laid by Phil Sullivan of the 10th Light Horse Display Troop, along with his war-horse Gee-Jay, who remained at the left shoulder of Phil as he laid the wreath—as someone quipped, 'No doubt resisting the perfectly natural equine urge to eat the flowers tantalizingly within reach!' Gee-Jay had the traditional reversed boots in the stirrup to remind us that all six of our Victoria Crosses awarded in the Boer War involved horses.
I want to thank my constituent Kevin 'Kiwi' Bovill for his tireless work on the Boer War memorial event and in helping the veterans of many wars who may not have received the recognition and entitlements their service has merited.

Mr VAN MANEN (Forde) (18:49): It is with great pleasure that I rise to speak on the Prime Minister’s motion on the 100th anniversary of the landing at Gallipoli.

One hundred years ago our nation swore an oath that we would remember them. Today we can stand proud as a nation to say that we have, and that we continue to remember them. On 25 April our community came together to honour the service and sacrifice of our Anzacs, and it was heartening to see the increasing number of people—particularly our younger generations—who attended dawn services and Anzac Day marches.

We came together to honour the heroism, bravery and resilience of the young Australian and ANZAC men who were sent to Gallipoli to fight alongside other forces. We lost some 8½ thousand men and more than 19,000 others were wounded.

During this year’s Anzac Day service, the president of the Beenleigh RSL, David Draper, shared the story of two local families. Sharing these stories reminds us of the men who had been thinking about home, their families and their children 100 years ago.

Lieutenant Kidd, whose name lies on the Beenleigh honour roll, was one of six brothers. All six went off to war but only two returned. The family came from the Ormeau area, but the boys enlisted in different parts of the country. There was also the Stewart family, who sent three sons off to war—none came home. While their names have remained on the honour roll for many years it was only after some research by the Beenleigh RSL that we found out they were brothers.

More than 20 men from Beenleigh and the surrounding community went to war and never came home. Their names and memories remain, and so too does the cause that they represent today. Today, Anzac Day is not only about remembering the sacrifice of those men who died at Gallipoli. It represents a day of remembrance and reflection for all the men and women who paid the ultimate sacrifice in ensuing wars. The 100th anniversary of the landing at Gallipoli was a special day to remember the service personnel and civilians from Australia and other nations who paid the supreme sacrifice so that we can live in peace. The Anzac spirit has not only been remembered but has become entrenched in our everyday lives; mateship, camaraderie, courage and sacrifice are elements of the Anzac spirit I see in the community every day.

On April 25, I saw these traits in our veterans, service personnel, families, community groups, students and residents who took part in the Anzac Day march. I also see these traits in the men, women and children in our community on a daily basis. I see the mateship at our local men’s shed groups, where members come from all walks of life unite to share their struggles and do something meaningful with their time and for others. I see the camaraderie when we visit local sporting clubs with teammates supporting each other and sharing the highs and lows. I see the courage of our local SES, rural firefighters, police and emergency service workers who face tremendous challenges each and every day. From the tragic house fire in Beenleigh on May 14 to evacuating residents in the 2011 flood and helping people in times of crisis, our emergency service men and women show courage in the face of tragedy. I see the courage in our local business community, who risk it all in the hope of following their
dreams. I see the courage in our student leaders, who proudly represent their school and their peers and give a voice to the next generation as they share their hopes for the future. I see the sacrifice in our volunteers, who give up their time to selflessly offer support to others. From Meals on Wheels to the Salvation Army and Lighthouse Care, for various reasons we see people performing great deeds every day and expecting nothing in return.

The Anzac Centenary was not only about remembering; it was a reflection on what happened and what a wonderful and lucky nation we live in. It is a reflection on the people who live here and the continuing Anzac spirit that makes us who we are as Australians. It also highlighted how important it is for our country to continue its commitment to peace in other parts of the world. As a nation, it is our responsibility to ensure that everyone, regardless of race or creed, is entitled to live in peace without fear. Our entrenched spirit of mateship, camaraderie, courage and sacrifice mean our nation will always answer the call to others in need. We will always step up and provide help to those who need it most.

Finally, I would like to thank the members of the Anzac Centenary Local Grants committee. My sincere thanks go to David Draper, President of the Beenleigh and District RSL Sub Branch; Ken Golden OAM, President of the North Gold Coast RSL Sub Branch; and Matt O’Hanlon, Principal of Beenleigh State High School. The committee recommended great local projects in Forde and I would like to thank the community for nominating such worthy projects. These projects include: Rivermount College, who will be performing an arena spectacular honouring the spirit of the Anzac; Beenleigh and District RSL Sub Branch, who organised a re-enactment of the Dungaree march with local school students—hundreds of students marched proudly along the route on Anzac Day this year and, in particular, I would like to thank Mr Phil Butterghee for his indefatigable work to put that together; North Gold Coast RSL Sub Branch was able to purchase much-needed equipment for their sub-branch; Canterbury College will be building a World War I memorial garden in their school grounds; and the Rotary Club of Coomera Valley was successful in gaining a grant to undertake restoration work for the Upper Coomera Cenotaph. This World War I memorial attracts thousands of attendees every Anzac Day, and I am pleased to see that this memorial restoration will ensure future generations will be able to pay their respects. I would again like to thank all of the members of the community involved. My thanks to the Minister for Veterans’ Affairs for his support in this wonderful project.

In closing, I wish to thank the members of the Beenleigh and District RSL Sub Branch, the Greenbank RSL, the North Gold Coast RSL Sub Branch, the Pimpama and Ormeau war memorial committee and the Rotary Club of Coomera Valley for the effort that went into organising their various Anzac Day services. The dignity and respect that they demonstrated at those services, in honour of those who paid the ultimate sacrifice in their service for this country, was tremendous. Also, the wonderful support from all of those in the local community who came along to show their respect and acknowledge that supreme sacrifice. Lest we forget.

Mr WILLIAMS (Hindmarsh) (18:58): On 25 April, we commemorated the 100th anniversary since the Gallipoli landings. I was honoured to mark this occasion at the dawn service at Moseley Square in Glenelg and I joined thousands of others who came out to remember those who have given their lives in service during conflicts and peacekeeping operations. I am sure all members will join me in saying that there was that spine-tingling
feeling when the bugler played the last post or the ode was spoken. It is one that most people know well.

This year was even more special because it commemorated the centenary of the landings of the Australian and New Zealand troops in Gallipoli—a watershed moment in our nation's history. Charles Bean, Australia's official historian of the First World War, long held the view that the consciousness of Australian nationhood was born on 25 April 1915, and many share this common view.

As the Prime Minister stated, in his address to the many that made the pilgrimage this year to Anzac Cove, Gallipoli, for the 100 year commemoration: 'In volunteering to serve, they became more than soldiers; they became the founding heroes of our modern nation.' Today, Australians are in awe of the efforts of those first Anzacs, and we are rightly proud of their achievements, as the Minister for Veterans' Affairs stated in his address at the Australian Memorial Service at Lone Pine, when he called them 'ordinary men, achieving extraordinary deeds'.

At the dawn services I attended at Glenelg and Henley, the young and old gathered to remember and pay their respects. I want to congratulate all the RSLs in Hindmarsh for their efforts in organising the very special and moving Anzac Day ceremonies: Plympton Glenelg; Henley and Grange; and Hilton. I also want to thank the numerous community groups who supported the services, such as the Bendigo Bank team, who cooked the breakfast enjoyed by my family and many others after the Henley service. On this centenary, there were record numbers at all the dawn services in Hindmarsh. Many groups in the community—and schools such as William Light and the Nazareth Catholic Secondary College—also paid their respects at special ceremonies.

To give another example, the Messinian Association of South Australia held a commemorative event to recognise the Australia-Greek alliance in the Great War, and the Australian soldiers of Hellenic origins who fought as Anzacs. The Australian Hellenic community is a significant community in my electorate, and I was privileged to attend the event on April 26.

I also attended the Lemnos Association of South Australia's Anzac Day memorial service and luncheon. The landing at Gallipoli was launched from the island of Lemnos, which was also the place where many of the wounded were taken and where many Anzacs are buried. Lemnos was the location of the major nursing stations for the Gallipoli campaign and is the location of two major Commonwealth war graves. Both services honoured the critical roles and strong links forged by Greece and its people and Australia—and Lemnos—during the Gallipoli campaign and was celebrated in true Greek fashion, with family, friends, food, music and dance. It was clear that Anzac Day is a day for all Australians, regardless of religion, race or even place of birth.

I was also one of thousands who braved the cold and rain and attended the Camp Gallipoli commemorations, held in Morphettville, following a youth vigil organised by the Henley and Grange RSL. The Centenary of Anzac captured the interest and imagination of communities right across Australia. Groups across Hindmarsh participated in the Anzac Centenary Local Grants Program, funding new memorials and honour boards to demonstrate that we truly do remember them.
The government's Anzac Centenary Local Grants Program provided up to $125,000 per federal electorate to support community based commemoration. Across 150 electorates, almost 1,800 individual projects sought funding. The Messinian Association of SA were successful in their application, and it was great to make the announcement at their commemorative event.

Moseley Square in Glenelg is home to a new and impressive memorial—thanks to the efforts of the Plympton Glenelg RSL, the City of Holdfast Bay and funding from the Anzac Centenary Local Grants Program. It was a momentous occasion to see the numerous wreaths laid in front of the memorial which stands in front of the Glenelg Jetty. I congratulate Will Smith and his team at the Plympton Glenelg RSL for the great work they did in making this memorial a reality.

RSL SA also received funding to assist in the development of the 'RSL virtual war memorial', an outstanding interactive website which allows members of the community to search for, or contribute information about, family members who served. It tells their story, and each and every day recognises the Australians who fell on this day in history.

I acknowledge my own Centenary of Anzac committee, chaired by Mr Peter Summers OAM. The committee did an outstanding job in deliberating over the many applications, and I commend all involved for their time, effort and input—especially Peter for his commitment and diligence.

In closing, I would also like to acknowledge the Minister for Veterans' Affairs, Senator the Hon. Michael Ronaldson, and his staff and department, for their efforts and assistance. As we commemorate the events of World War I and the centenary of Gallipoli, we reflect on the terrible cost of war. We pay respect to the 60,000 Australians who fought in the Gallipoli campaign; the nearly 9,000 who died; the 20,000 who were wounded; and the thousands more who carried the unseen scars for the rest of their lives.

Anzac Day is not about mourning a defeat or honouring success. It is about remembering the original Anzacs and the legacy of all who have followed in this path. We honour all who have served, and continue to serve, our nation, and their families. We honour all of those who have given their lives in the service of our nation over the past 100 years.

We have not forgotten and we will not forget.

Ms HENDERSON (Corangamite) (19:04): It gives me great pleasure to rise and speak on behalf of Corangamite residents on the Prime Minister's motion on the 100th anniversary of the landings at Gallipoli.

The Centenary of Anzac is the most significant period of commemoration in our nation's history. The 25th of April 2015 marked 100 years since that first fateful landing at Gallipoli. It was a very special time but a very challenging time for every Australian, young and old.

I have been incredibly proud to have represented the people of Corangamite at this incredibly important time in our nation's history, principally through the Anzac Centenary Local Grants Program. I want to join my parliamentary colleagues in commending the work of the Minister for Veterans' Affairs, Senator Michael Ronaldson, for the way this program has been delivered to all electorates and to all people right around Australia.

As we know, the government is committed to ensuring the Centenary of Anzac is community focused; it helps locals commemorate, remember and pay tribute to the service
and sacrifice of Australians who have served their nation. This resonated everywhere I went, as we made many announcements under the Anzac Centenary Local Grants program. It was a great joy, I have to say, to join with so many communities across Corangamite to celebrate the work of local RSLs, local schools and local organisations, in their various activities to commemorate our national service and sacrifice at this very significant time.

I think for many people at this time this is also very personal. So many families around the nation were directly impacted by those who went before them in the service and sacrifice they gave on behalf of our nation. For my family, it was also personal. Private Raymond Sullivan was a member of the 7th Australian Infantry Battalion. He was particularly special of course because he was a great great uncle of mine. He was actually one of 750 Australians to die on the day of that fateful landing at Anzac Cove. It is a very sad story. He, like so many others, arrived on the beaches and within a matter of hours this young 24-year-old butcher from Brunswick lay on the fields, shot in both legs and within 24 hours he was dead due to blood loss or exposure. It destroyed his family.

For many months, Raymond's parents did not know whether he was dead or alive. In 1916 the Wounded and Missing Enquiry Bureau of the Australian Red Cross took evidence about Raymond's death and reported that a witness said he believed he was about the last man to see Sullivan on the day of the Anzac landing. He was lying on the ground. He thought he was pretty well even though he was shot in both legs and the witness gave him some cigarettes and drink from his water bottle and then heard nothing further. As we know, he was one of hundreds of men who died on that day. In World War I, from an Australian population of just under five million, 417,000 enlisted, 332,000 served overseas, 152,000 were wounded and more than 61,000 never came home.

These stories have affected so many families. It was with a great deal of joy that I joined with so many communities in the commemoration of the 100th anniversary of Anzac. I would like to reflect on some of the local grants. The Bannockburn Primary School was awarded just over $3,000 for a beautiful remembrance garden. I am a big supporter of Bannockburn Primary School and their move to a new bigger school. They did an amazing job.

The Belmont Fire Brigade received just over $3,000 also to support a memorial commemorating the service and sacrifice of brigade members during World War I. On Sunday 19 April I officially opened the First World War Memorial Gates in Ceres, which had been restored with a $10,000-grant. That was one that really had been championed by the local community and was a fantastic project. The Belmont Primary School, another fabulous primary school in my electorate, received a grant to renew a memorial garden. The Colac RSL Sub-Branch received a grant to support the Cressy community with a new flagpole and some other restoration work at the Colac RSL Sub-Branch in Cressy.

In Torquay we had some fabulous announcements. In January, in fact, the Prime Minister announced funding for a new memorial plaque at Point Danger to honour residents who served in the First World War. That was certainly a wonderful day. Point Danger is an incredible part of Corangamite where this year some 15,000 or more people gathered for one of the largest Anzac Day services in Victoria. It is very reminiscent of the beaches of Gallipoli looking over the cliffs to the east as the sun rises. We were also incredibly proud to support the Torquay RSL, which does such an incredible job with that service, through a grant for a memorial garden.
There was another fantastic project that was supporting the Military Historical Society Geelong. And the Geelong military re-enactment group did an amazing job at their Gallipoli Before and Beyond event, which received a $15,000 Centenary of Anzac local grant. There were many more grants as communities from right across the very large electorate of Corangamite, some 7,500 square kilometres, did so much to work together to commemorate this very significant day.

The Lorne RSL and Historical Society unveiled a fabulous project. They celebrated and honoured 32 soldiers who enlisted from the Lorne area. They too have a memorial garden and they have done an incredible job to honour those who served from the Lorne area. The Surf Coast Shire is supporting a memorial walk along the Barwon River where we are actually upgrading the Princess Highway—a fantastic project that the federal government is working very hard on. It is a new walk of honour commemorating 64 Australians who received the Victoria Cross during the First World War, including Albert Jacka. Albert Jacka was a famous local resident. He was a great Australian and received a Victoria Cross for his heroic acts in Gallipoli in 1915. Some say that Albert Jacka was such an incredible soldier that he could have been honoured three times over.

The Golden Plains Shire received a grant for a wonderful project that they are doing, a local publication. There is a Teesdale photographic restoration project, a publication—the Meredith Soldier's History—and also the restoration of the Teesdale War Memorial. We supported the Borough of Queenscliffe with its fabulous Anzac Day service and also the Ocean Grove and Barwon Heads RSLs with a number of grants to support both their activities in terms of reaching out to local school children through an education program and also an upgrade of the cenotaph in Barwon Heads.

I want to finally thank the great work of the Corangamite electorate committee—Graham Rawlins, Councillor Bob Merriman and Keith Hankin—who did an incredible job. It has been a great honour to join with the Corangamite community to commemorate this very important time in our nation's history. Lest we forget.

Mr HARTSUYKER (Cowper—Deputy Leader of the House and Assistant Minister for Employment) (19:14): I welcome the opportunity to speak today on the importance of the Anzac Centenary and to recognise some of the people from my electorate who made this year's commemoration such a successful community event. One cannot underestimate the impact of World War I on the psyche of a new Australian nation. A nation of only 4.9 million people, a nation not even 15 years old, had 417,000 men volunteer for the Australian Imperial Force and sent 323,000 overseas. More than 61,000 were killed in action—more than one per cent of Australia's population at that time—and more than 150,000 were wounded.

Gallipoli was the beginning of that terrible sacrifice. Around 50,000 to 60,000 Australians served on Gallipoli. There were more than 19,000 casualties and 8,709 deaths recorded. They were amongst the first to die in World War I but not the last. While almost all Australians have heard of Gallipoli, it is important not to forget the sacrifices at Passchendaele, Fromelles, Pozieres, Polygon Wood and the deserts of Palestine and Sinai. What is important now is how we honour the sacrifice of those who served during World War I. I think we have done them justice.

On Anzac Day this year, hundreds of thousands of people attended dawn services across the country. More than 10,000 people attended the dawn service at the site in Turkey where
Anzac forces landed on 25 April 1915. Another 7½ thousand people attended the dawn service at Lone Pine, and more than 6,000 attended the service at Villers-Bretonneux. Thousands more attended services in London, Belgium, Thailand, Papua New Guinea, Malaysia and Vietnam and throughout New Zealand.

I would like to add my thanks for the graciousness of the Turkish government and the people of Turkey. Some might think our relationship with Turkey to be passing strange—enemies during the Great War but now good friends. But I think it says something extraordinary about the character of the Turkish people that they welcome so many Australians to the place where our troops landed and fought their grandfathers and great-grandfathers 100 years ago.

It would not have been possible to have hundreds of ceremonies around the country and around the world without thousands of volunteers to make it happen. They have been doing the tasks that go into honouring our fallen in communities across the country and, more specifically, in my electorate of Cowper. With this in mind, I would like to acknowledge the contributions of volunteers of ex-service and RSL organisations in my electorate to commemorating the Centenary of Anzac.

The Anzac Centenary Local Grants Program has been very successful and has allowed communities large and small to recognise the importance of the Anzac legend. In the Cowper community we had a very committed group who assessed the applications for local projects. I would like to acknowledge the contribution of committee members, who included David Doyle OAM, Bob Payne, Bon Denner, James McLeod, Brian Mortimer, Alex Robinson, Paul Huggins, Allan Crouch, Jim Cameron and Robyn Rooth. The committee did a fantastic job of approving many projects, and I would like to place on record my strong support for the work of the committee and my thanks for the work that they did.

In Coffs Harbour, the hard work of the RSL sub-branch ensured that the local community had the opportunity to participate in Anzac Day events in addition to the traditional services on 25 April. They organised a display of Anzac and other World War I material which recognised the involvement of many soldiers from the Coffs Harbour area. The branch also hosted a family fun day and featured an audiovisual display of World War I, where people had the opportunity to learn more about the Anzac legend.

The Coffs Harbour Regional Gallery also restored a First World War honour roll and built a display for World War I medals which is now housed in the museum. Dr Leigh Summers and Terrie Beckhouse were instrumental in this project.

The hard work that these volunteers put in was most commendable in honouring our fallen. The ceremonies around the electorate of Cowper saw unprecedented numbers of people turn out on Anzac Day. I joined many thousands of people who attended the dawn service at the Coffs Harbour Cenotaph. The march later that morning was one of the largest in recent history. I congratulate all schools and community groups who participated in these events. Services were also held at Woolgoolga, Bellingen, Repton, Glenreagh, Urunga and Sawtell.

Kerry Bayliss and Dallas Burrage, from the RSL sub-branch in Sawtell, organised a display of military items that reinforced the Sawtell community’s links with World War I.

I would like to acknowledge the efforts of Barb Piggott, Dick Nicholson and Tubby Bathgate in helping the Urunga RSL branch to get a new cabinet to display war memorabilia.
The RSL sub-branches in the Nambucca Valley, including the sub-branches of Nambucca Heads, Macksville and Bowraville, united to organise a special service at Bowraville on ANZAC Day. Bowraville was the centre of local government at the time of World War I, and the local war memorial was located there. With the assistance of a federal government grant, the Bowraville War Memorial was restored and a book entitled *The Story of Anzac* was republished and distributed throughout the community. I acknowledge the contribution of John Kent, Graeme Allen, Jim Cameron, Bob Harriss, Roger Jones, Wendy Litchfield and Barry McDonald, from the sub-branches of the Nambucca Valley.

And I should not forget the small communities of Stuarts Point, Eungai Creek and Taylors Arm, who also hosted services on Anzac Day. As part of the centenary commemoration, Taylors Arm upgraded their marble honour roll through the efforts of Stuart Johnson and Raelene Ward. These small communities, like so many other small villages around the country from which many of our servicemen were drawn, have, importantly, commemorated the deeds of our Anzacs.

Anzac Day is always well supported in the Bellingen shire, and this year was extra special. The Bellingen RSL sub-branch created an excellent mobile display of World War I memorabilia and war equipment, which was showcased to schools and the community. The great work of Brian and Kathy Mortimer with the assistance of Rick Maunder ensured that the Anzac Centenary was appropriately recognised.

The Dorrigo community re-enacted the First World War recruitment march, while further south, in the Macleay Valley, services were held in Kempsey, Frederickton, South West Rocks, Hat Head, Gladstone, Bellbrook and Willawarrin. I would like to recognise the extraordinary effort of all those involved in making the services a success in local communities throughout our region.

Of particular note is the contribution of the volunteers from the South West Rocks RSL Sub-Branch and their president, Alex Robinson, who organised the construction of an impressive Remembrance Wall to commemorate the centenary. The wall is the centrepiece of a memorial path that remembers the fallen from conflicts that Australia has been involved in from the Boer War to Afghanistan. The wall features a large plaque of a World War I soldier, and the intention is to use the wall to commemorate the centenaries of future conflicts. I commend to the House the efforts of that particular sub-branch. I recommend that if you are ever travelling through South West Rocks and the Macleay Valley you should pay a visit to the wall and pay your respects.

The Maclean RSL Sub Branch organised a dawn service and then a march down the main street prior to their service. Steve Davis and Geoff Lenz from the Ulmarra RSL branch helped their community acknowledge their World War I servicemen and organised the restoration of their local cenotaph. In Wooli, Bruce Bird and the Wooli Lions Club also refurbished the local cenotaph as part of the centenary commemoration.

The Gallipoli conflict and World War I has become part of the Australian psyche. Coming shortly after Federation, the Gallipoli campaign and more generally World War I have become a defining part of our national identity. This would not have happened without the personal commitment and sacrifice of Australians who volunteered at that time. The toll of the landings at Gallipoli and in the trenches of France and Belgium was huge in comparison.
to Australia's population at the time. Virtually every community large and small from around the country was touched by loss. It is a very important part of our history.

Anzac Day was appropriately commemorated through the hard work and great efforts of our local ex-service community. I commend them for their commitment—not only for their service at the time in our armed services, but also in their later service in ensuring that the deeds of their comrades and the memories of their comrades remain to this day and ensuring that the commemoration of Anzacs continue in the hearts and minds of the young people who will be the adults of the future.

COMMITTEES

Intelligence and Security Committee

Membership

The DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Craig Kelly) (19:24): Madam Speaker has received letters from Mr Clare and Mr Dreyfus resigning from the Parliamentary Joint Committee on Intelligence and Security. Madam Speaker has also received advice from the honourable the Prime Minister nominating members to be members of the Parliamentary Joint Standing Committee on Intelligence and Security.

Mr PORTER (Pearce—Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister) (19:24): by leave—I move:

That in accordance with the provisions of the Intelligence Services Act 2001, Mr B. C. Scott and Mr Dreyfus be appointed members of the Parliamentary Joint Committee on Intelligence and Security.

Question agreed to.

MOTIONS

Centenary of Anzac

Debate resumed on the motion:
That this House:

(1) acknowledge that the 25th of April 2015 marked 100 years since Australian and New Zealand troops landed at Gallipoli;

(2) pay its respects to the 60,000 Australians who fought in the Gallipoli campaign, the nearly 9,000 who died, the 20,000 who were wounded and the thousands more who carried the unseen scars for the rest of their lives;

(3) remember the brave soldiers of Great Britain, France, India and Newfoundland who fought alongside the ANZACS 100 years ago;

(4) note that on the 25th of April, solemn services of remembrance were conducted at Anzac Cove and at Lone Pine in Turkey, attended by some 8,000 Australians, including the widows of Australian veterans;

(5) extend its thanks to the people and the Government of Turkey for their support of the centenary commemorations and their ongoing and faithful care of the Gallipoli battlefields; and

(6) note that on Anzac Day, millions of our fellow Australians gathered to remember the ANZACs and all those who have worn our uniform and serviced in the name of Australia, and that the people of every electorate represented in this Parliament have honoured this milestone, the Centenary of the landings at Gallipoli.
Mrs MARKUS (Macquarie) (19:27): I stand here today in this place to reflect upon the impact and significance of what began that day we now refer to as Anzac Day—25 April 1915. On that day the Anzacs began a tragic yet generationally impacting journey. We all have a link to that day. It is our story. Today, I wish to paint a picture of some of those Australians that left our soil to fight for freedom and peace focusing first on those who left home and loved ones from the Blue Mountains and the Hawkesbury and secondly, with indulgence, recognising my own heritage.

While the Gallipoli campaign came to a close with a well organised retreat—demonstrating in itself the innovation, ingenuity, improvisation and meticulous planning—Brigadier-General CF Aspinall-Oglander wrote in reference to the military operations:

Up to the very last the men were visiting the cemeteries, erecting new crosses, or tidying up the grave of a dead friend. "I hope," said one of the Anzacs to general Birdwood on the last morning, as he pointed to a cemetery "I hope they won't hear us marching back to the beach."

The Anzacs left over three nights from 18 to 20 December without a single loss. Those who survived Gallipoli went on to Southern Belgium and Northern France on the Western Front. What they found was unprecedented human loss amid what has been referred to as 'mud moonscapes, endless artillery barrages, poisonous gas, landscapes wrapped in barbed wire, soaked, mud drenched uniforms and the likelihood of imminent death.'

I had the privilege of visiting the Western Front Fromelles, Bullecourt, Villers-Bretonneux and Menin Gate and have seen firsthand the gratitude that the French people have, particularly for Australians. This reminds us of what the Anzac spirit inspires and what our diggers today desire above all else. That is not the glorification of war but the pursuit of peace and freedom for everyday people across the globe.

The Kurrajong-Comleroy Historical Society received $10,000 to fund a project to research and print a book entitled First World War Soldiers of the Kurrajong about the men who enlisted—

Debate interrupted.

ADJOURNMENT

The SPEAKER (19:30): It being 7.30 pm, I propose the question:

That the House do now adjourn.

Budget

Ms RISHWORTH (Kingston) (19:30): I rise today to highlight to the House the Abbott government's continued attack on South Australian communities, particularly their refusal to reverse their decision for the $270 million cuts to community services that are hitting right now in my electorate of Kingston as well as right around Australia. As a result many community services, including family and parenting support, emergency relief, financial counselling services and settlement services, will be axed on 30 June this year. This decision is sending shock waves through the communities I represent in the southern suburbs of Adelaide.

The Abbott government and the minister have ignored pleas from local families to save many of these programs, including the Family Work Project. This decision will leave hundreds of families in my local area without vital support. The Family Work Project is run

CHAMBER
by the Hackham West Community Centre. This program provides essential support to families, helping to reduce social isolation, form friendships and develop support networks. These families will have nowhere to go as a result of this government's cruel cuts to community services.

I visited the centre and spoke to many of the families who have benefited from the Family Work Project. They told me that this program has been so important to them. It has helped them to connect with their community. Many of them said it has helped improve their relationship with their family. These people were extremely upset that the government was axing this program that has provided support for so many years. This program in different funding models has been getting support for many years and this government has for the first time axed this support. In March I wrote to the minister calling on him to reverse his decision and to continue the funding, but I have not had a response yet. Minister, please respond—if not to me, then to these families.

Unfortunately, this is not the only cut that will impact our community. I have spoken many times before in this place about financial counselling services. These are so important in helping those who find themselves in financial difficulty to get out of debt and to manage their money properly. This support has been axed by this government. It is a very unfair and cruel cut that will have long-term consequences for so many in my electorate.

The Christian Care and Support Centre in Aldinga, which has been funded for 20 years by the federal government to provide relief support, has also had its funding axed. It is the only group that provides this type of support in Aldinga for families who find themselves in emergency situations and need some financial or other support. It has been providing this service for many years to vulnerable individuals and families. It has now found that its support has been cut. It is very disappointing.

These decisions need to be reversed. Of course many of these organisations found out their fate on Christmas Eve. They received a very uncharitable email saying that their funding will be cut. It is time for the new minister now to reverse these decisions that will really hit hard communities right around the country.

In the time I have left available I would also like to speak about the attack on our arts community. What we have seen from the arts minister in this budget is a savage cut to the independent Australia Council for the Arts. I think $104 million is being transferred to his own department, rather than having the independent scrutiny that comes with funding arts in this country. I have heard from many second-tier and smaller arts groups that, as a result of this cut, they will fold. Many of these arts companies have allowed artistic endeavour to foster and grow and ensure that we have the creative community that we do. With the minister being able to determine who gets funding and who does not, many of these arts companies that have been working for a long time in our community fostering that creativity will have to shut their doors.

This is a disgraceful decision. Many on the other side who have connections with their arts communities will reject this decision. They should speak to the minister about this. This is appalling. I ask him to reverse this decision. (Time expired)
Mr RUDDOCK (Berowra) (19:35): I am always a little disappointed to follow speeches where requests are made for additional funding for programs but no ideas are proffered about where the Commonwealth is going to get the money to pay for them and then votes are recorded in this place against measures that are designed to ensure that we are properly resourced to be able to meet those many requests. But that is not the reason I want to speak tonight. I think this place is elevated when we can address matters of quite a different character.

I want to record that on 27 May last, tragically, a very fine Australian passed away. His name was William Chiu. A memorial service was held in Sydney Town Hall on Sunday. My good friend the member for Banks, David Coleman, was there representing me and our party because there were many hundreds of Australians, including many of Chinese descent, who took the opportunity to bid him farewell.

He was born in Malaysia. He was educated in Australia and New Zealand. He earned two master's degrees: one in chemistry and one in commerce. He held an honorary doctorate from the University of Western Sydney, and it was a great pleasure to be there on the occasion on which he received that award. He was the founding chairman of an organisation that has a rather strange name—the Australian Council for the Promotion of Peaceful Reunification of China. Some people are very interested in the title. My emphasis is always on 'peaceful'. It is an organisation to which he provided very effective leadership and it had undertaken, as I will elaborate, on raising money for very fine causes.

Dr William Chiu was widely recognised for his service to many Australian Chinese groups. He dedicated his time to promoting trade, culture, education, health and research cross-culturally. He was state patron of the New South Wales branch of the Australia China Business Council. He was a member of the New South Wales-Asia Business Advisory Council. He was chairman of the 2002 international peace conference. He had membership of the New South Wales Parliament Asia-Pacific Friendship Group. He was a strong advocate for increasing trade between Australia and China, and I think he would have been thrilled to see the signing of the free trade agreement recently with China.

He was the inaugural patron of the University of Western Sydney Foundation. The foundation raised funds for education, and UWS valued his ability to promote that foundation, while he was alive, through his extensive business connections and contacts. He was the principal sponsor of the Sydney Powerhouse Museum for its exhibition on the Great Wall of China in 2006, which was visited by over 113,000 people during its season. He provided a unique opportunity for Australians, particularly Chinese-born Australians, to gain new insights into China's rich history and culture. He was convenor and donor for the Sydney Chinese community support for the Victorian Bushfire Appeal in 2009, raising almost a quarter of a million dollars. He personally donated $20,000 and was a driving force in organising the Sydney Chinese community for later appeals.

For 12 consecutive years since 2003 he was a major sponsor and Chairman of Eyes on China—a free medical mission to Tibet, Sichuan, Yunnan, Inner Mongolia, Xinjiang, Guizhou and Guangdong to help cataract sufferers regain their sight and restore normality to their lives. This mission involves Australia using its unique skills to assist in that task, and
something in the order of 50 Australian eye surgical specialists and medical personnel over the years have participated in this program; it was particularly important.

He was patron of the Australian Hokkien Huay Kuan Association, which has a long history in Sydney. The association was established to provide support services to migrants from Fujian. His family grew up in Fujian, although, as I said earlier, he was born in Malaysia. He was Chairman and major sponsor of the World Fujianese Conference in 2005, which hosted more than 1,500 people. In cooperation with many other organisations, he initiated an educational organisation, the Australian Chinese-Classics Reciting Centre, providing a platform for Australian children, whether of Chinese origin or not, to understand Chinese culture and to promote much closer relationships.

As you can see, his resume is extraordinary—it speaks for itself. He was a man who spent his adult life as an advocate for international cooperation. We should be very proud of him and we will miss him greatly.

Workplace Relations

Mr CHAMPION (Wakefield) (19:40): Earlier in the day in debate on one of the bills before the House I talked about entry-level jobs and a recent finding by the Fair Work Ombudsman on the Baiada chicken company. I quoted one of Mr Jason Om's reports on the ABC, where Deputy Fair Work Ombudsman Michael Campbell likened what was happening in this industry to syndicated crime. Baiada is no small employer; it provides some 20 per cent market share to some of the major companies in Australia—Coles, Woolworths, IGA and many other supermarkets. It is very hard to buy chicken in this country without purchasing their products at some point. The statement of findings by the Fair Work Ombudsman about Baiada outlined what I think are some of the most concerning industrial relations practices I have heard of in my time in both the union movement and this House.

It is particularly concerning that there are employers in this country who seem to think that they can ignore this parliament and even an agency of the current government, Fair Work. The statement of findings found that Baiada refused permission for the Fair Work inspectors working on this inquiry to access the factory floor. They denied them an opportunity to observe work practices and talk to employees about conditions, policies and procedures. They also failed to provide the inquiry with any significant or meaningful documentation.

The statement of findings also outlines that there is, if you like, a cascading network of contractors and subcontractors. These contractors are paid per kilogram of poultry processed, rather than hours worked, irrespective of night shifts, weekends or public holidays. There were six principal contractors who then in turn subcontracted to at least seven other second-tier entities, some of whom subcontracted down a further two or three tiers—it involved some 34 separate entities in total. We have got a cascading set of entities, no written agreements and a model that relies on high levels of trust.

Other very concerning matters outlined in this statement of findings include noncompliance with a range of Commonwealth workplace laws, very poor or no governance arrangements by all the parties in the various labour supply chains, and exploitation of a labour pool comprised predominantly of overseas workers in Australia on the 417 working holiday visa. Exploitation in this area included significant underpayments, extremely long hours of work, high rents for overcrowded or unsafe worker accommodation, discrimination, and misclassification of
employees as contractors—all very serious issues. Fair Work inspectors were also required to consult stakeholders like the Meat Industry Employees’ Union, local government, the New South Wales Police, the Australian Taxation Office, the Department of Immigration and Border Protection, labour hire providers and hostel owners.

What we have here is a very serious situation indeed. When you look at the findings on some of the subcontractors, you see, for instance, that last year the Fair Work Ombudsman received requests from the employees of B&E Poultry Holdings Pty Ltd which resulted in back-pay of more than $100,000 to the agency. But when you look at Mushland Pty Ltd, which was a company that was providing services, that company failed to disclose information specifically requested by the inquiry. Subsequently the phones of both the company director and the accountant were disconnected. And it goes on to say that that company went into liquidation.

We have a very serious situation in this industry. It needs to be cleaned up. This statement of findings requests that Baiada engage with the Fair Work Ombudsman to make sure that Australian workplace laws and other laws are not broken and are not flouted with such careless abandon. I seek leave to table this statement of findings, because I think it is important that it is in the parliamentary record.

Leave granted.

**Gilmore Electorate: PCYC**

**Illicit Drugs**

**Mrs SUDMALIS** (Gilmore) (19:45): I have spoken many times in this House about the liaison work done at the PCYC, where the police work tirelessly to bridge the divide and mentor young people in Gilmore. This weekend we will see more evidence of our police working with the community in a positive way. Twelve Indigenous youngsters will participate in the local Fishing for the Future program. Under the guidance and organisational talents of Inspector Steve Johnson, together with our dedicated and effective Ben Wellington, our Aboriginal community liaison officer, these young people will have a day of workshops. They will learn many skills themed around their culture but they will also learn how to fish in a safe and responsible manner while participating in recreational fishing. On the second day they will have an opportunity to fish offshore for the whole day and perhaps be one of the chosen to earn the Uncle Ray Smith Memorial Trophy.

On 10 June we held a community ice forum in Ulladulla. We invited the community to attend and put forward their ideas on how best to deal with ice in our local region. Aunty Nell Mooney welcomed us all to country. She is a great contributor. Shelley Hancock, state member for the South Coast, spoke to the group and, since then, has announced confirmed funding for the new police station in the bay and basin. Congratulations, Shelley. You have worked so hard for this outcome.

Senior Constable Tony Jori talked about the impact of ice on crime statistics and about Operation Croci. Dr Andrew Bezzina, senior staff specialist in emergency medicine at Shoalhaven District Memorial Hospital, spoke of his own experiences with ice in the emergency ward. Renata Matyear, who is on the legal aid panel for family and criminal law, has been at the forefront of establishing a specialist drug court in Nowra to service the Illawarra and South Coast. Sue Adams, from Sunflower House, is a resident of Ulladulla and
she runs three non-clinical mental health programs in the region, one of which is Sunflower House. They each spoke briefly about the impacts of ice in their spheres of expertise before a message from the Prime Minister was played to the attendees. Then we set to work to develop strategies for the next steps.

Having held several ice forums during the past eight months, we have already heard stories of personal tragedy, violence, separation, petty crime and serious crime. It was very heartening to hear from Jacob Williams, Ulladulla High School Captain and member of the Ulladulla High School drug awareness team; Pete Young, the Mollymook representative from Narcotics Anonymous, who is seven years drug free; and two young people, Keturah Fitzgerald and Aaron Egan. We decided to gather ideas that would be communicated to the National Ice Taskforce, and I had the chance to present the Gilmore submission to the task force chairman, former Chief Commissioner of Victoria Police, Ken Lay. Today I met with the former commissioner and showed him the recommendation from Gilmore, but we had already submitted it previously.

Community awareness and contributing information to the police is an essential step. Due to the commendable work of our local area command in the Shoalhaven and the community helping all over, up to 16 June there were 32 arrests on ice-related charges. There will be more to come, all part of Operation Croci. The same week, one of our local police officers called my office and asked me to investigate possible PIN numbers being applied to PayPass and PayWave cards, because this petty crime is overlapping into other areas. From his recent figures, it looked like they had four times more fraud cases than their average.

According to some police jurisdictions, there has not been a spike in such events. Yet, if you speak to property managers and units at shopping centres, there has been an increase. Others report an increase in credit card fraud but they do not have a separate category for online fraud or contact-less events versus PayWave.

I am now on a bit of a mission. Just last week I was robbed and had my car vandalised, and I really want to get to the bottom of this credit card fraud. I would also like a better and more streamlined method of reporting stolen cards. There is absolutely nothing so frustrating as discovering the theft of your personal belongings and then having to report them as stolen. You are stuck on hold with a tacky message saying, 'have you tried the online method?' with tacky music, and then that is repeated. Then you have to go through the whole process with the next card, your licence and your Medicare card. Really? In this day and age, it just should not happen. Thank goodness for the police force, as I know they are checking CCTV now, because my cards have already been used fraudulently. Was this an ice-related crime? Was it just petty fraud? I think it is all related and I think we have to work exceptionally hard with our police to make sure we are looking at the ice factor all together.

**War Powers Reform**

Ms PARKE (Fremantle) (19:50): Today I was pleased to co-host, together with the member for Denison and Senator Scott Ludlam, a book launch organised by Australians for War Powers Reform. The book, titled *How Does Australia go to War?* edited by Dr Alison Broinowski, is dedicated to Malcolm Fraser, who wrote the preface in February this year. It is an important book at a critical time, containing contributions from a range of experts in policy and government. The book looks at how Australian governments exercise war powers and it
makes an irresistible case for legislative change to ensure that Australia does not commit troops and arms to war in future without a proper process.

I understand that every member of parliament will be receiving a copy of the book. I am grateful for the efforts of the Australians for War Powers Reform, including Paul Barratt, the president and the former Secretary to the Department of Defence; Dr Alison Broinowski, the vice-president; Dr Sue Wareham, Pera Wells, Kellie Merritt and Dimity Hawkins, as well as the many others who made contributions to the book.

I mentioned the need for a war powers act in my first speech in this place. Indeed, I have supported the idea since 2003, when, as a UN staff member working in the Middle East, I watched, horrified, as Prime Minister John Howard eagerly dispatched Australian troops to be part of the invasion of Iraq—an action that the majority of the world regarded as illegal and certainly disastrous. Subsequent events have borne that out. And that we now find ourselves back in the quagmire we helped create—and still all on the say-so of only the Prime Minister and the cabinet, as an exercise of outdated, leftover royal prerogative powers—is deeply disturbing.

Our current engagement in Iraq has followed the pattern of recent military excursions occurring as a result of a decision by the executive without due consideration by the parliament. At the time of the announcement, there was also no clear basis in international law for the commitment. As a member of the Security Council at the time, it is striking that Australia did not seek to raise the matter in that forum.

Our current engagement also follows the pattern of moving swiftly from a questionable premise to a larger, more expensive and more fraught involvement—without the addition of any better analysis or clearer 'mission scope' along the way. For example, in response to the recent failure of the Iraqi army in the battle for Ramadi, the Prime Minister suggested Australia should consider doing a lot more than simply providing training and assistance. As in a range of domestic policy matters, the Abbott government is seeking to create and exaggerate a sense in which the conflict in Iraq and Syria is some kind of real and pressing security issue for Australia. In late May, the Prime Minister said:

The serious setback in Ramadi just emphasises how challenging the task is and how necessary the task is.

If anything this should cause us to be more committed, not less committed, to the task ahead because this conflict in the Middle East is not just something that's happening thousands of miles away.

This fight is reaching out to us, and we might wish it were not so, but we have no choice in this matter.

This final statement is wrong in both its parts. The fight in Iraq is not reaching out to us, except insofar as we inspire the recruitment of foreign fighters and terrorists by our ill-considered interventions. And we absolutely do have a choice in this matter. It is a choice that should be considered and resolved more carefully than our current decision-making process allows. There is no doubt that our involvement in Iraq is sliding down a dangerous slope. When the Prime Minister uses a military failure to justify further and more risky military involvement, it is clear that circular reasoning is at work. Already there has been considerable slippage. Already the Prime Minister's rhetoric is suggesting we will need to make a larger, longer, more directly involved commitment of military personnel.
In 2003 we went to war in Iraq for an ever-shifting list of reasons, all of which were contested by members of the public and by some parliamentarians who were not part of the Howard government but none of which were properly considered by the Australian parliament and, as we now know, none of which turned out to be true. In terms of our current involvement in fighting in Iraq, there is nothing about the recent process—if it can be called that—that militates against making the same kinds of mistakes. Nobody is really sure what our objectives are. There is no time limit on this military adventure, nor is there a limit on the scope or type of involvement.

It may be that the Australian public is to some degree numb when it comes to the deployment of our military overseas, aided no doubt by the fact that war these days can often be waged from a distance—from a plane, a drone or even from a military base thousands of miles away. Whereas countries like the United Kingdom have learned from the folly of Iraq in 2003 and introduced reform to allow greater parliamentary debate and scrutiny, we have continued to muddle along with a demonstrably lower-quality and lower-integrity approach. A properly framed War Powers Act would allow greater public engagement on the grave question of military involvement and it would provide greater transparency about the reasons and terms on which Australia goes to war, especially when there is no direct threat to the Australian territory or its citizens. It is an improvement to our system of government that is long overdue, and I thank all the members of Australians for War Powers Reform and the late Malcolm Fraser for their efforts in this cause.

Cowan Electorate: Wanneroo Districts Netball Association

Mr SIMPKINS (Cowan) (19:55): Tonight I wish to speak about the biggest sporting body in the electorate of Cowan and an organisation which I have had a long association with. It is a positive and constructive organisation that fosters the health and fitness of more than 5,000 netballers and volunteers each Saturday and during training throughout the week. I speak of the Wanneroo Districts Netball Association based in Madeley at the Kingsway Sporting Complex and just some 500 metres from my home in Darch.

The WDNA celebrated the 40th anniversary of their establishment in 2014, and I was very happy to attend with my wife Lara. There were just six courts in 1974, and now around 450 teams play each Saturday on 57 hardcourts. Wanneroo netball is a massive undertaking. Each Saturday the games start at 8.30 am and go all day. To support this huge sporting event, the northern suburbs netballers are well served by an outstanding committee of volunteers. Wonderfully led by President Judy McInerney, the committee includes Vice President Sallie-Anne Hoypoy; competitions, Helen Hitchcock; facilities and risk management, Malcolm Wright; finance and admin, Keti Vrdoljak; umpiring and development, Yvette Thomson. Other committee members are Sharee Hitchcock and Jenny Hodson. The open convenor is Trish Fox and junior convenor is Teresa Newton, and the sub-junior convenor is Kerry Menaglio. The Net Set Go! convenor is Ruth Raspa and the Spring Competitions is the responsibility of Helen Hitchcock. I would also mention the hardworking office staff, whose manager is Lorraine Ward, the admin assistant is Nola Stansfield and the development manager and Net Set Go! coordinator is Leanne Bruce. The umpire development officer is Rachel Williams and the canteen manager is Joanne Higgins.

As I said, the Wanneroo Districts Netball Association is a huge logistical event every Saturday and a challenge each evening as teams come to train on the courts. The committee
and President Judy McInerney will attend each Saturday well before the first games and will normally be there until after the final games in the late afternoon. When I think of the scale of the operation they run and how many players and officials have been involved over the 41 years, it really does say something about the number of people within the northern suburbs who will have memories of having played there. Many schools in Cowan have teams that play there as well, as part of the competitions of the winter or spring seasons. Apart from the regular competitions, the courts are often used at other times for the lightening carnivals of local primary schools or the bigger secondary school competitions.

It is an amazing facility and it serves very well thousands of girls and women, and that includes the many state players who started their careers at Kingsway. It is due entirely to the dedicated volunteers on the committee and the staff of the office and the canteen facilities that this can be achieved. I thank them and those who have gone before them for their very positive influence on so many people over two generations. Each of the many clubs that play at Kingsway depend upon the volunteer club officials, coaches and managers so that their teams can take the court each game. It really is an example of the very best of human nature that there is such a spirit of dedicated volunteerism in netball and amongst those involved at the WDNA as a whole.

The courts at Kingsway are of course outdoor courts. The grounds are essentially in two sections. The original set of courts is in front of the clubhouse and those courts have lighting. This is, of course, very important during winter so that training can take place. Obviously, with so many teams playing each afternoon or evening during the week when training takes place and with the days being so short, by the time the older age group teams can attend the light of the day is fading or gone and the courts require floodlights. This means that only about 25 courts can be used and training times will always see two teams per court and sometimes even three. Clearly, the expansion of lighting for the courts is required so that more teams can train and the games on Saturdays during winter and on Wednesdays during spring can, if needed, take place even when the natural light fades. I think that an expansion of the lighting at the courts is required. I acknowledge that the officials at the City of Wanneroo have done good work in terms of better car parking but this facility does generate good revenue for the city and more needs to be done. More concrete around the outer courts to reduce the tracking of dirt, sand and other debris onto the courts would reduce the risk of injury to players.

I believe that the Wanneroo District Netball Association is an excellent organisation, adding great value to the lives of those involved with the sport. I have no hesitation in continuing my support for their good work in the form of donations and advocacy. That will always be the case. I am once again pleased to speak of the great contribution of the Wanneroo District Netball Association.

The SPEAKER: Order! It being eight o'clock, the debate is interrupted.

House adjourned at 20:00

NOTICES

The following notices were given:

Mr Truss: to present a Bill for an Act to amend various Acts relating to shipping, and for other purposes.
Mr Morrison: to present a Bill for an Act to amend the Paid Parental Leave Act 2010, and for related purposes.

Mr Keenan: to present a Bill for an Act to make provisions consequential on the enactment of the Acts and Instruments (Framework Reform) Act 2015 and other provisions relating to legislative instruments, notifiable instruments and rules of court, and for related purposes.

Mr Robert: to present a Bill for an Act relating to the Australian Defence Force Superannuation Scheme, and for related purposes.

Mr Robert: to present a Bill for an Act to provide benefits for incapacity or death suffered by certain members of the Australian Defence Force, and for related purposes.

Mr Robert: to present a Bill for an Act to amend the law relating to defence and superannuation, and for related purposes.

Mr Robert: to present a Bill for an Act to amend the law relating to veterans’ affairs, military rehabilitation and compensation and defence, and for related purposes.

Mr McCormack: to move:

That, in accordance with the provisions of the Public Works Committee Act 1969, it is expedient to carry out the following proposed work which was referred to the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works and on which the committee has duly reported to Parliament: 17th Construction Squadron Relocation Infrastructure Project.
Wednesday, 24 June 2015

The DEPUTY SPEAKER (Hon. BC Scott) took the chair at 09:30 am.

CONSTITUENCY STATEMENTS
Blair Electorate: Country Shows

Mr NEUMANN (Blair) (09:30): I am pleased to report on another season of success of agricultural and country shows across the electorate of Blair. The season began in April with the Kilcoy Show in the very northern tip of the electorate. It was followed by shows in Marburg, Ipswich, Esk, Lowood and Toogoolawah, and concluded last Saturday with the Rosewood Show, the last country show of the season.

These shows are central to the health and wellbeing of local communities. Each has a history stretching back over 100 years. At the risk of missing people out, I want to congratulate the show committees, the presidents, secretaries and treasurers. I will name just one from every show; Kilcoy Show, president Trevor Wessling; Marburg Show, secretary Lyndell Blanch; Ipswich Show, president Marcia Cruickshank; Esk Show, president Michael Jess; Lowood Show, secretary Janeen Schultz; Toogoolawah show, secretary Lynne Teske and Rosewood Show, secretary Katy Lenihan.

While many things have changed over the years, these shows remain constant in rural communities. A show weekend is still a highpoint in the year in these communities, and the communities put on their finest and best. It is a stage for locals to display their diverse and dynamic talents in areas that are fiercely contested but always in a friendly way. They are an important boost to the local economies as well. In 2015, I held mobile offices at each of the agricultural and country shows again. My mobile office at the Rosewood Show on Saturday was my 142nd since the last election. It was a pleasure to speak with local constituents. These conversations underscored the strength, diversity and character of the people of Blair.

At the Kilcoy Show, I was proud to sponsor, but I assure you not participate in, the breakdance and hip-hop workshop and competition. I was impressed by the talent on display. At the Esk Show, I teamed up with local Sarah Hannah, the 2014-15 Queensland Rural Ambassador, to actually win the celebrity cook-off. It was a hotly contested affair. Sarah and I created our champion stir-fry, incorporating local produce from across Blair. She brought in port from Kilcoy and I had Chuwar honey, produced by friends of mine, Bob and Liz Finney in Ipswich. So it was a win for Kilcoy and a win for Ipswich.

My office, across the three days of the Ipswich Show, adjoined those of the new Labor members for the state seats of Ipswich and Ipswich West, Jennifer Howard and Jim Madden. I can say that at the Ipswich show we gave out 2,000 Shayne Neumann show bags. So we got that information across the whole electorate as best we could. I want to thank all the volunteers who helped me, and all those people who came and had conversations with us about during the various shows. I offer my congratulations to all the volunteers who help out in these country shows, and I assure them that I will be back next year.
Mr CHRISTENSEN (Dawson—The Nationals Deputy Whip) (09:33): I have grave news to report to the chamber this morning for the economic development in my electorate in North and Central Queensland. Admittedly, this news is coming from The Guardian, which is an unreliable source when it comes to matters of the resources sector, because they are very much against these projects. Nonetheless, the reports are saying that Adani has suspended all engineering works associated with its Carmichael mine and the Abbot Point expansion. This morning I have tried to get in touch with sources in Adani to verify this. I have not been able to do so, but it is extremely alarming. I advise the Queensland government upon its change of direction on the Abbot Point expansion project, that they needed to have to the federal government by June/July all of the necessary approvals, environmental impact statement, for this project to go ahead, otherwise there is the distinct possibility that it could collapse. It is now reaching the end of June and we have not seen that environmental impact statement. I warn the state government that if they want to jeopardise thousands upon thousands of jobs and the future economic prosperity of the central and north Queensland regions then they should delay this further, because if they do delay it by many weeks further this project will fall over. By delaying this, the state government is kowtowing essentially to the extreme green movement, who want to tell out-of-work families in my electorate that jobs must not be created or the planet will be doomed. They have created the perception that the reef is going to be mined, dredged and bulldozed for a shipping highway and they claim that climate change is going to destroy the reef tomorrow; all because the Carmichael mine, the Abbot Point expansion and the associated rail infrastructure could go ahead. If these fringe-dwelling lunatics and the dillydallying by the Queensland Labor government are successful then they are going to kill off this project, and that will destroy tens of thousands of job opportunities. Their actions will have zero impact on the reef. Emissions will actually go up, because what will happen is that this project, instead of being done in Australia—India still needs the coal—will simply come from somewhere else. It will come from somewhere else that has less in terms of labour laws and environmental regulations and will probably be spewing out more carbon dioxide emissions.

I warn the state government: please get on with the approval of this project. It needs to be done now or otherwise these jobs are going to go up in smoke. We need this project for the economic development of central and north Queensland. People are on their knees in places like Mackay, Bowen and even Townsville, begging the state government to get this approval done and get it to the federal government so we can sign off and create the jobs.

Ms CHESTERS (Bendigo) (09:36): Last week in parliament I had the great opportunity, like many, to meet with a group of young carers. They were here with Carers Australia to share their experience of what it means to be a young carer. Breanna, from my electorate, was part of the delegation, and to meet with Breanna in this place, share her experiences and understand the challenges that she faces being a young carer was instrumental. It really taught me a lot about what she is going through and the challenges that she faces being a young woman caring for her mother. Breanna and the other women who were with her sharing their experiences talked about how hard it was in school—having teachers understand that they were not at school today not because they were lazy or had skipped school but because they
needed to take mum to an appointment because mum had had a turn. This is one of the things that these young people are dealing with day to day.

We quite often hear in this House about older carers and the work that they do in their communities and to ensure that people within their families receive support. It is important that we also remember the challenges facing our young carers and the fact that they are trying to navigate a tough period of their life and, at the same time, care for someone in their family. Usually it is one of their parents. One of the challenges that they mentioned, apart from trying to navigate school, was finding a job where the employer also understood the challenges that they face as young carers and having that flexibility in the workplace.

Breanna said that she is quite fortunate because she has chosen a career in social work. She has chosen a career in youth support where her employer understands that there needs to be that flexibility. But one of the other young carers said that her dream is to go into the police force, and she is concerned that that may be a bit of a challenge in terms of working formally for the police force. Would there be that same flexibility and understanding? It is unusual when someone who is 16 or 20 says to their employer or school, 'I need time off, because I've got to help mum. I've got to get mum to the appointment. I've got to be there at home.' It is different but it does not mean that they do not deserve support.

Breanna and I have decided that we are going to get together in Bendigo and form a local support group for young carers in Bendigo not only so that they have a forum to share their experiences and support one another but also to give me an idea about what is going to help improve their lives and what support they need from their government. I look forward to sharing their ideas with this parliament after the group has been formed.

**Corangamite Electorate: LAND 400 Defence Project**

Ms HENDERSON (Corangamite) (09:39): The LAND 400 combat vehicle Defence project is one of the most significant defence contracts in a generation. In contrast to South Australia, our region—the great Geelong and Corangamite regions—offers many existing manufacturing facilities which could be re-purposed for part of the manufacture, assembly and maintenance of the estimated 225 armoured fighting vehicles which will be delivered under the LAND 400 contract. With Deakin University, the Geelong Port, Avalon Airport, the Point Wilson defence facility and existing roads and rail freight infrastructure, our region has so much to offer. We also have the advanced manufacturing skills and capability.

Our government is extremely focused on the opportunities that LAND 400 will deliver to Australian industry. Australian companies have the opportunity to play a vital role in this project, including in relation to component and parts supply; integration of Australian communications, sensor and weapons systems; engineering and testing; facilities; and vehicle sustainment and logistics.

With the request for tender time line extended until early August, I am delighted to report that one consortium intends to place part of its operations in Geelong if it wins the LAND 400 tender. It is also focused on delivering a very high percentage of Australian industry content, which of course is a very important priority for our government. That means more jobs for local workers and more opportunities for businesses and the extended supply chain. In fact, after I speak in the chamber, I am going to be attending a meeting with the consortium, and as I do all the time, each and every day, I will be fighting for these jobs for our region, for
Corangamite and for Geelong. That is why it is so critical that the state Labor government deliver an incentives package to drive these companies to Geelong—to make sure that they have every possible advantage.

It is incredibly disappointing, in contrast to the $100 million incentive package that has been proposed by the South Australian government, that we have heard absolute silence from Daniel Andrews on such an important project. For many months, I have been calling on state Labor: 'Do the right thing; deliver this incentives package'. It might include payroll and other tax concessions, fast-tracking of planning approvals, the provision of manufacturing infrastructure—a range of different things the state government can do. It is very, very disappointing that we have seen no action from Daniel Andrews and state Labor. All we have seen from federal MPs, such as the member for Corio, is ongoing criticism and negativity. I am fighting for these jobs. I am very proud to continue to stand up for our region.

Fowler Electorate: Autism

Mr HAYES (Fowler—Chief Opposition Whip) (09:42): No doubt everyone here will know that raising a child requires constant love, support and sometimes much patience. But please, take a moment to consider raising a child with autism. Think about the added complexities that brings to life. My grandson, Nathaniel, is on the autism spectrum, so I know firsthand that raising a child with a disability such as autism can bring many, many challenges to their family. But there is also this special type of love which is a joy in itself.

I represent a region which has significant disadvantage. One of the complications is that 52 per cent of all families in New South Wales that live with autism live within a 20-kilometre radius of the Liverpool Central Business District. There is a great need to support families living with autism in my community. Therefore, and because of my own family's experience with autism, I continue to advocate—both in and outside this parliament—for greater support for those who work to support families living with autism.

Last Sunday, together with the member for Hughes, I attended the 7th annual Foundation of Hope charity ball, hosted by the Autism Advisory and Support Service. This is a charity event that raises necessary funds to support families and children with autism. I have spoken about AASS on many, many occasions in this place. It is a not-for-profit organisation which has dedicated an enormous amount of effort and time in caring for and supporting children with autism and their families.

Headed by Grace Fava, who is the founder and President of AASS. This organisation has really taken on a very proactive role in raising awareness. But more than that, advocating on behalf of sufferers and the families of children with autism. Grace herself has two sons on the spectrum but, nevertheless, she is able to put in an enormous amount of time in educating, communicating and, importantly, going about all those things supporting families after their child has been diagnosed with autism. She personally believes that children with a disability have the right to participate as fully as possible in our community and enjoy the same opportunities and experiences of other children. It certainly takes a special kind of dedication and commitment to be so giving to a community in need. AASS truly makes a great difference in the lives of many in my community, and this is an organisation that is worthy of our general support.
Infrastructure Funding

Mr ALEXANDER (Bennelong) (09:46): Over the past four years, my office has been working on an infrastructure funding concept as an alternative to the current grants and loans systems without incurring a large government debt. Known as value capture, this concept has been used to great effect in a variety of forms in many different countries, including the United States, Britain, Japan, Hong Kong and Brazil.

We have all witnessed the huge growth in our two biggest cities over recent decades providing similar increases in the cost of living, yet without commensurate infrastructure to efficiently and effectively service that growth. Value capture can fund the retrofitting of infrastructure into our major cities.

Currently, the biggest inhibitor is the cost of land acquisition. When this is too expensive, we revert to tunnelling, and when tunnelling is too expensive nothing happens—and nothing has happened for too long. Value capture provides the potential to develop our regional areas and capture the improved property values that result as the method of funding the infrastructure.

There is significant pressure developing in our cities, highlighting the need to find an affordable supply of land. Our regions can provide this through strong new connectivity which can largely be funded through value capture. Well-planned public infrastructure is central to economic and social development. Australia suffers from an infrastructure deficit, and bold new measures need to be taken to both address this deficit and build the infrastructure to service the future growth in our cities and regions.

I have been most fortunate to meet regularly and discuss policy issues with Mr Joe Langley, one of our nation’s leading experts on value capture. I met with Joe last week as he launched his new paper entitled, Value Capture Roadmap, which I strongly recommend to all my colleagues. To quote Joe’s eloquent definition:

Value capture funding methods identify and collect an equitable portion of the value released through new zoning and other public improvements, so the communities that pay for them can share in the value created.

We need to bring all three levels of government together to focus on this common goal. We need to identify development corridors and rezone around transport hubs to allow high-density living which will provide the necessary infrastructure and growth whilst protecting the amenity of our suburban areas and our Australian way of life.

Value capture ties into the reforms recommended in the recent reports of the Productivity Commission and Infrastructure Australia. It adds another lever into our policy armoury and creates a sustainable funding loop where the infrastructure creates the growth, the growth creates the funding and the funding creates the infrastructure. This concept offers significant opportunities for my electorate of Bennelong and for the nation. I look forward to working further with Mr Joe Langley and my parliamentary colleagues to bring this policy to fruition.

National TAFE Day

Ms HALL (Shortland—Opposition Whip) (09:48): Today is National TAFE Day—a day when we should celebrate the role that TAFE has played within Australian society for many decades. In doing so, it is important to know that it is an organisation that has been of value and has been responsible for providing vocational training to tens of thousands of young
Australians. Just looking at some figures, more than 1.15 million students were enrolled in TAFE in 2013, and I suspect that that may have decreased slightly. During that time, 480,000 people between the age of 15 and 24 attended TAFE, as well as 441,000 people between the age of 25 and 44, and 227,000 people over the age of 45. It provides an opportunity for people to update their skills, and it provides an opportunity for people when they leave school to undertake that first vocational training that they need.

Unfortunately, over the past few years, we have seen places in TAFE decrease, and we have seen teachers lose their jobs. The Smart and Skilled program in New South Wales has led to over 2,000 jobs being cut. Every day, we hear about cuts to TAFE, and every cut is a reduction of an opportunity for a young person and their future. Each time that governments go down this track it places more strain on our education system. The privatisation of TAFE is destroying it. Governments have slashed funding to TAFE. It seems that the Liberal and National Party governments do not like TAFE—every time they come to power, they take money away from TAFE.

More and more money is going to private colleges that do not provide the same standard of training as is provided at TAFE. Only this week we have learned that the government, in its green paper, outlines options which would see the Australian government walking away from every single dollar that it funds to VET. Now we have seen $2 billion cut from skills and training—including $1 billion for apprenticeships—by this government. I call on this government to really consider the role that TAFE plays. I will be talking to teachers from TAFE today, and I look forward to hearing their opinion on this government's performance—(Time expired)

Swan Electorate: Lathlain Precinct Redevelopment

Mr IRONS (Swan) (09:52): I rise today to update the House about an important infrastructure project in my electorate of Swan, which I have been working very hard with both my federal and my state colleagues to secure funding for. The project will be of significant benefit for every single resident of my electorate of Swan. This is about the relocation of the West Coast Eagles and the redevelopment of Lathlain oval.

This project is a plan to redevelop a facility which, if it comes to fruition, is going to not only provide state-of-the-art training facilities for the team and administration but will also provide vital sporting, recreational and social facilities for the community of Swan and the surrounding areas. It is an ambitious plan which will cost $67.93 million to fully implement, but this West Coast Eagles Lathlain Precinct Redevelopment Project is exactly what the Lathlain community—or, more broadly, the Town of Victoria Park—needs to boost its local economy and provide much needed community facilities.

I have been campaigning for this project since 2010 when I first had a quiet word in West Coast Eagles CEO Trevor Nisbett's ear about this particular project, as I knew that their club was looking to relocate. Lathlain oval is also the home of the Perth 'Demons' Football Club. I am sure that the Prime Minister would attest that I have had a lot more than just a quiet word in his ear about this particular project, which has had an application for $10 million in federal government funding, and that is what it needs in order to progress.

Just to highlight the benefit that this project really will have for the community—aside from the two football ovals, the synthetic running track and the indoor and outdoor training
facilities that will be developed, which, I highlight, will also be accessible to the public and junior football leagues—it will also include education areas with dedicated areas for community development programs; a community hub, including a cafe and club museum; a new home for the Wirrpanda Foundation, which will deliver community outreach programs locally; and barbecue areas, playgrounds and walk trails.

Lastly, another key aspect of this project, which I believe is important to highlight, is the club's landmark agreement last year with the SAS Resources Trust for the provision of rehabilitation facilities at Lathlain Park. This will play a vital role in the development of medical research in Western Australia, with the two parties intending to collaborate with Western Australia's five universities on a research project. This project will be the first time that the five universities have come together.

We have also had support from Julie Bishop, Don Randall, Gary Gray the member for Brand, Ian Goodenough and Michaelia Cash. It is great to see that Bill Shorten has also come on board and supported this project. This will provide a local boost to the community and I will continue to campaign to get the $10 million for this vital infrastructure project for Swan.

Lalor Electorate: Road Funding

Ms Ryan (Lalor—Opposition Whip) (09:55): Since this Prime Minister has come to office, he has doubled the deficit. He has also found ways to raise the cost of living for Australian families, including the petrol excise. This was done by regulation, which means that if the excise is not passed in this parliament, the money collected will have to be returned in August to the oil companies, not to Australian commuters. This all changed yesterday though when Labor, faced with this ridiculous situation—money from the pockets of Australians going to oil companies—agreed to pass legislation with a very, very important condition: that the money be used to fill the shortfall to local governments to build and maintain local roads. This is a great outcome, particularly in my electorate from what was an appalling situation.

It now means that Wyndham City Council and Hobsons Bay City Council might get the funding needed to ease the congestion, a crippling local issue. They may get funds for work on Dohertys Road, Ballan Road, Point Cook Road—all points of incredible congestion, pressure points that commuters face every day just getting across our community before their commute to the city, for those who are travelling by car. I know that our local government will welcome any injection of funds after having their federal funding slashed by this Prime Minister. It is also sensible that local governments will get this funding because they have shovel-ready projects ready to go. That of course will mean local jobs. In an area like Lalor, local jobs are at a premium because we have lost so many jobs with the closure of manufacturing industries, the closure of the car manufacturing industries in particular.

On top of what was a terrific opening for the Regional Rail Link, and evidence that public transport funding will lead to an easier life for the people in my community, which has created 55,000 more seats on trains headed to city and taken cars off the road hopefully this week, we have seen that a Labor government initiative has changed people's lives on the ground. I am hoping that some of this injection of funding to local governments will find its way to my local government to create local jobs and to ease the congestion on our local roads.
Gippsland Electorate: Orbost Regional Health

Mr CHESTER (Gippsland—Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Defence) (09:57): I appreciate the opportunity to raise concerns on behalf of the Orbost Regional Health service in relation to the sustainability of the current funding models for aged care as part of the multipurpose service. It is one of the excellent multipurpose services in Victoria and operates under quite a unique funding model which was developed in the 1990s to provide flexibility for rural health services. These services are funded per bed per day regardless of whether there is actually someone in that bed or not, which is a different funding model that would otherwise apply to a stand-alone residential aged-care service.

Orbost Regional Health is a highly valued and respected service provider in the east Gippsland community. It has a highly capable staff and highly capable board members, who provide an extraordinary diversity of services to a rural and remote community. The viability of the aged-care service as part of the Orbost Regional Health service is critical to the future of the community and the broader east Gippsland region. Giving older east Gippslanders the opportunity to receive care if and when they need it in their own community is of fundamental importance.

The Orbost Regional Health service has written to me explaining its concerns about the current funding arrangements, which are historic in their nature and have been around for about 20 years. As the letter from Orbost Regional Health service explains:

Multipurpose Health Services empower rural communities to take care of their health. The multipurpose service model is perfectly designed to match our unique circumstances of delivering care to isolated rural communities whilst listening to our communities and designing and delivering care that responds to our community needs.

Orbost Regional Health indicates that the funding rates for residential aged care delivered by the multipurpose health service have not been altered or reviewed since their inception more than 20 years ago and no longer represent current-day costs of care, despite considerable growth in the activity funding rates that apply to other residential aged care providers.

I am pleased to say that the minister is actively engaged with the sector and with my office on this issue and is listening to the concerns of the broader community. The Australian government has noted the concerns of the rural and remote providers and has asked the independent Aged Care Financing Authority to provide advice to government on issues affecting the financial performance of rural and remote providers by 16 December this year. ACFA will be consulting with the sector, and the MPS providers will be able to raise their concerns with ACFA as part of this process.

I note the presence of the member for Indi. She has raised similar concerns in relation to the multipurpose services in her electorate. It is of concern to a small number of communities, but they are important communities in our rural and regional environments of Victoria. I am looking forward to continuing to work constructively with the minister, who, I must emphasise, has been actively engaged with my office on the issue and is very concerned to make sure that the viability of these services continues into the future. Orbost Regional Health is very keen to work with me and the government to make sure that we can achieve an outcome that provides for the future viability of aged care in communities like far east Gippsland.
Ms OWENS (Parramatta) (10:00): On Friday night I hosted a forum in Parramatta called Empower Parramatta. It was an attempt to bring people who care about solar power together with business to see whether we can grow the industry in Parramatta. Parramatta is down from where it should be. Fewer than one in 10 residences in Parramatta has solar. Largely because of our large unit blocks and the townhouses in the area, we are quite low. The numbers have been decreasing. There are 2,766 certified installations of solar power in Parramatta but 2,697—nearly all—were installed between 2001 and 2013. In January last year my electorate had only 48 panels installed. This year in January we had 13 installed; in February we had eight; and in March we had none. We had 13 locally based solar installers in 2013 and today we have one. The purpose of the forum on Friday was to try to reverse that by community support for what is a very important business. The forum was hosted by a wonderful organisation called PolisPlan, who are strategic partners and engineers. Steven and Nil put the forum together. They deal with local systems for water, food and energy, and they are quite an extraordinary duo to have in your electorate. We also had some wonderful community organisers there. April and Tracey from Pingala, Nicky and Tom from the Community Power Agency, Oscar from Sydney Renewable Power Company and Kartik from Parramatta City Council joined us as well.

Around the world at the moment community solar is growing. In Germany, which is one of the biggest solar countries in the world, 51 per cent of solar panels are owned by community schemes—not by commercial schemes but by community schemes where people have come together and made the investment in installing solar power, and they receive a return on their investment and channel that investment back into more installations.

We do not know what the energy market and energy businesses are really going to look like in 10 years time. Anyone who says they do is probably fibbing. But we do know that it is going to be different. If we want the jobs of the future, we need the businesses of the future. That requires not just access to capital but also capacity—that means the networks, the experience, the understanding, the mistakes, getting it wrong, working it out and getting it right. I hope the small group of people formed as a result of the forum on Friday that will drive our first community projects in Parramatta will form part of the base knowledge and experience in Parramatta that will serve us well as this industry is disrupted and forms new business models.

It was a wonderful night with great enthusiasm. We had to throw them out in the end—they stayed for nearly 45 minutes after we closed, and eventually we had to take pity on the cleaners and leave. It was a great night, and I look forward to working with the smaller group. *(Time expired)*

Mrs GRIGGS (Solomon) (10:04): The Solomon local sporting grants program is a fantastic initiative that helps so many budding Territory sporting stars. For those aged between 12 and 18, it helps towards the cost of travel, accommodation, uniforms and equipment when they are competing, coaching or officiating at a state, national or international sporting championship program.
The grants, as you are well aware, Mr Deputy Speaker, are for $500. Each recipient receives $500. I have had many mums and dads say to me that they are so appreciative of this grant when they have received it. There are three rounds of grants for each financial year. Round 1 for 2015-16 is closing in a few days' time, on 30 June, so I encourage all parents and sporting organisations to put in their grant submissions. They can do that through my website, which is natashagriggs.com.au.

I would like to share with you the grant recipients for round 3 of 2014-15: Sara Wenck from Ludmilla participated in the Australian Calisthenic Federation Championship in Melbourne; Tempe McLeod from Larrakeyah represented the Northern Territory at the 2014 Peter Horobin Saddlery Victorian Interschool Equestrian Championships; Sailor Jed Cruickshank from Rapid Creek represented the Northern Territory at the 2015 Australian Laser Open National Championships; boxers Daniel Sellers and Reed Halicek both represented the Northern Territory at the Australian National Championships in May; born-and-bred hockey star Erin Broadway represented the Northern Territory at the Hockey Australia 2015 Australian Championships; athlete Liam Mulvihil represented the Territory in Adelaide at the National All Schools Sports Competition; squash player Chad Blenkinship participated in the Australian Junior Squash Open 2015 in NSW, once again representing the Northern Territory; Henry Callander participated in the Basketball Australia Under-18 Junior National Championships, which was held in Victoria; and, netballer Sally King represented her school at the Northern Territory School Sports Under-12 Netball Competition that was held in April.

You can see we have a range of different sporting activities. The Territory is full of lots of sports people and we love our sports in the Territory. We want to encourage as many children as possible to get involved. The next round closes on 30 June, so please go to my website and put in your submissions. (Time expired)

Matildas and Queensland Firebirds

Mr SWAN (Lilley) (10:07): Queenslanders love their sport, and this week we have been treated to two of the best sporting moments in our recent history. The first was the victory of the Matildas over Brazil in round 16 at the FIFA Women’s World Cup, in Canada. With their victory on Sunday night the women became the first Australian soccer team, men’s or women’s, to win a knockout stage match at a FIFA World Cup, and they will play either Japan or the Netherlands in the quarterfinals.

If the Matildas lose in their World Cup quarterfinal they will leave Canada with just $2,850 in their pay packets. If the Socceroos were to lose the Asian Cup at the same stage they would be paid more than $66,000. FFA gives the Matildas amazing support, but I urge sponsors and TV broadcasters to support our Matildas and give them the backing and recognition they deserve. To the Matildas, regardless of the result in the weekend’s quarterfinal in Canada, you have done Australia proud, and we will all be watching and hoping you can go all the way.

The second memorable sporting moment, which also unfolded last Sunday—it was a fantastic day last Sunday—was the Queensland Firebirds’ victory over the New South Wales Swifts in the Trans-Tasman ANZ Championship grand final, at the Brisbane Entertainment Centre, in Lilley. The Firebirds had reached the grand final in the previous two years, only to fall at the final hurdle. Four goals down with only a few minutes to go and it looked like they would be bridesmaids for the third year in a row. But, in true Queenslander 'never say die'
style, the Firebirds staged a remarkable comeback to win by one goal on the bell. Their victory is an inspiration to all the young netballers at the Brisbane Netball Association, in Bradbury Park, and to others all across Queensland.

I think it will go down in history as a truly iconic Queensland sporting moment, comparable to Mark Coyne's miracle try in the 1994 State of Origin. The Firebirds are deserving of a permanent netballing home to call their own, and I encourage both the federal and state governments to come together to see what can be done to achieve that. Congratulations to Laura, Gretel, Romelda, Clare, Beryl, Laura, Amorette, Kimberley, Caitlyn, Verity and Rosalie, and all of their support staff and management team. You have done Queensland proud and shown a lot of people what an exciting game netball truly is. And, of course, we have had the Australian team announced today for the World Cup in August, and Laura is of course the captain of that team. The weekend was capped off by another amazing moment—and of course we have another amazing netballer here in terms of the member for Lalor, who has a pretty good record as well—but the Broncos' win over the Storm last Sunday was truly a spectacular rugby league moment.

Dobell Electorate: Schools Speech Competition

Mrs McNAMARA (Dobell) (10:10): As a member of parliament, one of the most enjoyable experiences is visiting schools and meeting students who are the future of our great nation. During my visits, I am always amazed to hear about the great achievements of our local school students and I wanted to provide them with an opportunity to have their voices heard in federal parliament. This year, I launched the Dobell schools speech competition and invited year 5 and 6 students to write a short speech on the topic 'Kids can make a difference,' with the winning speech to be delivered in parliament. I received a number of great speeches from local students capturing how they see our world, full of imagination and hope for the future. I am pleased to announce that the winner is Erica Field, an 11-year-old from Tuggerah Public School. This is Erica's speech on 'Kids can make a difference':

Making a difference doesn't have to be world changing, it can be as small as smiling at someone. Kids make a difference from the day they are born, they change their parents' lives, in a good way of course. Kids can make a difference simply when they are at school, in their community and in the future.

First and foremost, kids can make a difference when they are at school. They can make a difference by being quiet when the teacher is talking and that ensures that the class will learn what the teacher is telling them. At our school, year 5 and 6 students can make a difference by being part of our kindergarten buddy system. They can also take part in being a peer reading buddy. Most schools support different charities and this makes a difference. Kids can make a difference by helping a teacher or doing jobs. Kids can also help prevent and defeat bullying which is a problem in some of our schools.

In addition, kids can make a difference in their community. They can do this by participating in volunteer work such as Bunnings barbeques, fundraising, helping charities and much more. Kids can make a difference in our community by simply being well behaved and having good manners. They say thank you and sorry and smile at people that walk past. Kids can participate in activities such as surf lifesaving and get to the stage of getting their SRC (surf rescue certificate). In surf lifesaving, you learn skills for life and learn a lot about the ocean.

Last but not least, kids can make a difference in the future. They are the world's next tech experts, inventors and world leaders. Kids will be our future life savers and sporting sensations. They are the teachers of the next generations of kids. What they will have learned will impact on everyone else.
In conclusion, I very strongly believe that kids can make a difference. They make a difference when they are at school, in their community and in the future.

Congratulations to Erica and all the students from Dobell who took the time to write and submit outstanding speeches. To each of the participating students, thank you for sharing your thoughts with adults on how kids can make a difference.

**Indi Electorate: Bhutanese Community**

**Ms McGOWAN** (Indi) (10:13): I second the comments from the member for Dobell. What a great idea!

*Mrs McNamara interjecting—*

**Ms McGOWAN:** Yes, I would like to take it up. Last week was Refugee Week and on Thursday, I had the pleasure of welcoming 30 people from Albury-Wodonga to this parliament. They are part of the over 1,000-strong Bhutanese community who have come to Albury-Wodonga via refugee camps in Nepal. The last census showed an interesting statistic: Nepalese is the fourth largest language spoken at home in Indi. These Bhutanese people arrived in Albury-Wodonga in October 2008, initially 22 people, and today we have over 1,000 people living in Albury-Wodonga. They have come via the refugee camps, expelled from Bhutan 22 years ago, spent 22 years in refugee camps in Nepal and 5½ thousand of these people have now been resettled in Australia.

Since their arrival the Bhutanese community members have made an active contribution to the community of Albury-Wodonga and Victoria. One of these examples is that the Bhutanese community collected and fundraised and donated over $3,500 at the time of the Victorian bushfires, Black Sunday, to the whole community. It was in their early days in Victoria, and this effort was absolutely recognised and we are very grateful for it.

The Bhutanese community continues to make fantastic inroads into our community. I would particularly like to acknowledge three of the leaders who are playing their part to make this possible. Teju came up last week and made a fantastic speech in this parliament. He is chairperson of the Albury-Wodonga Ethnic Communities Council and he is president of the Bhutanese Association in Albury. Thank you, Teju! Thank you also, Tulshi, for your work! Tulshi is vice-president of the Bhutanese Association in Albury. Thank you too, Radha! Radha is the former president of Bhutanese Association.

When I told this community that I was making this speech today, I asked them for some words. Now, with great pleasure, I would like to talk a little about some of the things they have done. They tell me they are settling in well. The students are studying and winning prizes at school and university. But there are some challenges, particularly for middle-aged people who are learning English for the first time and trying to find work. Regardless of that, the community is volunteering and working in Parklands Albury-Wodonga and at TAFE. They are working in seniors wellness projects. They are doing cultural transition projects—and they are particularly participating in interstate soccer.

I would like to say to my Bhutanese community of Albury-Wodonga: thank you very much for what you are doing. Welcome to our community. Thank you for coming to Canberra. I am very proud to be your representative in this place.
Hume Electorate: Budget

Mr TAYLOR (Hume) (10:16): Small businesses in Hume are spending up big before the end of the financial year to realise the instant asset write-offs for business purchases. This is just what we wanted small businesses to do. Retailers say the larger items have been particularly popular in the last few weeks. Cowra Motorcycles and Power Equipment have reported that sales of quad bikes have gone through the roof, which is fantastic news. Owner Lyndsay Cain says sales of ag equipment and products have been much stronger than he expected. Cowra clothing retailer Carla Sparkes says the instant asset write-off initiative is:

… a great opportunity for all small business.

She is purchasing a new jewellery cabinet for her Kendall Street business. This is a plan which has been on the backburner, but, thanks to the budget support initiatives, she can now make it a reality. Goulburn Plumbing employs seven staff, including two apprentices. Co-owners Dean Thompson and Scott Hore have added a new ute to the vehicle fleet this financial year. Mr Thompson says that, whilst tradesmen are always buying new tools and equipment, when there is an extra incentive it makes you think about it a bit more. He says there is plenty of work for Tony's tradies in Goulburn at the moment, which is great news.

The wool and meat producers, the grain growers and the horticulturalists of Hume are all welcoming the strong support this government is giving to rural and regional businesses. The announcement of accelerated depreciation for fencing, fodder and water storage purchases is another massive help for farmers. Grazier John Reynolds and his son, Simon, at Tarago have purchased a new ag bike. John says the small business incentives are a particular bonus for younger farmers like Simon who 'still have fire in their bellies' and 'want to have a real go'. The Reynolds are sinking a bore this week and building a new silo on the back of government incentives. We wish them luck with that bore. I am sure it will go well. Caragabal farmer Dan Cooper has already met with his accountant. He is looking at buying farm equipment earlier than he would have, as are Bev and Ian Donges between Cowra and Grenfell, who have bought a solar pump.

Strong incentives to invest, coupled with some recent good rain across Hume, mean prospects are looking up for the local agricultural sector. These are all good news stories for not only Hume but Australia. Our small business incentives are having exactly the desired effect the government wanted. The rush is on to spend and invest before the end of the financial year and to make the most of immediate depreciation in the next tax year. We know only too well small businesses hold the key to re-energising our economy and creating wealth and jobs for the next generation.

Trade with China

Mr KELVIN THOMSON (Wills) (10:18): I have received correspondence signed by the national secretaries of eight trade unions: Paul Bastian from the AMWU, Michael O'Connor from the CFMEU, Michele O'Neil from the Textile, Clothing and Footwear Union of Australia, Allen Hicks from the ETU, Tony Sheldon from the Transport Workers' Union, Scott McDine from the Australian Workers' Union, Paddy Crumlin from the MUA and Tim Kennedy from the National Union of Workers.

This is a joint letter of five pages. It expresses concern about the China free trade agreement provisions regarding what are called investment facilitation arrangements. These
arrangements give Chinese investment projects of over $150 million the opportunity to access Chinese workers under a temporary working visa program with specially negotiated terms and conditions.

The terms of these agreements are open to negotiation between the Chinese representatives of project proponents and the Australian government. They offer an even looser set of conditions than the already excessively loose conditions attached to the granting of 457 visas. These negotiations will determine how many visas can be granted under an arrangement, as well as the occupations and skill levels that can be filled with such workers; whether there should be any requirement for labour market testing for the granting of visas; the temporary skilled migration income threshold that will apply; English language proficiency requirements, if any; and qualifications and experience requirements, if any.

Unless radically modified, this provision will lead to projects that involve entire imported workforces made up of temporary-visa holders, effectively locking out Australian workers, regardless of skills, qualifications, ability, availability and other relevant factors; workforces that are paid sub-living wages and as a result are effectively bonded, temporary immigrant working poor; workforces that do not speak English and cannot effectively represent their interests with respect to workplace safety, employment conditions and other issues; and imported workers working in positions that are not characterised by domestic skills shortages. These unions say that the China agreement, as it stands, creates the certainty that sooner or later Australia will see the importation of entire foreign workforces, to be exploited at will. Not only will immigrant workers be exploited, but Australian workers will be locked out of work in their own country because a foreign worker can be exploited in ways that they cannot be.

The agreement removes the ability of the Australian government to implement labour market testing for Chinese workers entering through the regular 457 scheme. This measure is irrevocable and means that we are giving up this right forever—a recipe for rising unemployment, falling living standards and greater inequality.

Albury-Melbourne Train Service

Dr STONE (Murray) (10:22): Would you believe that on every journey of the Albury to Melbourne train the catering staff close the canteen when the train arrives at Violet Town station, in my electorate, and are then offloaded and driven by car to Seymour, where they climb back on board and re-open the canteen service for the last half of the journey into Melbourne. I hear the laughs on the other side, and I can understand it. Why the absurdity, you ask? Well, the trains buck and rock and roll so badly on the line that some canteen staff have had to have knee reconstructions. Back injuries are also prevalent. Regarding the condition of the Albury to Melbourne and Shepparton to Seymour train lines—the Shepparton people then join the Albury to Melbourne line at Seymour—it is now supposed to be up to ARTC standards. It has been ticked off as a job well done.

The operators also claim that 92 per cent of arrivals are on schedule. In fact, people from Shepparton with specialist medical appointments, particularly the elderly, very frequently take the train to Melbourne the day before, knowing that the likelihood of the train service being too late for their appointment is so great that they inevitably will have that critical appointment rescheduled for, say, six months later. This, of course, is a combination of state and Commonwealth responsibilities. When I took the train from Euroa station a little while
ago, it was an hour late arriving. On the way back, the train's electronic doors malfunctioned. We were carried to a station further down the track and had to be taxied back to where we had left our car. This is not uncommon. The conductor said, 'Oh, not again,' as she offloaded us and the other elderly customers at the wrong station at Violet Town, from where we had to be transported back to Euroa.

Since 2009, $730 million has been spent on trying to fix up the Albury to Melbourne section of the track. Why haven't we got it right yet? Why is it ticked off as okay? I have to say that the state is planning to undertake a regional rail strategy. We want to make sure that this line becomes the centre of their intention to have a full upgrade. We want a business case prepared for doing a full upgrade of this line so that modern rolling stock can be used. We can have on-schedule service rather than one that has to see staff offloaded because of the damage the train does to their physical wellbeing.

We have the East West Link monies, which, of course, are no longer to be spent on this project. There is quite a bit of money there and, unfortunately, the only thing with a rural flavour about it that was on the Victorian shopping list sent through to the Commonwealth as alternative spends was the line to Mildura. I want to see this line, the Albury to Melbourne line, which goes through my electorate—the Shepparton to Seymour connection as well—on their list for alternative funding or use of those East West Link monies. And it needs to happen soon, because it is not right, it is not fair, that my constituents and the constituents next door in Indi are so disadvantaged in the 21st century.

Newcastle Electorate: Shipbuilding

Ms CLAYDON (Newcastle) (10:25): The shipbuilding industry in Newcastle dates back some 185 years to the 1830s, when steamers were built for the growing colony. Today the most recent build has been the Navy's three Air Warfare Destroyers, with 37 of the 93 blocks required being built at the Forgacs yards in Carrington and Tomago. Sadly it looks as though this proud history will end soon. Last night news broke that Forgacs had been forced to lay off another 160 workers. That is nearly half of its remaining workforce, taking the total job losses under this government to 610. These are highly skilled men and women who have been entrusted with building our naval ships, working in shipyards that have been building our ferries, icebreakers, transports and naval ships for generations.

At its peak, just two years ago, the Forgacs workforce was close to 1,000. By the end of this year it may be zero. Let me make this clear at the outset: Forgacs has been forced into this position of letting hundreds of jobs go because the Abbott Liberal government has done nothing to support our vital shipbuilding industry since being elected nearly two years ago. They have broken promises. They have sent work off shore, locking Australian companies out of valuable contracts. They have delayed tenders. They have stalled and blamed rather than act with purpose.

In August 2013, before the last election, the now-dumped defence minister, Senator Johnston, told ABC Newcastle that he wanted to keep defence manufacturing in Australia. He said, 'I get really fired up when I find us giving away our manufacturing base in the defence space to foreign manufacturers; it's just not on.' This is the same man who said in Adelaide that an Abbott Liberal government would indeed build 12 submarines required by the Navy here in Australia. My neighbour the member for Paterson was in the media yesterday blaming Labor for the job losses at Forgacs—the same man who has not dared to utter the words
'shipbuilding' or 'Forgacs' in this 44th parliament, not even while he was the parliamentary secretary for industry. The silence is deafening.

The workers of Forgacs and the other shipbuilders, BAE and ASC, need strong leadership and support from the government. But this Abbott Liberal government has consistently failed them. The shipbuilding industry is dying a slow and agonising death right before our eyes. The workers of Forgacs who are losing their jobs do not need excuses. They need work. They need a future. The last two defence white papers clearly mapped out Australia's need for more than 40 new ships. The Prime Minister must act immediately to provide certainty for the shipbuilding industry and its workers and secure Australia's sovereign shipbuilding capacity for generations to come. It is time for this government to commit to a long-term rolling build of our naval ships in Australia. There is no time to waste.

Riverina Electorate: Queen's Birthday Honours

Mr McCormack (Riverina—Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Finance) (10:28): Five years ago this very day a person who described herself as 'an insignificant girl from Guyra' gave her valedictory speech in the House of Representatives. Recently that same person, Kay Elizabeth Hull, was deservedly recognised by being made a Member of the Order of Australia, AM, in the Queen's Birthday honours. Far from being insignificant, Kay has devoted herself to public service—a lifetime of helping others. Her fearless and passionate advocacy has continued since she retired as the member for Riverina in 2010.

In her final speech to parliament, Kay used the well-known saying 'it is not the size of the dog in the fight; it is the size of the fight in the dog'. Never were truer words said. Barely five feet tall, Kay is a pocket-sized dynamo. The many highlights of her political career including helping not only to keep Wagga Wagga's Air Force base at Forest Hill open but also to expand it; being instrumental in the establishment of Regional Express airlines after the 2001 collapse of Ansett and with it the subsidiary Kendell; and being a driving force in securing dentistry and veterinary science schools at Charles Sturt University. She chaired the House of Representatives Standing Committee on Family and Community Affairs which inquired into and handed down a groundbreaking and timely report on child custody entitled Every picture tells a story.

Presently Kay—the first female to do so—is chairing the Australian National Council on Drugs, a peak body which has the onerous task of, amongst other things, tackling the scourge of 'ice' in our communities.

This evil drug is particularly prevalent in regional areas. Kay was never afraid to speak her mind and to stand up for her beliefs, even if it meant going against the tide. She crossed the floor against the sale of Telstra in 2005. She was just as determined and vocal about the abolition of the single wheat desk in 2008. Her advocacy on behalf of people living with HIV-AIDS has been important. Her personal journey to help and adopt an Ethiopian family torn apart by tragedy is truly heart-warming and inspiring. As her former adviser and long-time friend, Joe Dennis once wrote:

This unbelievable commitment, relentless pursuit of justice, determination and values of the highest community standard have inexplicably changed the life of this extended African family forever, inspiring countless others to what can be achieved when the human spirit determinedly overcomes the unachievable.
John Sullivan, another former member for Riverina, was awarded an OAM for his services to local government and the Narrandera community. At the age of 86, he is still a current councillor in Narrandera Shire. He is a past mayor and a former state member for Sturt. He is currently on a number of committees for Australia Day, wetlands and Narrandera shire improvement. And lastly, but certainly by no means least, I would like to mention Rick Firman, mayor of Temora, awarded an OAM for his tireless advocacy on behalf of Temora and the wider Riverina community. He said:

We do what we do because we love it.

He is only 40. We still have a lot more to come from Rick Firman. He is a champion and I applaud all three medal winners.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Irons): In accordance with standing order 193 the time for constituency statements has concluded.

BUSINESS

Rearrangement

Mr McCORMACK (Riverina—Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Finance) (10:33): by leave:

The order of the day No. 1, committee and delegation reports, be postponed until a later hour this day.

Question agreed to.

COMMITTEES

Joint Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade

Report

Debate resumed on the motion:

That the House take note of the report.

Ms GAMBARO (Brisbane) (10:32): As chair of the Joint Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade, I have great pleasure in commending this report from the committee's Foreign Affairs and Aid Sub-Committee, entitled Partnering for the greater good. I want to thank my parliamentary colleague Dr Sharman Stone, who chaired this inquiring, and deputy chair Senator Alex Gallacher, for producing a report which not only recognises the need to change the paradigm of foreign aid delivery but also sets out the mechanics on how we can begin to do this much more effectively. It is clear that the way forward is through innovation and partnerships, to strengthen Australia and to strengthen our region. A point that must be noted here is that, in this 44th Parliament, it is the first time we have had a subcommittee of the Joint Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade with a particular focus on aid. This has coincided with the major realignment of Australia's aid program, harnessing the power of the private sector, and addressing gender inequalities.

In 2014, the Minister for Foreign Affairs, the Hon. Julie Bishop, launched a new development policy that changed the whole way Australian aid is to be delivered. There is a strong agreement that the private sector is absolutely pivotal to economic growth and also independence for developing countries. As Dr Stone said:
It is in everyone's interest to have a stable and increasingly prosperous region. Stability comes when people within sovereign nations are able to have their basic human rights met, and they are able to contribute to the betterment of their community and country through productive work.

In the course of the past year, we have had many businesses, academics, NGOs, global partnerships, government and public service, as well as the many, many individuals, who have contributed a range of views to the Foreign Affairs and Aid Sub-Committee, on what role the private sector could, and should, play in international development. I know that the committee greatly appreciated the comprehensive and constructive nature of all of the evidence that was collected. It received more than 150 submissions, which is absolutely huge. It heard from 84 diverse organisations and individuals at public hearings. I see the member for Ryan is beside me, and I want to thank her for her contribution on the committee. She did a sterling job attending many of the hearings interstate, and also in Canberra. I know that we all gained a tremendous amount from the many witnesses that came and presented to the committee.

The report found the Australian government, through the Department of Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade, can tackle the many challenges in the Indo-Pacific region by helping to strengthen governments—land tenure systems, taxation systems and customs. The report also identified the need to address roadblocks which hinder participation of private sector partners and to position government as a hub of information for development partners, potential partners and the Australian public.

In total, there were 37 recommendations in the report. They addressed a whole pile of issues, including donor coordination; engagement with partner nations, the private sector and other key stakeholders; financing for development and infrastructure; and the internal change needed within DFAT. Something that we have had to grapple with in Australia, and in developing countries, is increasing engagement with the private sector. We really need to promote gender equality. We need to refocus our efforts in the Indo-Pacific region. Some of the greatest levels of poverty are in the Indo-Pacific, yet it receives less than a third of the world's aid.

We are now underpinning this great work to reduce poverty through enabling and facilitating growth. One of the priorities that was emphasised by the Minister for Foreign Affairs upon the Abbott government coming to office was the focus on partnering with developing countries across our region. For far too long, many countries have gone out there independently when there should have been greater coordination, and there has been much duplication in this area. In referring this inquiry to the committee, Minister Bishop suggested the committee pay particular attention to what other donors, new and traditional, are doing in this area; the role of women, particularly in the private sector; and the possible return on investment to Australia of private sector partnerships and specific financial instruments.

The report explores best practice, both domestically and internationally, in the public-private partnerships sector in providing finance. It addresses impediments or roadblocks which hinder participation and profit making in the formal economies of developing nations. We were able to hear submissions from B-group companies and about social impact financing arrangements.
Throughout the world, there has been a changing environment and development landscape. This was recognised by Minister Bishop in her statement from June 2014, 'Australian aid: promoting prosperity, reducing poverty, enhancing stability', when she said:

Our aid program needs to adapt to new realities. In 2015 the international community will sign up to a new development agenda, replacing the Millennium Development Goals negotiated in 2000. The aid world has changed in fundamental ways since then. Traditional aid approaches are no longer good enough. We need a new development paradigm.

Positive outcomes in the delivery of foreign aid are not just about more money—it is never just about more money. It is about coordinating. It is about targeting that money. It is making sure that the effective work that is already being done by NGOs and the private sector is reinforced and that we have foreign aid delivery platforms that are absolutely united, that are not disjointed and not wasted.

Our failure to tackle this problem costs lives. It is a failure that we cannot allow to continue. One of the really positive dynamics to emerge from this inquiry is a general acknowledgment and recognition of the need for the paradigm shift. In regard to this, the evidence provided was, as I said, of a constructive nature. We heard from 84 diverse organisations and individuals and it was great to see them all coming together, particularly for this inquiry.

In terms of focusing on the paradigm shift in the context of partnering with the private sector, I want to briefly highlight two submissions and explain why an explicit focus on partnering with the private sector is needed: GRM Futures Group stated:

We would venture that the private sector effort and intensity in the aid program has been underdone hitherto, and the effect of that has been to miss several significant potential opportunities that the private sector can bring to achieve results at scale that are sustained. We strongly feel that the private sector partnership—the whole idea of integrating the private sector—is not a panacea for all aid but it offers significant potential, particularly in terms of realising value for money in the aid program.

The potential of scalability was another area that was highlighted by the Rt Hon. Stephen O'Brien MP from the United Kingdom, when he came to visit us here at Parliament House in Canberra. He is a global advocate for the Roll Back Malaria Partnership. He said:

In the end, whatever quantum you throw at development, it has now got to be done in partnerships. There is no way you can just look to the bottomless pit of your constituents'—and my constituents'—hard earned taxpayer money and keep throwing it out for public good. You need the efficiency of the private sector to help you view the greatest impact on delivery but, equally, you will never do it at sufficient scale unless the public sector is involved and there is political ownership.

As I have said, there is strong agreement that the private sector is pivotal to growth and economic independence for developing countries. The 37 recommendations and supporting commentary in the report will facilitate putting development of policy into practice.

The report provided an overview of the global aid landscape and examined best practice stakeholder engagement. It also highlighted the work being done by the private sector—an area that has been seriously unrepresented—and the emergence of social responsibility and cross-collaboration in accelerating the pace of economic growth and reducing poverty, as well as the risks and benefits to the enterprises and the nations concerned.

I want to endorse and reinforce the comments made by many of our parliamentary colleagues, including Dr Stone, that our new aid paradigm represents an exciting and
important new era of development support in our region. Australia does stand on the threshold of new partnerships with our regional neighbours, some of whom have the greatest need globally, to address gender inequality and poverty. Through innovation and partnerships utilising Australian expertise in the public sector, the private sector and civil society, together we can build a better region. I commend the report to the House.

**Mrs Prentice** (Ryan) (10:42): I join with the member for Brisbane in her comments on this report, and note that as chairman of the Joint Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade she does work tirelessly across a whole range of topics in this area, and many reports have been undertaken at the moment.

As a member of this joint standing committee, I rise to speak on the foreign affairs and aid subcommittee's most recently tabled report, entitled *Partnering for the greater good: the role of the private sector in promoting economic growth and reducing poverty in the Indo-Pacific region*.

Australia is a generous aid donor by global standards. In 2015-16 Australia is set to provide an estimated $4 billion in total official development assistance, which makes us approximately the 13th-largest donor among OECD nations. The aid program will continue to reflect the government's commitment to development and economic needs, with a particular focus on encouraging development among our near neighbours in the Pacific and on building economic partnerships across Asia. As a government we are interested in outcomes. We want an aid program that is effective: not merely measured by money spent but also measured in development outcomes achieved in partnership with countries across our region.

Crucial to achieving long-lasting positive outcomes from our aid program is economic development and growth. Such growth, if it is to be permanent, needs to involve the creation of a vibrant private sector as well as the establishment of reliable public institutions. In developing economies, it is the private sector that provides the jobs to lift people out of unemployment or subsistence farming. It is the private sector that provides revenue through taxation to allow governments to fund infrastructure and services and to eventually reduce dependence on foreign aid. Encouraging private sector activity in developing nations should be a focus of the Australian aid budget, and I welcome the committee's recommendation in this respect. A great example of a successful partnership is the role played by the company Oil Search in delivering HIV and AIDS programs in Papua New Guinea as part of their major LNG project. I have been privileged to have done site inspections of the work they are doing with a variety of villages up in the highlands where they have started the LNG project, and how they are delivering community support throughout very difficult areas of Papua New Guinea. I also note that very worthwhile projects like the YWAM boat with a mission, which is delivering medical services to the western part of Papua New Guinea and very difficult to access areas, is doing so with the support of private sector involvement. Everyone involved is a volunteer, but they could not deliver the medical supplies and services without the support of the private sector.

A key part of any attempt to grow economic activity is broadening the size and the skill base of the workforce. In many developing countries in our region, women are underrepresented in the workforce. This can be due to factors including barriers to education for young girls; patriarchal social norms discouraging women venturing beyond the home to work; early marriage and pregnancy and, in some cases, endemic rates of domestic violence.
What this means is that in many developing countries a large proportion of the productive labour capacity is being locked out of the labour market. In this context, I note that recommendation 11 of the report is for the Australian government to support and extend business leadership programs, such as the Business Coalition for Women in Papua New Guinea, a group of companies and corporate leaders who are working together to drive positive change for women and businesses in PNG.

This recommendation also supports the continuation of existing women's leadership programs, including the Pacific Women's Parliamentary Partnerships Project. The PWPP aims to address the continuing underrepresentation of women in parliaments in the Pacific region. Just 13 per cent of positions in unicameral or lower houses of parliament are held by women in the Pacific region. This is the lowest of any region in the world. If we exclude Australia and New Zealand, the figure drops to just 5.4 per cent—although I note that recently in the Bougainville elections, as well as the three reserved seats for women, a woman was also elected in one of the open seats against other men and women candidates.

The major focus of the PWPP forum this year was on ending family violence, and we held a forum in Suva, in Fiji. We had wonderful representation from many of our Pacific neighbours, and we worked together to try and mentor and support the women who have a much more difficult time in their parliaments than we enjoy here in Australia.

As we know, this is a global problem, but one that is endemic in large parts of our region. Ending family violence is vital to improving the economic wellbeing of women in our region. I note that the report also recommends that the PWPP be transitioned to become an initiative where all women's leadership positions are included for development and support. As we know, it is the women in roles in the bureaucracy and in delivering government services that can provide support for other women in their communities, and we must support women in the Pacific nations and our near neighbours and encourage them to participate in this way.

In total, the report makes 37 recommendations relating to the engagement of the private sector in the delivery of the Australian aid budget. The recommendations are wide-ranging, practical and evolutionary in nature. We have an aid budget that is generous and does achieve worthwhile outcomes in many countries in the Asia-Pacific region, but we can always do better. This report provides a set of proposals as to how we can better target our aid program to achieve long lasting outcomes for recipient countries across our region. I particularly congratulate the chairman, the member for Murray, Dr Sharman Stone, and I commend the report to the House.

Debate adjourned.

Standing Committee on Social Policy and Legal Affairs

Report

Debate resumed on the motion:
That the House take note of the report.

Mr PERRETT (Moreton) (10:49): Last year, one million Australians took cruises. It is a booming industry which is growing at the rate of 20 per cent each year, with another 200,000 expected to undertake a cruise next year. In the 43rd Parliament I was chair of the House of Representatives Standing Committee on Social Policy and Legal Affairs, and that committee
conducted an inquiry into the arrangements surrounding crimes committed at sea and produced a report entitled *Troubled Waters*.

Crucial to that inquiry was the evidence of Mark Brimble, the former husband of Dianne Brimble. Dianne's horrendous death on a cruise ship in 2002 horrified all Australians. Mark's commitment to ensure that justice was served after Dianne's death contributed enormously to that inquiry. The *Troubled Waters* report was tabled in the House of Representatives on 24 June 2013, two years ago today in fact. The government response was due six months after it was tabled, but there was an election, so we moved that out to February 2014. However, the report was not received from the Attorney-General, the honourable George Brandis, until November 2014. It took the government a full year and a half to consider the report and to respond, yet when they did the honourable George Brandis responded very limply indeed.

The report made a total of 11 recommendations, ones that would help prevent crimes at sea, help to care for victims and make it easier for law enforcement agencies to investigate crimes at sea if they did occur. However, the government's response was not only tardy it was completely inadequate. Of the 11 recommendations in the *Troubled Waters* report concerning arrangements surrounding crimes committed at sea, two were agreed to, three were not agreed to, two were noted and four were agreed in principle. Unfortunately the three recommendations that were not agreed to by the Abbott government go to the heart of crimes at sea and appropriately managing and responding to such crimes. Bizarrely, the Attorney-General, the honourable George Brandis, refused to agree to collect and publish statistics on crimes committed at sea. The Attorney-General, the honourable George Brandis, a senator for Queensland, also refused the recommendations that would make it a condition of entry to Australian ports for cruise operators to meet minimum standards in responding to alleged crimes at sea. This would ensure that crime scenes are properly managed, which was a big issue in the Brimble case, and would also ensure that there is reporting of any alleged crimes at sea. The Social Policy and Legal Affairs Committee, now chaired by Mr George Christensen, the member for Dawson, considered the government's response and the committee took the unusual and unanimous—I stress—step of holding a further hearing so that the government could provide more information after the government tabled their response. The Social Policy and Legal Affairs Committee was so concerned about the Abbott government's lack of adequate response to these serious issues that it has tabled its own response, *Reviewing Troubled Waters*, which I have here. This is the committee's response to the response to the original report from the Attorney-General, the honourable George Brandis, senator for Queensland. The committee, under the member for Dawson, has set out a further three recommendations—again, they are unanimous. They are: 1) that the government ensures that all data on alleged crimes at sea involving Australians is collected and published annually; 2) that the government report back to the committee at the end of 2015 on operators' agreements to provide safety information to all cruise passengers departing Australia; and, 3) that legislation be introduced to create mandatory international maritime organisation guidelines, crime scene management protocols and reporting of alleged crimes at sea. This report, *Reviewing Troubled Waters*, is an amazing response to Attorney-General George Brandis. It is from a committee chaired by a fellow Liberal National party member for Queensland, George Christensen. This is definitely a case where George slapped George.
Holiday cruises are an important part of our tourism industry. Tourism contributes $3.2 billion to the economy every year and employs one million people in Australia. It is our largest services export. We need to protect this tourism industry and Australia's reputation as a premier tourist destination. All Queenslanders understand the importance of tourism. Certainly the member for Dawson does; however, our senator for Queensland, the honourable George Brandis, does not. More importantly, we need to protect all Australians who embark on a holiday cruise thinking that they will be safe. Many people mistakenly think that they take the laws of Australia with them when they go outside of Sydney Heads or outside of Moreton Bay and into international waters. Many people on these cruise ships think they have access to appropriate law enforcement when that is not necessarily the case. It is actually protection enforced by contact with the cruise company.

The recent coronial inquest into the deaths of Paul Rossington and Kristen Schroder from a cruise ship in 2013 further underscores the necessity of these important recommendations being implemented. The government's response so far has been embarrassing. The Abbott government needs to take this committee report seriously and reconsider. George needs to listen to George, and by that I do not mean that he should listen to himself.

Debate adjourned.

Federation Chamber adjourned at 10:56