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SITTING DAYS—2020

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Month</th>
<th>Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>February</td>
<td>4, 5, 6, 10, 11, 12, 13, 24, 25, 26, 27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March</td>
<td>2, 3, 4, 5, 23, 24, 25, 26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May</td>
<td>12, 13, 14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>August</td>
<td>11, 12, 13, 17, 18, 19, 20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September</td>
<td>7, 8, 9, 10, 14, 15, 16, 17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October</td>
<td>12, 13, 14, 15, 19, 20, 21, 22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November</td>
<td>9, 10, 11, 12, 23, 24, 25, 26, 30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December</td>
<td>1, 2, 3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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FORTY-SIXTH PARLIAMENT
FIRST SESSION—FIRST PERIOD

Governor-General
His Excellency General the Hon. David John Hurley, AC, DSC, FTSE (Retd)

House of Representatives Office Holders
Speaker—Hon. Anthony David Hawthorn Smith MP
Deputy Speaker—Mr Llewellyn Stephen O'Brien MP
Second Deputy Speaker—Mr Robert George Mitchell MP
Members of the Speaker's Panel—Hon. Kevin James Andrews MP, Hon. Sharon Leah Bird MP, Ms Sharon Catherine Claydon MP, Mr Steven Georganas MP, Hon. Dr David Arthur Gillespie MP, Mr Ian Reginald Goodenough MP, Hon. Dr John Joseph McVeigh MP, Ms Maria Vamvakinou MP, Mr Ross Xavier Vasta MP, Mr Andrew Bruce Wallace MP, Mrs Lucy Elizabeth Wicks MP, Mr Richard James Wilson MP, Mr Trent Moir Zimmerman MP
Leader of the House—Hon. Christian Porter MP
Deputy Leader of the House—Hon. Darren Chester MP
Manager of Opposition Business—Hon. Anthony Stephen Burke MP
Deputy Manager of Opposition Business—Hon. Mark Butler MP

Party Leaders and Whips
Liberal Party of Australia
Leader—Hon. Scott John Morrison MP
Deputy Leader—Hon. Joshua Anthony Frydenberg MP
Chief Government Whip—Mr Albertus Johannes van Manen MP
Government Whips—Mr Rowan Eric Ramsey MP and Ms Nicolle Flint MP

The Nationals
Leader—Hon. Michael Francis McCormack MP
Deputy Leader—Hon. David Littleproud MP
Chief Whip—Hon. Damian Kevin Drum MP
Deputy Whip—Mr Kenneth Desmond O'Dowd MP

Australian Labor Party
Leader—Hon. Anthony Albanese MP
Deputy Leader—Hon. Richard Marles MP
Chief Opposition Whip—Mr Christopher Patrick Hayes MP
Opposition Whips—Ms Joanne Catherine Ryan MP and Ms Anne Maree Stanley MP

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## Members of the House of Representatives

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Members</th>
<th>Division</th>
<th>Party</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Albanese, Hon. Anthony Norman</td>
<td>Grayndler, NSW</td>
<td>ALP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alexander, Mr John Gilbert, OAM</td>
<td>Bennelong, NSW</td>
<td>LP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Allen, Dr Katrina Jane</td>
<td>Higgins, VIC</td>
<td>LP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aly, Dr Anne</td>
<td>Cowan, WA</td>
<td>ALP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Andrews, Hon. Karen Lesley</td>
<td>McPherson, QLD</td>
<td>LP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Andrews, Hon. Kevin James</td>
<td>Menzies, VIC</td>
<td>LP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Archer, Mrs Bridget Kathleen</td>
<td>Bass, TAS</td>
<td>LP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bandt, Mr Adam Paul</td>
<td>Melbourne, VIC</td>
<td>AG</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bell, Ms Angie Marion</td>
<td>Moncrieff, QLD</td>
<td>LNP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bird, Hon. Sharon Leah</td>
<td>Cunningham, NSW</td>
<td>ALP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bowen, Hon. Christopher Eyles</td>
<td>McMahon, NSW</td>
<td>ALP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Broadbent, Mr Russell Evan</td>
<td>Monash, VIC</td>
<td>LP</td>
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<tr>
<td>Buchholz, Hon. Scott Andrew</td>
<td>Wright, QLD</td>
<td>LP</td>
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<td>Burke, Hon. Anthony Stephen</td>
<td>Watson, NSW</td>
<td>ALP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Burney, Ms Linda Jean</td>
<td>Barton, NSW</td>
<td>ALP</td>
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<tr>
<td>Burns, Mr Joshua Solomon</td>
<td>Macnamara, VIC</td>
<td>ALP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Butler, Hon. Mark Christopher</td>
<td>Hindmarsh, SA</td>
<td>ALP</td>
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<td>Butler, Ms Terri Megan</td>
<td>Griffith, QLD</td>
<td>ALP</td>
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<tr>
<td>Byrne, Hon. Anthony Michael</td>
<td>Holt, VIC</td>
<td>ALP</td>
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<td>Chalmers, Dr James Edward</td>
<td>Rankin, QLD</td>
<td>ALP</td>
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<td>Spence, SA</td>
<td>ALP</td>
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<td>Chester, Hon. Darren Jeffrey</td>
<td>Gippsland, VIC</td>
<td>NATS</td>
</tr>
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<td>Chesters, Ms Lisa Marie</td>
<td>Bendigo, VIC</td>
<td>ALP</td>
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<td>Christensen, Mr George Robert</td>
<td>Dawson, QLD</td>
<td>NATS</td>
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<td>Clare, Hon. Jason Dean</td>
<td>Blaxland, NSW</td>
<td>ALP</td>
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<td>Claydon, Ms Sharon Catherine</td>
<td>Newcastle, NSW</td>
<td>ALP</td>
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<td>Coker, Ms Elizabeth Ann</td>
<td>Corangamite, VIC</td>
<td>ALP</td>
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<td>Coleman, Mr David Bernard</td>
<td>Banks, NSW</td>
<td>LP</td>
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<tr>
<td>Collins, Hon. Julie Maree</td>
<td>Franklin, TAS</td>
<td>ALP</td>
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<td>Conaghan, Mr Patrick John</td>
<td>Cowper, NSW</td>
<td>NATS</td>
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<tr>
<td>Connelly, Mr Vincent Gerard</td>
<td>Stirling, WA</td>
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<td>Conroy, Mr Patrick Martin</td>
<td>Shortland, NSW</td>
<td>ALP</td>
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<tr>
<td>Coulton, Hon. Mark Maclean</td>
<td>Parkes, NSW</td>
<td>NATS</td>
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<td>Dick, Mr Dugalid Milton</td>
<td>Oxley, QLD</td>
<td>ALP</td>
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<td>Dreyfus, Hon. Mark Alfred, QC</td>
<td>Isacs, VIC</td>
<td>ALP</td>
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<td>Drum, Hon. Damian Kevin</td>
<td>Nicholls, VIC</td>
<td>NATS</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dutton, Hon. Peter Craig</td>
<td>Dickson, QLD</td>
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<tr>
<td>Elliot, Hon. Maria Justine</td>
<td>Richmond, NSW</td>
<td>ALP</td>
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<tr>
<td>Entsch, Hon. Warren George</td>
<td>Leichhardt, QLD</td>
<td>LP</td>
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<td>Evans, Mr Trevor Mark</td>
<td>Brisbane, QLD</td>
<td>LNP</td>
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<td>Falinski, Mr Jason George</td>
<td>Mackellar, NSW</td>
<td>LP</td>
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<td>Fitzgibbon, Hon. Joel Andrew</td>
<td>Hunter, NSW</td>
<td>ALP</td>
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<td>Bradfield, NSW</td>
<td>LP</td>
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<td>Flint, Ms Nicolle Jane</td>
<td>Boothby, SA</td>
<td>LP</td>
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<td>Macarthur, NSW</td>
<td>ALP</td>
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<td>Frydenberg, Hon. Joshua Anthony</td>
<td>Kooyong, VIC</td>
<td>LP</td>
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<td>Gee, Mr Andrew Robert</td>
<td>Calare, NSW</td>
<td>NATS</td>
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<td>Georganas, Mr Steven</td>
<td>Adelaide, SA</td>
<td>ALP</td>
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<tr>
<td>Giles, Mr Andrew James</td>
<td>Scullin, VIC</td>
<td>ALP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gillespie, Hon. Dr David Arthur</td>
<td>Lyne, NSW</td>
<td>NATS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Members</td>
<td>Division</td>
<td>Party</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>Goodenough, Mr Ian Reginald</td>
<td>Moore, WA</td>
<td>LP</td>
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<td>Perth, WA</td>
<td>ALP</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gosling, Mr Luke John</td>
<td>Solomon, NT</td>
<td>ALP</td>
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<td>Haines, Dr Helen Mary</td>
<td>Indi, VIC</td>
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<td>Hammond, Ms Celia Monica</td>
<td>Curtin, WA</td>
<td>LP</td>
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<td>Hastie, Mr Andrew William</td>
<td>Canning, WA</td>
<td>LP</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hawke, Hon. Alexander George</td>
<td>Mitchell, NSW</td>
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<td>Hayes, Mr Christopher Patrick</td>
<td>Fowler, NSW</td>
<td>ALP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hill, Mr Julian Christopher</td>
<td>Bruce, VIC</td>
<td>ALP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hogan, Hon. Kevin John</td>
<td>Page, NSW</td>
<td>NATS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Howarth, Mr Luke Ronald</td>
<td>Petrie, QLD</td>
<td>LP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hunt, Hon. Gregory Andrew</td>
<td>Flinders, VIC</td>
<td>LP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Husic, Hon. Edham Nurredin</td>
<td>Chifley, NSW</td>
<td>ALP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Irons, Hon. Stephen James</td>
<td>Swan, WA</td>
<td>LP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jones, Mr Stephen Patrick</td>
<td>Whitlam, NSW</td>
<td>ALP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joyce, Hon. Barnaby Thomas Gerard</td>
<td>New England, NSW</td>
<td>NATS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Katter, Hon. Robert Carl</td>
<td>Kennedy, QLD</td>
<td>KAP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kearney, Ms Gerardine Mary</td>
<td>Cooper, VIC</td>
<td>ALP</td>
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<tr>
<td>Kelly, Mr Craig</td>
<td>Hughes, NSW</td>
<td>LP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kelly, Hon. Dr Michael Joseph</td>
<td>Eden-Monaro, NSW</td>
<td>ALP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Keogh, Mr Matthew James</td>
<td>Burt, WA</td>
<td>ALP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Khalil, Mr Peter</td>
<td>Wills, VIC</td>
<td>ALP</td>
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<tr>
<td>King, Hon. Catherine Fiona</td>
<td>Ballarat, VIC</td>
<td>ALP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>King, Ms Madeleine Mary Harvie</td>
<td>Brand, WA</td>
<td>ALP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laming, Mr Andrew Charles</td>
<td>Bowman, QLD</td>
<td>LP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Landry, Hon. Michelle Leanne</td>
<td>Capricornia, QLD</td>
<td>NATS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leeser, Mr Julian Martin</td>
<td>Berowra, NSW</td>
<td>LP</td>
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<tr>
<td>Leigh, Hon. Dr Andrew Keith</td>
<td>Fenner, ACT</td>
<td>ALP</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ley, Hon. Sussan Penelope</td>
<td>Farrer, NSW</td>
<td>LP</td>
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<tr>
<td>Littleproud, Hon. David Kelly</td>
<td>Maranoa, QLD</td>
<td>LNP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liu, Ms Gladys</td>
<td>Chisholm, VIC</td>
<td>LP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marino, Ms Nola Bethwyn</td>
<td>Forrest, WA</td>
<td>LP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marles, Hon. Richard Donald</td>
<td>Corio, VIC</td>
<td>ALP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Martin, Mrs Fiona Barboutitis</td>
<td>Reid, NSW</td>
<td>LP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>McBride, Ms Emma Margaret</td>
<td>Dobell, NSW</td>
<td>ALP</td>
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<tr>
<td>McCormack, Hon. Michael Francis</td>
<td>Riverina, NSW</td>
<td>NATS</td>
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<td>McIntosh, Ms Melissa Iris</td>
<td>Lindsay, NSW</td>
<td>LP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>McVeigh, Hon. Dr John Joseph</td>
<td>Groom, QLD</td>
<td>LNP</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mitchell, Mr Brian Keith</td>
<td>Lyons, TAS</td>
<td>ALP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mitchell, Mr Robert George</td>
<td>McEwen, VIC</td>
<td>ALP</td>
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<tr>
<td>Morrison, Hon. Scott John</td>
<td>Cook, NSW</td>
<td>LP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Morton, Mr Ben</td>
<td>Tangney, WA</td>
<td>LP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mulino, Dr Daniel</td>
<td>Fraser, VIC</td>
<td>ALP</td>
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<tr>
<td>Murphy, Ms Peta Jan</td>
<td>Dunkley, VIC</td>
<td>ALP</td>
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<td>Neumann, Hon. Shayne Kenneth</td>
<td>Blair, QLD</td>
<td>ALP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>O'Brien, Mr Llewellyn Stephen</td>
<td>Wide Bay, QLD</td>
<td>LNP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>O'Brien, Mr Ted Lynam</td>
<td>Fairfax, QLD</td>
<td>LNP</td>
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<tr>
<td>O'Connor, Hon. Brendan Patrick John</td>
<td>Gorton, VIC</td>
<td>ALP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>O'Dowd, Mr Kenneth Desmond</td>
<td>Flynn, QLD</td>
<td>NATS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>O'Neil, Ms Clare Ellen</td>
<td>Hotham, VIC</td>
<td>ALP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Members</td>
<td>Division</td>
<td>Party</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------------------</td>
<td>------------------</td>
<td>-------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Owens, Ms Julie Ann</td>
<td>Parramatta, NSW</td>
<td>ALP</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pasin, Mr Antony</td>
<td>Barker, SA</td>
<td>LP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Payne, Ms Alicia Emma</td>
<td>Canberra, ACT</td>
<td>ALP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pearce, Mr Gavin Bruce</td>
<td>Braddon, TAS</td>
<td>LP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perrett, Mr Graham Douglas</td>
<td>Moreton, QLD</td>
<td>ALP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phillips, Ms Fiona Evon</td>
<td>Gilmore, NSW</td>
<td>ALP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pitt, Hon. Keith John</td>
<td>Hinkler, QLD</td>
<td>NATS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plibersek, Hon. Tanya Joan</td>
<td>Sydney, NSW</td>
<td>ALP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Porter, Hon. Charles Christian</td>
<td>Pearce, WA</td>
<td>LP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Price, Hon. Melissa Lee</td>
<td>Durack, WA</td>
<td>LP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ramsey, Mr Rowan Eric</td>
<td>Grey, SA</td>
<td>LP</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rishworth, Hon. Amanda Louise</td>
<td>Kingston, SA</td>
<td>ALP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Robert, Hon. Stuart Rowland</td>
<td>Fadden, QLD</td>
<td>LP</td>
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<td>Rowland, Ms Michelle Anne</td>
<td>Greenway, NSW</td>
<td>ALP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ryan, Ms Joanne Catherine</td>
<td>Lalor, VIC</td>
<td>ALP</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sharkie, Ms Rebekah Carina Che</td>
<td>Mayo, SA</td>
<td>CA</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sharma, Ms Devanand Noel</td>
<td>Wentworth, NSW</td>
<td>LP</td>
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<tr>
<td>Shorten, Hon. William Richard</td>
<td>Maribyrnong, VIC</td>
<td>ALP</td>
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<tr>
<td>Simmonds, Mr Julian Graham John</td>
<td>Ryan, QLD</td>
<td>LNP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Smith, Hon. Anthony David Hawthorn</td>
<td>Casey, VIC</td>
<td>LP</td>
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<td>Smith, Mr David Philip Benedict</td>
<td>Bean, ACT</td>
<td>ALP</td>
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<td>Lingiari, NT</td>
<td>ALP</td>
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<td>Werriwa, NSW</td>
<td>ALP</td>
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<td>Warringah, NSW</td>
<td>IND</td>
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<td>Sturt, SA</td>
<td>LP</td>
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<td>Deakin, VIC</td>
<td>LP</td>
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<td>Swanson, Ms Meryl Jane</td>
<td>Paterson, NSW</td>
<td>ALP</td>
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<td>Hume, NSW</td>
<td>LP</td>
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<td>Tehan, Hon. Daniel Thomas</td>
<td>Wannon, VIC</td>
<td>LP</td>
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<tr>
<td>Templeman, Ms Susan Raye</td>
<td>Macquarie, NSW</td>
<td>ALP</td>
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<tr>
<td>Thistlethwaite, Hon. Matthew James</td>
<td>Kingsford Smith</td>
<td>ALP</td>
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<td>Herbert, QLD</td>
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<td>Fisher, QLD</td>
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<td>ALP</td>
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<td>Mallee, VIC</td>
<td>NATS</td>
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<td>ALP</td>
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<td>Robertson, NSW</td>
<td>LP</td>
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<td>Young, Mr Terry James</td>
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</table>
### Members of the House of Representatives

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Members</th>
<th>Division</th>
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<td>Zimmerman, Mr Trent Moir</td>
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</table>

### PARTY ABBREVIATIONS

AG—Australian Greens; ALP—Australian Labor Party; CA—Centre Alliance;
IND—Independent; KAP—Katter’s Australia Party; LNP—Liberal National Party;
LP—Liberal Party of Australia; NATS—The Nationals;

### Heads of Parliamentary Departments

Clerk of the Senate—R Pye
Clerk of the House of Representatives—C Surtees
Secretary, Department of Parliamentary Services—R Stefanic
Parliamentary Budget Officer—J Wilkinson
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TITLE</th>
<th>MINISTER</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Prime Minister</td>
<td>The Hon Scott Morrison MP</td>
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<td>Minister for the Public Service</td>
<td>The Hon Scott Morrison MP</td>
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<td>The Hon Greg Hunt MP</td>
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<tr>
<td>Minister for Indigenous Australians</td>
<td>The Hon Ken Wyatt AM MP</td>
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<tr>
<td>Assistant Minister to the Prime Minister and Cabinet</td>
<td>The Hon Ben Morton MP</td>
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<tr>
<td>Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Infrastructure, Transport and Regional Development</td>
<td>The Hon Michael McCormack MP</td>
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<tr>
<td>Minister for Agriculture, Drought and Emergency Management</td>
<td>The Hon David Littleproud MP</td>
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<tr>
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<td>The Hon Paul Fletcher MP</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Assistant Minister for Superannuation, Financial Services and Financial Technology</td>
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<td>Senator the Hon Mathias Cormann</td>
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<tr>
<td>(Leader of the Government in the Senate)</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Senator the Hon Zed Seselja</td>
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<td>The Hon David Littleproudja</td>
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<tr>
<td>Minister for the Environment</td>
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</tr>
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<td>Minister for Resources, Water and Northern Australia</td>
<td>The Hon Keith Pitt MP</td>
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<td>The Hon Trevor Evans MP</td>
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<td>Assistant Minister for Forestry and Fisheries</td>
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<td>Minister for Foreign Affairs</td>
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<td>Portfolio</td>
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<tr>
<td>Minister for International Development and the Pacific</td>
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<td>The Hon Andrew Gee MP</td>
</tr>
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<tr>
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<td>The Hon Christian Porter MP</td>
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<td>(Leader of the House)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Minister for Industrial Relations</td>
<td>The Hon Christian Porter MP</td>
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</tr>
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<td>Minister for Regional Health, Regional Communications and Local Government</td>
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<td>Minister for Home Affairs</td>
<td>The Hon Peter Dutton MP</td>
</tr>
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<td>Minister for Agriculture, Drought and Emergency Management</td>
<td>The Hon David Littleproud MP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minister for Immigration, Citizenship, Migrant Services and Multicultural Affairs</td>
<td>The Hon David Coleman MP</td>
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<tr>
<td>Assistant Minister for Customs, Community Safety and Multicultural Affairs</td>
<td>The Hon Jason Wood MP</td>
</tr>
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<td>Minister for Education</td>
<td>The Hon Dan Tehan MP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minister for Employment, Skills, Small and Family Business</td>
<td>Senator the Hon Michaelia Cash</td>
</tr>
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<td>Minister for Decentralisation and Regional Education</td>
<td>The Hon Andrew Gee MP</td>
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<td>Assistant Minister for Vocational Education, Training and Apprenticeships</td>
<td>The Hon Steve Irons MP</td>
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<tr>
<td>Minister for Industry, Science and Technology</td>
<td>The Hon Karen Andrews MP</td>
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<tr>
<td>Minister for Energy and Emissions Reduction</td>
<td>The Hon Angus Taylor MP</td>
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<tr>
<td>Minister for Resources, Water and Northern Australia</td>
<td>The Hon Keith Pitt MP</td>
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<tr>
<td>Assistant Minister for Northern Australia</td>
<td>The Hon Michelle Landry MP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minister for Defence</td>
<td>Senator the Hon Linda Reynolds CSC</td>
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<tr>
<td>Minister for Veterans' Affairs</td>
<td>The Hon Darren Chester MP</td>
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<tr>
<td>Minister for Defence Personnel</td>
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<tr>
<td>(Deputy Leader of the House)</td>
<td>The Hon Alex Hawke MP</td>
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<td>The Hon Melissa Price MP</td>
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<tr>
<td>Minister for Families and Social Services (Manager of Government Business in the Senate)</td>
<td>Senator the Hon Anne Ruston</td>
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<tr>
<td>Minister for the National Disability Insurance Scheme</td>
<td>The Hon Stuart Robert MP</td>
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<tr>
<td>Minister for Government Services</td>
<td>The Hon Stuart Robert MP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assistant Minister for Children and Families</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assistant Minister for Community Housing, Homelessness and Community Services</td>
<td>The Hon Luke Howarth MP</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Each box represents a portfolio. **Cabinet Ministers are shown in bold type.** As a general rule, there is one department in each portfolio. The title of a department does not necessarily reflect the title of a minister in all cases. Ministers are sworn to administer the portfolio in which they are listed under the ‘Minister’ column and may also be sworn to administer other portfolios in which they are not listed. Assistant Ministers in italics are designated as Parliamentary Secretaries under the *Ministers of State Act 1952.*
### SHADOW MINISTRY

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Shadow Minister</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Leader of the Opposition</strong></td>
<td>The Hon. Anthony Albanese MP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Shadow Cabinet Secretary</strong></td>
<td>Senator Jenny McAllister</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Deputy Leader of the Opposition</strong></td>
<td>The Hon. Richard Marles MP</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Shadow Minister for Defence</strong></td>
<td>The Hon. Shayne Neumann MP</td>
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<tr>
<td>Shadow Minister for Veterans’ Affairs and Defence Personnel</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Shadow Assistant Minister for Defence</strong></td>
<td>The Hon. Dr Mike Kelly AM MP</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Leader of the Opposition in the Senate</strong></td>
<td>Senator the Hon. Penny Wong</td>
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<td><strong>Shadow Minister for Immigration and Citizenship</strong></td>
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<td>The Hon. Tony Burke MP</td>
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<td>Ms Emma McBride MP</td>
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</tr>
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<td>Ms Emma McBride MP</td>
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<td>Shadow Minister for Infrastructure, Transport and Regional Development</td>
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<td>Shadow Minister for Northern Australia</td>
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<tr>
<td>Shadow Minister for Disaster and Emergency Management</td>
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<td>Shadow Assistant Minister for Infrastructure and Regional Tourism</td>
<td>Senator Carol Brown</td>
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<td>Shadow Assistant Minister for Tasmania</td>
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<td>The Hon. Warren Snowdon MP</td>
</tr>
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<td>Shadow Assistant Minister for Road Safety</td>
<td>Senator Glenn Sterle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shadow Minister for Agriculture and Resources</td>
<td>The Hon. Joel Fitzgibbon MP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shadow Minister for Western Australian Resources</td>
<td>Mr Matt Keogh MP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>Senator the Hon. Don Farrell</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>Shadow Minister for Tourism</td>
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<tr>
<td>Shadow Attorney-General</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shadow Minister for Constitutional Reform</td>
<td>The Hon. Matt Thistlethwaite MP</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Shadow Minister for Communications</td>
<td>Ms Michelle Rowland MP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shadow Assistant Minister for Communications</td>
<td>Mr Tim Watts MP</td>
</tr>
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<td>Shadow Minister for Finance</td>
<td>Senator Katy Gallagher</td>
</tr>
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<td>Shadow Minister for the Public Service</td>
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<td>Manager of Opposition Business in the Senate</td>
<td>Senator Kimberley Kitching</td>
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<td>Shadow Assistant Minister for Government Accountability</td>
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<td>Deputy Manager of Opposition Business in the Senate</td>
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<td>Shadow Minister for Families and Social Services</td>
<td>The Hon. Linda Burney MP</td>
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<td>Shadow Minister for Indigenous Australians</td>
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<td>Shadow Assistant Minister for Reconciliation</td>
<td>Senator Patrick Dodson</td>
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<td>Shadow Assistant Minister for Constitutional Recognition of Indigenous Australians</td>
<td>The Hon. Warren Snowdon MP</td>
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<td>Shadow Minister for Ageing and Seniors</td>
<td>The Hon. Julie Collins MP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shadow Minister for Women</td>
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<td>Shadow Assistant Minister for Aged Care</td>
<td>Ms Ged Kearney MP</td>
</tr>
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<td>Shadow Minister for Small and Family Business</td>
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<td>Shadow Minister for Innovation, Technology and the Future of Work</td>
<td>Ms Clare O'Neil MP</td>
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<td>Shadow Minister Assisting for Small and Family Business</td>
<td>Mr Matt Keogh MP</td>
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<td>Shadow Assistant Minister for Manufacturing</td>
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<td>Shadow Minister for Regional Services, Territories and Local Government</td>
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</tr>
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<td>Shadow Minister for Housing and Homelessness</td>
<td>The Hon. Warren Snowdon MP</td>
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<td>Shadow Assistant Minister for External Territories</td>
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<td>Shadow Minister for Early Childhood Education</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Shadow Minister for the Environment and Water</td>
<td>Ms Terri Butler MP</td>
</tr>
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<td>Mr Josh Wilson MP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shadow Minister for Trade</td>
<td>Ms Madeleine King MP</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Each box represents a portfolio. Shadow Cabinet Ministers are shown in bold type.
CONTENTS

TUESDAY, 12 MAY 2020

Chamber
PARLIAMENTARY REPRESENTATION —
Member for Eden-Monaro —
Resignation .................................................. 1

BILLS —
Coronavirus Economic Response Package (Payments and Benefits) Bill 2020 —
Coronavirus Economic Response Package Omnibus (Measures No. 2) Bill 2020 —
Appropriation Bill (No. 5) 2019-2020 —
Appropriation Bill (No. 6) 2019-2020 —
Returned from Senate ........................................ 1

Coronavirus Economic Response Package (Payments and Benefits) Bill 2020 —
Coronavirus Economic Response Package Omnibus (Measures No. 2) Bill 2020 —
Appropriation Bill (No. 5) 2019-2020 —
Appropriation Bill (No. 6) 2019-2020 —
Assent ................................................................. 1

BUSINESS —
Days and Hours of Meeting ................................... 1

MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS —
Economy .......................................................... 3

BILLS —
Privacy Amendment (Public Health Contact Information) Bill 2020 —
First Reading .................................................. 10
Second Reading .................................................. 10

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS —
COVID-19: Child Care ........................................ 15
Bennelong Electorate: COVID-19 ................................ 15
Perth Electorate: COVID-19 .................................... 15
COVID-19 .......................................................... 16
Macquarie Electorate: Richmond Bridge ................. 16
Menzies Electorate: Infrastructure ......................... 16
Housing Affordability .......................................... 17
Bass Electorate: COVID-19 .................................... 17
Employment ....................................................... 17
Trade with China .............................................. 17
International Nurses Day .................................... 18
Stirling Electorate: Coronavirus Care Campaign ..... 18
COVID-19 .......................................................... 18
Crescent Head Rural Fire Brigade ......................... 19
Health Care ....................................................... 19
Murray-Darling Basin ......................................... 19
Child Care ......................................................... 19
Exports ............................................................. 20
Health Care ....................................................... 20

CONDOLENCES —
Causley, Mr Ian Raymond .................................... 20
Taylor, Leading Senior Constable Lynette ............... 21
King, Senior Constable Kevin ................................ 21
Humphris, Constable Glen .................................... 21
Prestney, Constable Joshua ................................... 21

MINISTERIAL ARRANGEMENTS ......................... 23

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE —
COVIDSafe App .............................................. 23
COVID-19: Economy .......................................... 24
Employment ...................................................... 24
COVID-19: Economy .......................................... 25
Economy ........................................................... 25
## CONTENTS—continued

Fuel.................................................................................................................. 25
Regional Australia.............................................................................................. 26
Budget.................................................................................................................. 26
COVID-19: Economy.......................................................................................... 27
COVID-19: Economy.......................................................................................... 28
COVID-19: Health Care...................................................................................... 28
COVID-19: Economy.......................................................................................... 29
COVID-19: Education......................................................................................... 29
JobKeeper Payment........................................................................................... 30
COVID-19: Industry........................................................................................... 30
COVID-19: Employment..................................................................................... 31
Australian Bushfires.......................................................................................... 31
JobKeeper Payment........................................................................................... 32
Australian Bushfires.......................................................................................... 32

### STATEMENT BY THE SPEAKER—

Department of Parliamentary Services.................................................................. 32

### DOCUMENTS—

- Presentation...................................................................................................... 33
- Commonwealth Ombudsman—
  - Presentation.................................................................................................. 33

### AUDITOR-GENERAL'S REPORTS—

- Reports Nos 31 to 36 of 2019-20.................................................................. 33

### MATTERS OF PUBLIC IMPORTANCE—

- Economy........................................................................................................... 33

### BUSINESS—

- Days and Hours of Meeting.......................................................................... 42

### COMMITTEES—

- Public Works Committee—
  - Report.......................................................................................................... 44
- Communications and the Arts Committee—
  - Report.......................................................................................................... 44
- Reference to Federation Chamber.................................................................. 45

### BILLS—

- Privacy Amendment (Public Health Contact Information) Bill 2020—
  - Second Reading........................................................................................... 45
  - Third Reading.............................................................................................. 74
- National Vocational Education and Training Regulator Amendment
  (Governance and Other Matters) Bill 2020—
  - Second Reading........................................................................................... 74

### ADJOURNMENT—

- Immigration Detention.................................................................................. 74
- COVID-19........................................................................................................ 74
- Racism............................................................................................................. 74
- International Nurses Day............................................................................... 76
- COVID-19........................................................................................................ 76
- COVID-19: Employment............................................................................... 78
- Welfare........................................................................................................... 78
- COVID-19........................................................................................................ 78

### NOTICES

- 79

### Questions In Writing

- Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment—(Question No. 284)...... 81
- Defence Industry—(Question No. 285)................................................................ 81
- Parramatta Electorate: Centrelink—(Question No. 286).................................... 81
- Modified Monash Model—(Question No. 287).................................................. 82
- Modified Monash Model—(Question No. 294).................................................. 82
- Long Term Ecological Research Network—(Question No. 296)....................... 83
- Pensions and Benefits—(Question No. 297)...................................................... 84
- Elephant Ivory and Rhinoceros Horn—(Question No. 298)............................... 84
CONTENTS—continued

High Court of Australia—(Question No. 299) ................................................................. 84
Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade—(Question No. 301) .................................................. 84
Climate Change—(Question No. 302) ...................................................................................... 85
Climate Change—(Question No. 303) ...................................................................................... 85
Climate Change—(Question No. 304) ...................................................................................... 85
Nuclear Energy—(Question No. 305) ...................................................................................... 85
Environment—(Question No. 306) ...................................................................................... 87
National Climate Change Adaptation Research Facility—(Question No. 307) .............................. 87
National Waste Policy—(Question No. 308) ............................................................................. 88
Aged Care—(Question No. 311) ............................................................................................. 89
Superannuation—(Question No. 312) ..................................................................................... 89
Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse—(Question No. 314) .......... 91
Biosecurity—(Question No. 315) ............................................................................................ 92
Defence Equipment—(Question No. 317) ............................................................................... 93
Defence Procurement—(Question No. 319) ............................................................................ 94
Superannuation—(Question No. 321) ..................................................................................... 94
CuDeco—(Question No. 322) ................................................................................................. 94
Foreign Investment—(Question No. 324) ............................................................................... 95
Taxation—(Question No. 326) ............................................................................................... 96
Environment—(Question No. 328) ....................................................................................... 96
Banking and Financial Services—(Question No. 329) ............................................................. 97
Human Rights—(Question No. 331) ....................................................................................... 97
Human Rights—(Question No. 334) ....................................................................................... 97
Human Rights—(Question No. 336) ....................................................................................... 98
Human Rights—(Question No. 337) ....................................................................................... 99
Human Rights—(Question No. 340) ..................................................................................... 100
Human Rights—(Question No. 341) ..................................................................................... 101
Human Rights—(Question No. 344) ..................................................................................... 102
Human Rights—(Question No. 345) ..................................................................................... 103
Food Labelling—(Question No. 347) ..................................................................................... 104
Environmental Conservation—(Question No. 350) .............................................................. 104
Tuesday, 12 May 2020

The SPEAKER (Hon. Tony Smith) took the chair at 12:00, made an acknowledgement of country and read prayers.

PARLIAMENTARY REPRESENTATION

Member for Eden-Monaro

Resignation

The SPEAKER (12:01): I inform the House that on 30 April, I received a letter from the Hon. Michael Joseph Kelly resigning his seat as the member for the electoral division of Eden-Monaro. Consideration is being given to possible dates for the by-election, and I will consult with party leaders on the matter in the normal way.

BILLS

Coronavirus Economic Response Package (Payments and Benefits) Bill 2020
Coronavirus Economic Response Package Omnibus (Measures No. 2) Bill 2020
Appropriation Bill (No. 5) 2019-2020
Appropriation Bill (No. 6) 2019-2020

Returned from Senate

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

Coronavirus Economic Response Package (Payments and Benefits) Bill 2020
Coronavirus Economic Response Package Omnibus (Measures No. 2) Bill 2020
Appropriation Bill (No. 5) 2019-2020
Appropriation Bill (No. 6) 2019-2020

Assent

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

BUSINESS

Days and Hours of Meeting

Mr PORTER (Pearce—Attorney-General, Minister for Industrial Relations and Leader of the House) (12:02): I rise to move a motion to suspend standing orders and advise the House that, pursuant to standing order 47(c)(ii), the Manager of Opposition Business and I have agreed that an absolute majority is not required. I move:

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

(1) the House of Representatives to meet on Wednesday, 13 May 2020 and Thursday, 14 May 2020;
(2) the Federation Chamber not to meet today, and to meet on Wednesday, 13 May 2020 and Thursday, 14 May 2020;
(3) immediately following the resolution of this motion the Treasurer to make a ministerial statement, with the Shadow Treasurer to respond; and
(4) any variation to this arrangement to be made only by a motion moved by a Minister with leave granted by the Manager of Opposition Business.

Mr BURKE (Watson—Manager of Opposition Business) (12:03): I thank the government for the discussion that's taken place with respect to this motion. We will be voting for the motion. There are some things that we sought in relation to matters on which the government modified its position. We would have liked to have seen the Federation Chamber operating every day. We think there is an understandable grievance from a lot of members of parliament that there are speeches that they want to be able to deliver during this time. If the government were to change its mind on the Federation Chamber, we would be very happy to see that up and running for the benefit of members as soon as possible.

There remains a difference between the Labor Party and the government as to the sitting calendar. Whether our amendment is carried or not, we will be supporting the resolution, but, in relation to that difference, I move the following amendment:

That the following words be added after paragraph (4):

“(5) the first item of business on Wednesday, 13 May 2020, be the presentation of a revised program of sittings for 2020”.

We accept that those dates will be chosen by the government. But, when the government made the decision—
Government members interjecting—

Mr BURKE: Back to politics as usual pretty quickly over there! The parliament's decision that we would not sit until 11 August was always absurd. It was absurd for two reasons. First, the nation was going through a health crisis which was causing an economic crisis. And we said, at the time the government said that we would not sit until 11 August, that we would need to come back, and we were voted down. Today is now the third time we have come back since the government decided we wouldn't need to sit until 11 August.

The second issue is that not only do we need to come here for the business of government to do our jobs as members of parliament but we also need to come here for the scrutiny of government. Right now, we are going through the largest period of expenditure in the history of the Commonwealth. To be doing that at a time when the parliament is not meeting is absurd. The point's been made before—and the Leader of the Opposition in the other place made the point again only hours ago—that we are able to observe physical and social distancing here. While we're not meant to be meeting until 11 August, rugby league will be starting on 28 May. If you think about rugby league adopting the 1½ metre distant tackle rule, it's not easy for them to do. But they are able to resume playing again, whereas we, spaced at the distance that we are, are apparently not going to be able to meet until 11 August. Scrutiny should not be another casualty of this pandemic. The parliamentary process should not be another casualty of this pandemic. Us turning up here for work should not be another casualty of this pandemic.

I know the Prime Minister has said this week we are here for a trial. They've been trialling parliament since 1901. It works. We've had the trials of parliament. We've had the trials of whether or not we could meet through social distancing. We can. We have shown we are able to make those changes and function. There is no reason—absolutely no reason—for the government to not be bringing down this week a new sitting calendar.

We're not asking in this amendment that the government be told these are the dates on which we must sit. What we are saying is the House should acknowledge that the concept that we don't come back until 11 August is ridiculous. The concept that sporting events are now finding ways to have regular weekly meetings and games, that they can do that, but we can't fulfil our essential constitutional role is an argument that is completely flawed. Therefore, this amendment gives the government the full normal authority to say what exactly those dates will be. But the opportunity for claiming that we can't meet any more needs to end and it needs to end now. The parliament should resume a normal sitting calendar, and tomorrow, as the first item of business, the government should be presenting that to the parliament.

The SPEAKER: Is the amendment seconded?

Mr Butler: I second the amendment and reserve my right to speak.

The SPEAKER (12:09): The question is the amendment moved by the Manager of Opposition Business be agreed to. Before I put the question, there was a statement I was planning to make a little bit later with respect to divisions, but it might suit if I do that now. Firstly, for members who haven't been here for the last two sittings—I can still hear the member for Ballarat even when she's up there!—the question has been put in the negative to avoid people crossing the chamber. When I put the question it will be, 'That the amendment moved by the Manager of Opposition Business be disagreed to,' as that allows those voting no to be on the left and those voting aye to be on the right. That practice has worked well.

I also have a statement with respect to the recording of divisions. In these unusual times, as members will be aware from our last two sittings, large numbers—very large numbers—of pairs of government and opposition members have been necessary, meaning certain members were not present in the chamber for voting in those divisions. Now, pairing arrangements are unofficial and a Speaker wouldn't usually comment on such matters; however, in the interests of members, I've given this some thought and had some discussions. Pairing allows the voting intentions of absent members to be recorded in this time, and pairing, of course, has enabled the important legislation that the government has put forward to be debated and passed—indeed, without pairing it wouldn't have been possible because in any sitting there's a limit to the number of people in this chamber—so for the foreseeable future that will be the practice.

In the last two sittings the Chief Government Whip and the Opposition Whip read into the Hansard the names of those members of their respective parties who'd been paired as a way of recognising the special arrangements and recognising how they would have voted if they had that opportunity. So as to better support this practice, I asked the whips to consider a change that goes back to a previous practice. I now inform the House that the pairs will be recorded in the House records, the Votes and Proceedings, and in the Hansard. Those who've been here for a while will know that practice existed for a long time, and I can assure members it was in fact a practice that existed at the beginning of the very first parliament. That will mean that those members' voting intentions will be listed in the column of the pairs. To facilitate this, the Chief Government Whip and Chief Opposition Whip will provide a list of the paired members as necessary to the Table Office and Hansard, and when the advice is
received the pairs will be recorded in the Live Minutes, the *Votes and Proceedings* and the *Hansard* in the way it used to be. I thought I'd just point that out now. I thank everyone.

I will now put the question—yes, Leader of the House.

Mr PORTER (Pearce—Attorney-General, Minister for Industrial Relations and Leader of the House) (12:13): I would just put the government's position with respect to the Leader of the Opposition's amendment. We have had weekly meetings with the opposition. We have explained that we are—sorry?

The SPEAKER: You're speaking on the amendment?

Mr PORTER: I am, yes.

The SPEAKER: Okay. Well, the question is that the amendment be agreed to, and I call the Leader of the House.

Mr PORTER: The government will not be agreeing with the amendment. By way of context to that, we have had weekly meetings with the opposition. We've explained that we fully intend to have additional sitting weeks between now and August. This was clearly put, so any suggestion that there is any intention on the part of the government to leave a void in sitting between this week and what was otherwise to be the next scheduled sitting week, which I think is 11 August, is not correct. We've clearly explained there will be additional sitting weeks.

There will be a revised parliamentary calendar produced shortly. That will set out regularised sitting weeks between now and 11 August, and they will be regular and conducted as normally as possible. We are not going to produce that sitting calendar on the date nominated by the opposition in the amendment. We're arguing here over literally a matter of days.

The SPEAKER: The question is that the amendment moved by the Manager of Opposition Business be disagreed to. There being more than one voice calling for a division, in accordance with standing order 133 the division is deferred until after the discussion on the Matter of Public Importance.

Debate adjourned.

**MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS**

**Economy**

Mr FRYDENBERG (Kooyong—Treasurer) (12:15): by leave—Australia finds itself at war against a faceless and flagless enemy. The coronavirus has created a one-in-100-year event—a health and economic shock the likes of which the world has never seen.

So many of our fellow Australians, through no fault of their own, are struggling and doing it tough—be they battling the virus, separated from friends and family or worried about their job security and economic future.

Tragically, 97 Australians have lost their lives, with many more people, including in this parliament, directly affected. Our thoughts are with the member for Cooper and all the other families across the country who have lost loved ones.

Many of the things we take for granted—visiting grandparents, taking the kids to weekend sport or having a beer—have been disrupted. The Australian way of life has been put on hold.

But, once again, Australia and its people are showing remarkable resilience and character. Having withstood fire, flood and drought, there is a unity of purpose that should make us all proud.

Through strong and decisive action led by the Prime Minister, together with state premiers and chief ministers, Australia has avoided the fate of many other nations.

Globally, more than four million people have contracted the virus. More than 280,000 have died, and much of the world has gone into lockdown. In the United States, 80,000 have died. In the United Kingdom, over 31,000 have died, with Italy, Spain and France not far behind.

In contrast, Australia's mortality rate is one of the lowest in the OECD. Early border restrictions, comprehensive and coordinated action by the national cabinet and a world-class health system and health professionals have contributed to this result.

The pandemic is not just an enormous health challenge but an economic one as well. The IMF is forecasting the world economy to contract by three per cent this year. In contrast, during the GFC the global economy shrank by just 0.1 per cent in 2009. China's GDP fell in the March quarter by 9.8 per cent, their first quarterly fall on record. Italy, France and Spain all experienced their largest quarterly falls on record. In the United States, 33 million jobless claims have been made in the last seven weeks, with the unemployment rate rising to 14.7 per cent.

In Australia, Treasury is forecasting GDP to fall by over 10 per cent in the June quarter, which would represent our biggest fall on record. At $50 billion, this is a loss equivalent to the total combined quarterly production of
South Australia, Tasmania, the Northern Territory and the ACT. Treasury is forecasting the unemployment rate to reach around 10 per cent, or 1.4 million unemployed, in the June quarter. The five-percentage-point increase in the unemployment rate is expected to occur over three months, compared with the three years it took the unemployment rate to rise by the same amount in that devastating period of the early 1990s.

Household consumption and business and dwelling investment are all forecast by Treasury to fall sharply in the June quarter. The combination of social distancing, lower incomes and increased uncertainty are weighing heavily on aggregate demand and flowing through to reduced cash flow. Household consumption is expected to be around 16 per cent lower. Business investment is expected to be around 18 per cent lower, with falls concentrated in the non-mining sector. Dwelling investment is also expected to be around 18 per cent lower. Over the same period, household savings are expected to increase as a result of the restrictions that have been imposed and an understandably cautious approach by households to discretionary spending.

Overall, the economic data has been sobering. In March, business and consumer confidence saw the largest declines on record. The ASX 200 lost more than a third of its value in just over four weeks. In April, surveys showed that job ads halved, and activity in the construction, manufacturing and services sectors had their largest-ever monthly falls. New motor vehicle sales fell by 48 per cent through the year, their largest-ever fall. House sales fell by 40 per cent. Domestic and international air travel is down by more than 97 per cent, with nearly 40,000 passengers moving through Brisbane airport on Easter Sunday last year, compared with just 31 passengers this year.

Against this backdrop, between 14 March and 18 April the number of jobs decreased by 7½ per cent and the wages bill paid by businesses decreased by 8.2 per cent. During this period, accommodation and food services saw the largest fall in jobs at 33.4 per cent, followed by the arts and recreation sector at 27 per cent.

The scale of the economic shock is hitting the budget bottom line. The monthly financial statements for March provide the most recent report on the budget position. To the end of March, the underlying cash deficit was $22.4 billion, $9.9 billion higher than forecast in MYEFO. Tax receipts were $11.3 billion lower than forecast in MYEFO.

While payments to the end of March were still $1.4 billion lower than in the MYEFO profile, this will change from the next statement onwards as the measures we have implemented continue to ramp up. Since MYEFO, the total face value of Australian Government Securities on issue has increased by more than $50 billion from $560 billion to $618 billion as of 8 May 2020. An updated economic and fiscal outlook will be provided in June, following the release of the March quarter national accounts, with the budget to be delivered in October.

In accordance with the requirements of the Charter of Budget Honesty I am tabling this ministerial statement to set out the reason for the increase in borrowings.

The unprecedented scale and speed of the government's economic response has driven a rapid increase in borrowings. While there will be a significant increase in government debt, which will take many years to repay, our measures have been designed in a way that protect the structural integrity of the budget.

Australians know there is no money tree. What we borrow today, we must repay in the future. Temporary and targeted, the new spending measures were not designed to go forever but to build a bridge to the recovery phase. As Standard & Poor's stated less than four weeks ago, while the government's fiscal measures will 'weigh heavily on public finances in the immediate future, they won't structurally weaken Australia's fiscal position.'

With $320 billion, or 16.4 per cent of GDP, in financial support, our focus is getting the country through the crisis and positioning the economy to recover on the other side. This has only been possible because of the strength of our economic position when we entered the crisis. Growth had risen from 1.8 to 2.2 per cent in the December quarter, and the IMF was forecasting the Australian economy to grow faster than the United States, the United Kingdom, Japan, France and Germany in both 2020 and 2021. The unemployment rate fell in February to 5.1 per cent, with the participation rate at near record highs against the backdrop of 1½ million new jobs being created over the last six years.

After inheriting a budget deficit of $48½ billion, the budget was back in balance for the first time in 11 years, and, despite the adverse economic impacts from the global trade tensions, fires, floods and drought, we were on track for the first surplus in 12 years. Our ability to handle this crisis has once again reminded Australians of the importance of a strong and stable financial position which must always be a primary responsibility of government.

The proven path for paying back debt is not through higher taxes, which curtail aspiration and investment, but by growing the economy through productivity-enhancing reforms. Our focus will be on practical solutions to the most significant challenges which will be front and centre in the post-coronavirus world: reskilling and upskilling the workforce; maintaining our $100 billion, 10-year infrastructure pipeline; cutting red tape to reduce the cost
burden on businesses and the economy; and tax and industrial relations reform as a means of increasing our competitiveness.

The values and the principles that have guided coalition reforms in the past must guide us again in the future: encouraging personal responsibility; maximising personal choice; rewarding effort and risk taking whilst ensuring a safety net which is underpinned by a sense of decency and fairness.

Unleashing the power of dynamic, innovative, and open markets must be central to the recovery, with the private sector leading job creation, not government. We know that a strong economy is the foundation for everything else, and only with a strong economy can you provide the health, education, and essential services that Australians rely on.

**The economic response to the crisis**

Conscious of the extraordinary health and economic shock created by the coronavirus, the government was determined to act quickly and decisively. We were in a race against time to replenish our personal protective equipment stocks, increase the capacity of our intensive care units and secure a sufficient number of ventilators to deal with the expected surge in demand.

We provided additional funding to our scientists and medical researchers who are participating in a global mission to find a vaccine. We entered into an equal cost-sharing arrangement with the states and territories to meet the extra burden on hospitals. Non-urgent elective surgeries were suspended, and we guaranteed the viability of private and not-for-profit hospitals to ensure that over 30,000 beds and 105,000 healthcare professionals were available. We allocated more than $850 million to the aged-care sector to provide additional support and services at this difficult time.

On the economic front, in less than a three-week period we announced three separate support packages, each complementary and each building on the other. Combined, they represent the largest fiscal response in Australia's history. Over $25 billion of support has already flowed to households and businesses in recent weeks, with more than $30 billion to flow in the next month. This is the largest and fastest injection of economic support Australia has ever seen. Our economic measures fall into three categories: support for households; support for business and employment; and support for the financial system.

For households, our actions are designed to cushion the blow from the income shock and to support consumption across the economy. Given the level of uncertainty, our economic measures provide more than financial relief. They provide a psychological boost as well. There are so many stories from across the nation about how our measures have provided an economic lifeline to people in their hour of need. Luke, the owner of a local restaurant and bar in Chapel Hill, Brisbane, said JobKeeper 'saved our bacon'. Sorry and excuse my coughing, Mr Speaker—I need some water. It's too long a speech! Adrian, the owner of an auto business in Moonah, Hobart, said JobKeeper has turned out to be a 'saviour'.

We effectively doubled unemployment benefits with the introduction of a temporary $550 coronavirus supplement for JobKeeper. We waived the waiting period, adjusted mutual obligation for clients and expanded the partner income test to ensure it reached those in need. With over 1.4 million Australians now receiving the payment, it is providing critical support. We announced two $750 cash payments. The first payment, totalling $5.2 billion, went out from 31 March to more than seven million income support recipients, including pensioners, carers, veterans, those receiving family tax benefits and Commonwealth seniors health card holders.

We provided tax-free, early access to superannuation of up to $10,000 this financial year and up to $10,000 next financial year. To date, nearly 1.3 million early release of super applications have been released by the ATO, equating to about $10.6 billion, with an average withdrawal of around $8,000. We reduced the pension deeming rates, both the lower and upper levels, to 0.25 per cent and 2.25 per cent at a cost of $876 million. We reduced the superannuation minimum draw down rates by 50 per cent for 2019-20 and 2021 to give those in retirement more control over their savings.

We worked with the banks and the prudential regulator to ensure households could get much needed temporary relief from loan repayments. With repayments on $200 billion of loans deferred, the majority of which are residential mortgages, the financial pressure on many households has been lowered.

An early childhood and education relief package of over $1.6 billion, will see over one million families receive free child care. This has allowed our childcare sector to remain open to support working families and vulnerable children through the pandemic.

The second set of economic measures has been directed at business and employment. The motivation has been to encourage investment; boost cash flow; maintain the connection between employer and employee; and provide
a regulatory shield and more workplace flexibility, while preserving as much capacity across the economy, as we build a bridge to the recovery phase.

At $130 billion, the JobKeeper program provides for a fortnightly $1,500 payment to part-time and full-time employees, long-term casuals, sole traders and those working in the not-for-profit sector. The payment is equivalent to 70 per cent of the median wage and is close to a replacement wage for many working in those sectors most affected, like hospitality and retail. Payments began last week for the period beginning 30 March, which was the date the program was announced. There are now more than 835,000 businesses employing more than 5.5 million workers who are now formally enrolled in the program. This is an addition to the temporary cash flow support to help small and medium-sized businesses keep operating, pay their bills and retain their staff.

Over 450,000 small and medium-sized businesses have now received over $8 billion under our cash flow boost program. Linked to the size of the payroll, this program will provide between $20,000 and $100,000 to SMEs to help them retain staff and meet their fixed costs. This measure uses the existing payroll systems so that no new forms need to be filled in, businesses do not need to apply and payments are made automatically in the most efficient way possible. We also introduced a separate 50 per cent wage subsidy for 117,000 apprentices, helping to keep the local apprentice baker and hairdresser in work.

In addition to the financial support we have provided businesses, we have amended the bankruptcy insolvency laws to provide temporary protection for distressed businesses during this period. In the first package, we announced two measures to support business investment—an extended instant asset write-off of up to $150,000 which can be used any number of times for any eligible asset; and a 50 per cent accelerated depreciation allowance for businesses up to $500 million in turnover. Other measures included a $500 million loan facility to support exporters, recapturing market share, and a $1 billion relief and recovery fund with over $500 million has already been committed. This fund is supporting regional airlines and airports; air freight for essential agriculture; levy relief for Commonwealth fisheries; supporting tourism businesses and Commonwealth national parks; a funding boost for Australia’s zoos and aquariums; and support for Indigenous and regional arts programs.

To assist commercial tenants with rent relief during this difficult period, we work with the states and territories on a mandatory code of conduct to govern their relationships with landlords. In total there have been more than 80 regulatory changes that the federal government has made to provide greater flexibility and support to those affected by the crisis. This includes significant temporary industrial relations changes to allow employees and employers to vary work arrangements in order to keep people employed.

A great strength of the Australian economy during this crisis has been the resilience of our financial system which has benefited from many reforms under this government, commencing with the financial systems inquiry which led to our banks being required to hold more capital so as to be unquestionably strong. Global and domestic markets have experienced significant stress during this period, and the government moved quickly to inject liquidity into the system. The Reserve Bank of Australia and the Australian Office of Financial Management have made $105 billion available to support lending to businesses from both bank and non-bank lenders. The government has also partnered with the banks in a $40 billion SME loan guarantee scheme which to date has already seen over $1 billion in loans approved to more than 11,000 businesses. Regulatory relief has included the clarification of responsible lending laws to help credit flow faster to SMEs as well as changes made to facilitate the rapid recapitalisation of ASX-listed companies.

In recognition of the unprecedented and volatile market environment, the government has also temporarily reduced the FIRB assessment thresholds to zero to safeguard the national interest and ensure confidence in the foreign investment framework is maintained. It has been encouraging that through the combination of our economic measures and flattening the curve we have seen gradual signs of improvement in sentiment. Consumer confidence has risen for six consecutive weeks, and key sectors like mining, agriculture and manufacturing have continued to be resilient and contributed to a record trade surplus of $10.6 billion in the month of March. Significant product innovation, market diversification strategies and the accelerated uptake of digital transformation opportunities have also been pursued by many businesses in their effort to adapt to the difficult circumstances they are in. This innovation will assist these businesses on the other side.

Last week the Prime Minister summarised the government's five-point plan in response to this crisis. First, we made real progress in fighting the virus, buying time to increase our health capacity. Second, we put in place our economic response to cushion the blow and build a bridge to recovery. Third, we have begun lifting restrictions with a clear plan and framework mapping out the road ahead. Fourth, with restrictions starting to lift, it will be paramount to build confidence and momentum to consolidate these gains. And, fifth, continuing to grow the economy, create more jobs, guarantee the essential services Australians rely on and keep Australians safe.
Last Friday was a significant point on our pathway back, with national cabinet agreeing to a three-step framework to achieve a COVID-safe Australia and the lifting of restrictions by July. Treasury estimates that, with the restrictions lifted under the three separate stages, 850,000 people will be back at work. More than half of those workers will come from three sectors with 338,000 jobs in accommodation and food services; 76,000 jobs in arts and recreation; and 71,000 jobs in transport, postal and warehousing. Construction with 45,000 jobs and manufacturing with 20,000 jobs will also be significant contributors.

Treasury estimate that, as a result of easing the restrictions in line with stages 1, 2 and 3, GDP will increase by $9.4 billion each month. The lifting of restrictions will see Australians move around more freely. Of the $9.4 billion, increasing demand, including in retail, will contribute $2.9 billion. The opening of cafes, pubs, clubs, entertainment venues and health and fitness gymnasiums will contribute $2.4 billion while the opening of schools will contribute nearly $2.2 billion and other industry sectors like local government, museums and parks a further billion. The relaxation of travel restrictions is expected to contribute around $700 million.

The speed at which restrictions are lifted may differ in each state and so too the impact on jobs and GDP from the implementation of each stage. Treasury estimate that the benefits of just stage 1 being lifted will lead to more than 250,000 people going back to work and more than $3 billion in additional GDP. This includes 83,000 jobs and $1 billion a month in New South Wales, 64,000 jobs and over $715 million in Victoria, 51,000 jobs and $610 million in Queensland, 25,000 jobs and $435 million in Western Australia, 17,000 jobs and $178 million in South Australia, 5,000 jobs and $50 million in Tasmania, 4,000 jobs and $60 million in the ACT, and 3,000 jobs and $40 million in the Northern Territory.

However, these improvements in the economy depend on us continuing to follow the health advice. Failing to do so could see restrictions reimposed at a loss of more than $4 billion a week to the economy. If our largest state, New South Wales, had to reimpose restrictions equivalent to those in place before the 8 May national cabinet meeting, it would cost its economy around $1.4 billion per week. For Victoria, the cost would be around $1 billion, in Queensland $800 million, in Western Australia $500 million, in South Australia $200 million, in Tasmania $100 million, in the ACT $100 million and in the Northern Territory $40 million per week. This is the economic cost we will all have to bear if we fail to act.

Before concluding, I would like to thank the Prime Minister, the Deputy Prime Minister, the health minister and my good friend and colleague in the other place the Minister for Finance for their leadership throughout this period, and the many agencies of government that have worked so tirelessly behind the scenes.

Australians know that, as a consequence of the actions we have taken, we are better placed than most, but there is still a long way to go. There will be more coronavirus cases and it is vital we remain vigilant. The economic benefits from lifting the restrictions will only be realised if Australians continue to follow the health advice and download the COVIDSafe app.

On the economic front, we have put in place a comprehensive range of measures designed to keep people in jobs and businesses in business, and to build a bridge to recovery. Our measures are working, protecting lives and livelihoods. We can be confident about our future. The virus will not defeat us. We must stay strong. We must stay together. We must maintain our resolve. The fighting Australian spirit will see us get through this and be stronger than ever. I commend this statement to the House.

**Dr CHALMERS** (Rankin) (12:48): I hope the Treasurer is okay. In normal times, today would be budget day. Those opposite had already printed the mugs, they'd already filmed the ads, they'd already rehearsed the slogans. But the economy was already weaker than they wanted us to believe. Even before the fires, even before this coronavirus, wages and living standards were already stagnant, work was already too precarious and too insecure for too many people for too long, growth was already below average and investment was weak. And then the coronavirus broke out.

So now we gather, in very different circumstances, to deal with a diabolical pandemic with devastating economic consequences: long lines at Centrelink; the prospect of double-digit unemployment, a fifth of hours worked and a 10th of economic output vanishing in a matter of weeks; synchronised carnage in the global economy, the worst in 90 years; and a long shadow and a patchy recovery. Yet all we got today was a cut and paste of what the government has already said and what Australians already knew. If only the Treasurer had coughed up some detail or a plan. This was a missed opportunity for the government to bring people into its confidence about where things are going and what the government intends to do about it—not just to remind us of all of the sacrifices that the Australian people are making but to remind us of why those sacrifices matter, what people can look forward to on the other side, and why we can do better as a nation than to snap back to all of the economic weakness and ideological obsession which governed the years leading up to now.
I'm reminded of the late Denis Healey, who once said, 'I don't come from the Treasury; I come from the battlefront,' because we come to Canberra today from the economic battlefront, from the suburbs where the jobs are being lost and the people need a plan, where people are terrified of being left out and left behind. Let me give you just one example. On Monday night I was at home in Logan City. The kids had gone to sleep at last, and I was answering emails. Up popped a note from a mum. She wanted to share with me her son's story. This young man is a ground worker at one of our international airports. This is part of what she wrote to me about her son: 'Since the federal government's shutdown of almost all aviation operations over the last couple of months, his company has had no choice but to stand him down. They did so under the understanding that they could collect JobKeeper payments for their employees so they didn't join the Centrelink queues. Now my son has been told to join Centrelink queues, knowing that his job and thousands of his co-workers' jobs are in jeopardy because of a loophole excluding dnata from the scheme.

To my understanding, the JobKeeper payments were put in place to help workers stay employed in this unknown time. Yet my son and thousands of his co-workers are now to be left helpless and abandoned by the Australian government. As his mother and a fellow citizen of this country, I can't understand why some citizens are looked after and others are being forgotten, and made to feel unimportant like this. I beg you to fight on his behalf, so he is not put in this position—please. Please help him keep his job.'

This side of the House says to that mum that Labor will fight on his behalf, and for many who are caught in this situation. Our principle during this crisis has been to be constructive, supportive and responsible—to put the people before the politics. We do recognise that this isn't business as usual in the economy, and that it can't be business as usual in here as well. When the government has adopted a good idea, we've all said so. When they rejected our amendments to the JobKeeper legislation, we didn't hold up that legislation. But bipartisanship doesn't mean parliamentary groupthink or empty acquiescence. Being constructive doesn't mean being silent. Acting responsibly doesn't mean meekly following along. That might be the Labor Party the government wants, but it's not the opposition that the nation needs.

It's not the opposition that the workers at dnata and their families, and hundreds of thousands of other workers, need either. We have a responsibility as the party of working people to stand up for all of the wage earners of Australia—permanent and casual. We have a duty, as the architects of the Fair Work Act, to protect the rights and conditions of every worker. We have obligations as the party of the social safety net to help ensure that it is stitched strongly enough to respond to crises like this one. We have the ability, as the party who ensured that the Australian economy actually grew during the last global recession to make our voices heard, and, as the party of the future, to think ahead.

A thoughtful and constructive opposition has great value. After all, it was Labor that who called for the wage subsidies in the first place, just as we made constructive suggestions about unemployment benefits, the partner income test, mutual obligation, supporting students, relief from evictions, child care, telehealth, charities, access to broadband and the aviation sector. Just as we cautioned against the government's risky and rushed plan for early access to superannuation, and just as we warned about the faults in the design of the JobKeeper scheme. It gives us no joy whatsoever to say that the super scheme is a mess and that wage subsidies are a very good idea being very badly implemented.

The Treasurer has just conceded again today that the Morrison government has undershot its own JobKeeper enrolment targets by hundreds of thousands of Australian workers. This is a stunning admission of failure. This is not a saving to be celebrated; it is hundreds of thousands more breadwinners heading off to Centrelink instead. It made obvious what we already suspected: that this Treasurer and this government are fumbling the implementation of this crucial program. Too many Australians are left out and left behind—one, accidentally, but many deliberately.

In recent weeks, thousands of businesses have expressed confusion about their eligibility, they're uncertain about their obligations to their employees and they have struggled to access vital bridging finance, made necessary by the scheme's design and its late rollout. Many of them have given up as a consequence. That's why, when unemployment spikes even higher than necessary, this Treasurer's fingerprints will be all over it. The fewer people he signs up to JobKeeper now, the longer the unemployment queues will be and the harder the recovery. The jobless will pay the highest price, but the whole community will suffer as a consequence. We know from the bitter experience of previous recessions just how hard it is for people who lose their jobs in times like these to find another one down the track, and many of them are excluded from the labour market for far too long. There is human wreckage and wasted lives, and sometimes that cascades down the generations. This needs to be avoided at all costs. We can agree that this crisis has brought out some of the best in our country. There is a spirit of cooperation—an adaptability that we will need to build on. We do acknowledge the hard calls that all governments have had to make as they try to support an economy at the same time as they shut most of it down.
We don't pretend that this government has got everything wrong—they haven't—but nor should they pretend that they've got everything exactly right.

Last Friday, the Prime Minister gave one of those long press conferences in the prime ministerial courtyard. He said that the last few months have done two things: they've given us a reminder of some things and they've given us a lesson on some other things. That's true enough, I guess. But we need to be clear: this side of the House didn't need to be reminded how important public health is—of course it is. We didn't need to be reminded that every job matters—we've believed that all along as well—or that Australians at their best can focus on something bigger than just ourselves. That's what being Australian is all about. Those opposite might need reminding of all of this, but these are things that Labor has never forgotten. So what have the people really been reminded of during this crisis? Well, we've been reminded of this: the Australian economy wasn't strong enough before and it wasn't working well enough for ordinary Australians. Maybe the long tail years of the long growth decades really did obscure this truth, but it's very plain to us all now. Thankfully, we're not America. Thankfully, we're not Spain or Italy. But, thankfully, that's not the standard that we set for ourselves. Thankfully, we can aspire to something much, much better.

How did we get to this point in 2020 where, after a generation of growth, our economic cupboard is so bare and our defences are so thin? The short story is this: seven years, three Treasurers and one big gamble. They punctured that ordinary Australians could keep calm and carry the economy while a Liberal government in Canberra could get away with indulging their usual ideological obsessions. They bet that ordinary people would just keep working, spending, saving, raising kids, settling in Australia and starting and growing business while they kept undermining super, attacking trade unions, cutting penalty rates, cutting essential services and redistributing wealth in the wrong direction.

When Mr Hockey became Treasurer, the Australian economy was strengthening. When he handed it over to Mr Morrison, the Australian economy was weaker but still relatively resilient. By the time Mr Morrison handed it over to Mr Frydenberg, the Australian economy was fragile indeed. They were three different Liberal Treasurers, but they all took the same risk. They all took the risk that the economy would take care of itself while they took care of their mates in marginal seats.

So by the end of last year what did we have? We had slowing quarterly growth, below-trend annual growth and an economy growing barely faster than population. We had: record high underemployment, an unemployment rate higher than the US, UK or New Zealand and almost two million Australians looking for work or more work; the worst run of wages growth on record, missing almost every budget and midyear update forecast; multifactor productivity declining for the first time in eight years and annual labour productivity negative for the first time on record; business investment in decline and at its lowest level since the nineties recession; the private domestic economy going backwards; record household debt; the slowest annual consumption growth since the GFC; childcare costs up more than 30 per cent; and a budget already heaving with a debt that had more than doubled already under those opposite.

Don't forget that the record deficits forecast by Deloitte this week wouldn't be the first, second or third deficits recorded by this government but the seventh, eighth and ninth.

These are the facts that the Treasurer failed to mention in his ministerial statement. So this is not just about the last seven weeks; this is also about the last seven years.

To understand where we're going, we do need to understand where we've been. Be clear: the pandemic may have arrived without warning but weakness in the economy certainly did not. The Reserve Bank had already downgraded Australia's growth forecasts three times. The IMF had already downgraded Australia's forecast by more than global growth, by four times as much as the other advanced economies. The OECD had also slashed its expectations for Australian growth before the crisis by twice as much as the G20 economies as a whole.

Be clear about this, too: when our country woke up on New Year's Day 2020, we had a literal burning platform for change. No summer has ever shown more that what Australia needs is leaders who listen and have empathy and compassion, governments which cooperate, scientists who are heard, businesses that invest and workers who have the skills that they need to turn aspiration into opportunity. But our summer of ashes couldn't teach the Liberals what modern Australia's economy needs, and it looks like our autumn of isolation and anxiety hasn't either. If there is a plan from those opposite, it risks being the same approach that got us into this mess in the first place. Going by the statement that we just heard, they intend to double-down on trickle down.

Just last Friday, the Prime Minister in his courtyard read out a focus group report about how every Australian matters. On the same day we learned that his plan for super, his smash-and-grab raid on the future, has been hacked and compromised in predictable and predicted ways, that making Australians spend their retirement savings now has left the door open for fraudsters to rob ordinary people. He talks about 'Team Australia', but what
he really wants is a team separated into two separate dressing rooms: one where a few make all the decisions and one filled with the rest, the players who have to take all the wickets and score all the runs.

They say that we are all in this together, but not if you work at dnata, not if you're a casual worker moving from one company to another and not if you work in hospitality or entertainment or at councils or universities or as a relief teacher in our schools. They say every job matters, but they don't think every job is a keeper. 'We are all in this together' is more than a matter of saying, 'We are all at risk from this coronavirus,' or 'We all have a responsibility to follow the rules.' We are and we do. As the Labor leader pointed out yesterday, 'we are all in this together' is also about what happens next. It's about the Australia we want to live in when life is normal again.

But, unfortunately, instead of the vision that the Labor leader displayed yesterday, we get budget day without a budget. Delaying a budget is forgivable, but delaying a plan is not. The Treasurer had a big opportunity today and he missed it. When Australians wanted a policy program or a detailed economic outlook, all he gave them was a speech cobbled together from old press releases. But when the IMF, the Reserve Bank and the private sector forecasters have released expectations for the economy, the Treasurer has no excuse whatsoever. In the past week alone, the Reserve Bank and Deloitte Access Economics have provided detailed economic and budget forecasts that span several years. The Reserve Bank went even further than usual to describe three potential scenarios, giving definition to the uncertainty which confronts us all. And we should expect no less from the government. Dribbling out a number here or there to one newspaper or another is no substitute for the sort of information that Australians had a right to expect from the Treasurer today.

At a time of acute uncertainty, clarity around the government's expectations and assumptions is more important than ever, because decisions made in the coming weeks, months and beyond will have life-altering consequences for many Australians. We're not out of the woods when the restrictions ease. The government's economic choices will remain as crucial as they were during the worst days of this crisis, and every Australian needs them to get it right. This is where 'snapback' comes into it. We all want the economy to recover as quickly as possible and for people to go back to work as soon as it's safe—but hoping for the best is not a strategy, especially when the Reserve Bank, the International Monetary Fund and Deloitte Access Economics all expect higher unemployment for longer. Every informed commentator expects that the recovery will be patchy and long and that different industries will come back slower than others, yet we get this commentary from the Prime Minister about snapback. The Treasurer couldn't have been clearer about it when he told Paul Kelly this:

The Prime Minister was very strong on how there would be a snap back. They were his words. The economy would 'snap back' and we wanted the economy to bounce back stronger.

Now we read today that the government want to walk away from the language of snapback at the same time as they contemplate pulling some of this welcome support out of the economy. This is not actually about the slogans the Prime Minister abandons; it's about the workers he abandons if he withdraws this support too soon or without factoring in the long tail of this recovery.

Australia needs an economic plan, a plan for when the economy doesn't snap back on the Prime Minister's political timetable, a plan that doesn't withdraw support from the economy too early or too suddenly in a way that cruel the recovery, a plan that doesn't just learn the lessons of 2009 but 2014 as well, a plan that doesn't ask the most vulnerable people to pay the heaviest price for the money that's been borrowed here. Australia needs a plan for jobs and wages and living standards, for investment and productivity and for cleaner and cheaper energy, a plan that deals with the most pressing aspects of this crisis while we plan for the new Australia which comes after. We got none of that today from the Treasurer. We've seen none of that from this government. We didn't get a budget. We didn't get a plan. We got a mug. Australians have sacrificed so much to combat this virus. They've worked together and they've stayed apart, but all they got today for their efforts was a speech from the Treasurer. If they are to get through this crisis and get back to work, they need and deserve much better than that.

BILLS

Privacy Amendment (Public Health Contact Information) Bill 2020

First Reading

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

Bill read a first time.

Second Reading

Mr PORTER (Pearce—Attorney-General, Minister for Industrial Relations and Leader of the House) (13:10):

I move:

That this bill be now read a second time.
The Privacy Amendment (Public Health Contact Information) Bill 2020 will ensure that there are strong ongoing privacy protections to support the download, use and eventual decommission of the Australian government's COVIDSafe app.

At release, COVIDSafe was supported by interim privacy protections contained in the Minister for Health's determination under the Biosecurity Act 2015. Building on this, the purpose of this bill is to enshrine the privacy protections in the determination into primary legislation by inserting a new part into the Privacy Act 1988, give the Australian Information Commissioner oversight of COVIDSafe app data and introduce additional provisions that clarify protections in the determination.

The bill guarantees that the Australian public can have confidence that their privacy will be protected if they download and use COVIDSafe. An increase in the uptake of COVIDSafe will help states and territories trace outbreaks and combat the spread of COVID-19.

**Background**

To understand the bill's privacy protections, it is first crucial to understand how COVIDSafe operates and handles personal information. You will see that strong privacy protections have been built into the design of COVIDSafe as it requires users to provide the minimum amount of information required to contact trace which is encrypted until it is required by health officials.

COVIDSafe is a voluntary app developed by the Australian government that was launched on 26 April 2020. COVIDSafe can be installed on Android and iOS personal devices to collect information to assist state and territory health officials when they conduct contact tracing to combat the spread of COVID-19.

When a person downloads COVIDSafe, they are asked to register by entering a limited amount of personal information: a name or pseudonym, an age range, a mobile phone number and a postcode. Once verified by text message, this information is then uploaded in an encrypted form to the National COVIDSafe Data Store.

Once a user has registered, COVIDSafe works by using bluetooth signals to record encrypted data about close contacts with other users and stores this locally on their device. If this data is not uploaded to the National COVIDSafe Data Store, it is deleted on a rolling 21-day basis. Unlike manual contact tracing, COVIDSafe can record close contacts who are not known to the user—for example, people who sit near another user on the bus, at an event or in line at the supermarket. When a COVIDSafe user tests positive for COVID-19, they will be contacted by a health official in their state or territory as part of the usual contact-tracing process. When making contact, the health official will then ask the person if they use COVIDSafe. If they do, the health official will send them a code by text message to enter in the app. If the code is entered, the user consents to uploading the encrypted data about their close contacts to the National COVIDSafe Data Store.

Once information about close contacts is uploaded, state and territory contact tracers can access this information to notify the positive user's close contacts that they may have been exposed to the coronavirus. From this point, contact tracers will inform people at risk of COVID-19 that they have been exposed without identifying the infected app user. Contact tracers will step people at risk through what to do next, such as getting tested or self-isolating.

COVIDSafe, therefore, has the potential to significantly speed up existing manual contact-tracing processes, and in turn could accelerate the pace at which governments can ease restrictions while still keeping Australians safe.

**Biosecurity declaration**

The Australian public must have confidence that COVIDSafe protects their privacy for it to be used and highly effective in combating the spread of COVID-19. To this end, the Minister for Health, the Hon. Greg Hunt, made a determination under the Biosecurity Act on 25 April 2020—before the COVIDSafe launch. This determination provided strong interim privacy protections for data collected through COVIDSafe prior to the passage of this bill.

The determination contains provisions that:

- ensure that data from COVIDSafe is only used to support state and territory health authorities' contact-tracing efforts, and only to the extent required to do so,
- require that users must consent before data from their device can be uploaded to the National COVIDSafe Data Store,
- prevent data from COVIDSafe being retained outside of Australia, and protect against unauthorised disclosure outside of Australia,
- require all COVIDSafe data held in the National COVIDSafe Data Store to be deleted at the end of the COVID-19 pandemic,
• protect against decryption of COVIDSafe data stored on users’ devices, and
• provide that no-one can be forced to download or use COVIDSafe or upload their data to the National COVIDSafe Data Store.

Finally, the determination created criminal offences for the breach of the above requirements, with a maximum penalty of five years imprisonment.

Enshrining the determination

The Australian government has now developed this bill to enshrine the COVIDSafe privacy protections in the determination in primary legislation.

The protections in the bill will apply to all COVIDSafe data from the point at which the bill commences, even if that data was created before the bill commenced. Until the bill is passed, the determination will continue to apply to the handling of COVIDSafe app data.

The bill will also override the effect of any previously enacted laws under section 94ZD. This means that the bill will apply in place of any other laws that may apply, including the determination, once it passes into law. At that point, those handling COVIDSafe app data will have a single legislative reference, being the Commonwealth Privacy Act.

Criminal offences under the bill

While I do not plan to address those areas of the bill which directly replicate the determination, I will note that key criminal offences from the determination continue to apply, and remain subject to the same penalties, being imprisonment for five years, a fine of 300 penalty units ($63,000), or both. These are, of course, the maximum penalties that could be applied and are reserved for the most serious types of offending. The offences to which they would relate include:

• unauthorised collection, or use or disclosure of, COVIDSafe app data (section 94D),
• uploading COVIDSafe app data to the National COVIDSafe Data Store without the consent of the individual to whom the data relates (section 94E),
• storing the National COVIDSafe Data Store outside Australia (section 94F),
• disclosing COVIDSafe app data outside Australia (except in the case of a disclosure by a state or territory health authority that is necessary for contact-tracing purposes, such as where a user who needs to be contacted is outside Australia) (section 94F),
• uploading COVIDSafe app data from a mobile device to the National COVIDSafe Data Store without consent (while allowing for cases where a parent, guardian or carer uses COVIDSafe on an individual's behalf) (section 94H),
• decrypting COVIDSafe app data stored on a mobile device (section 94G), and
• requiring a person to use the COVIDSafe app (section 94H).

Committing criminal offences will breach the Privacy Act

The bill ensures oversight of COVIDSafe app data by the Australian Information Commissioner. The offences under the bill will also be breaches of the Privacy Act in certain circumstances. Therefore, (under section 94R) if a person commits an offence under the bill and that person is either already required to comply with the Privacy Act or is a state or territory health authority handling COVIDSafe app data, then the person’s conduct will also breach the Privacy Act.

This gives individuals affected by the breach more options for enforcement because they will have the option to make a complaint to the commissioner in addition to being able to report the matter to law enforcement.

Broader application of the Privacy Act

The bill will go further than the determination by ensuring that COVIDSafe app data must also be treated as 'personal information' under the Privacy Act, by virtue of section 94Q. This automatically applies a range of existing Privacy Act protections to COVIDSafe app data, including privacy policy, notification, and security obligations. The commissioner will be able to undertake a formal assessment of whether an entity subject to the Privacy Act, or a state or territory health authority handling COVIDSafe app data, is complying with the requirements in this bill.

The commissioner will also have discretion to refer matters that may constitute a breach of a state or territory privacy law to the responsible state or territory privacy regulator.
There is also an additional requirement that the commissioner provide regular public reports on the performance and exercise of her new powers and functions under part VIIIA.

**Application of Notifiable Data Breaches Scheme**

The bill applies the existing Notifiable Data Breaches Scheme to COVIDSafe app data under section 94S. The bill requires the administrator of the National COVIDSafe Data Store, or a state or territory health authority handling COVIDSafe app data, to notify the commissioner of any data breach involving COVIDSafe app data. The commissioner will then have the power to require the breach to be notified to affected individuals.

The notification requirement would be automatic in the event of a data breach, which is much stronger than the protection in the Privacy Act's existing data breach notification requirements.

**Summary of further differences between the bill and determination**

It should be noted that the bill also includes new clauses which:

- provide limited exemptions to the offence of requiring someone to use COVIDSafe to preserve an individual's ability to limit access to their private home,
- ensure that no further data can be collected from former COVIDSafe users,
- introduce and define the term 'data store administrator',
- outline the process for all COVIDSafe data to be deleted at the end of the COVID-19 pandemic,
- create reporting requirements, and
- outline the process for repeal of the bill.

I will now outline why these changes have been made.

**Requiring the use of COVIDSafe**

The prohibition on requiring a person to use the COVIDSafe app has been clarified under section 94H. A person will not be liable for this offence if they require a person to use COVIDSafe before entering their private residence, reflecting the normal expectation that a person is generally free to deny another person access to their home for any reason. However, this exemption is limited and would not apply to other situations covered by the offence involving a commercial relationship, such as a landlord-tenant relationship, a share house relationship or an employment relationship.

**Protections for former COVIDSafe users**

Section 94N is a new provision that guarantees that COVIDSafe will not be used to collect any further data from people who have chosen to delete the app. Section 94N provides that, if a user re-registers for the app, data collection can resume. This protection provides further assurance that a user's consent is central to COVIDSafe data collection.

**Administration of the National COVIDSafe Data Store**

With regard to administration of the National COVIDSafe Data Store, the bill designates the Australian Department of Health as the administrator of the National COVIDSafe Data Store and allows it to delegate some or all of these functions to certain Commonwealth government agencies under the proposed section 94Z. The Department of Health must make that delegation via a 'notifiable instrument', meaning the delegation will always be announced publicly. Importantly, an enforcement body or intelligence agency cannot be designated as the data store administrator.

Currently, the Digital Transformation Agency (DTA) is responsible for technical administration of COVIDSafe and the National COVIDSafe Data Store, in consultation with the Department of Health. When the bill comes into law, the Department of Health will formally delegate some of its administrator functions to the DTA to reflect this arrangement. If the Department of Health later delegates these functions to another agency, Health will need to publicly announce that fact via notifiable instrument.

**Deleting the National COVIDSafe Data Store**

Regarding deletion of the National COVIDSafe Data Store, the bill finally also includes a more specific process for deletion of the National COVIDSafe Data Store once the pandemic is over, compared to the determination. This includes a process for the minister to determine the end of the COVIDSafe data period under section 94Y and by outlining the actions that then need to be taken by section 94P.

**Reporting requirements**

Regarding reporting requirements, the bill includes a requirement that the Minister for Health report to the parliament as soon as practicable after each six-month period on the operation and effectiveness of the
COVIDSafe app. This underscores the government's commitment to transparency about the operation and effectiveness of COVIDSafe and the unprecedented privacy and security protections built around the app's data handling.

Repeal of the bill

Regarding repeal of the bill, schedule 2 of the bill will result in the legislation being automatically repealed 90 days after the Minister for Health issues a determination that COVIDSafe app is no longer required under section 94Y. The Acts Interpretation Act will apply to preserve the effect of the repealed law so that an investigation into a possible breach of a repealed law can continue or can be commenced after repeal.

Conclusion

By way of conclusion, this bill will guarantee that Australians' privacy is protected when they choose to download and use COVIDSafe. By enshrining the biosecurity determination into primary legislation, and ensuring the Information Commissioner has the power to hear complaints about the mishandling of COVIDSafe app data under the Privacy Act, the public can be assured that the government is doing all we can to keep their data as secure as possible. With the passage of this bill, we sincerely hope that the Australian public will take note of the unprecedented strength of these privacy protections, choose to download the app and help their fellow Australians combat the spread of COVID-19. I commend the bill to the House.

Leave granted for second reading debate to continue immediately.

Mr DREYFUS (Isaacs—Deputy Manager of Opposition Business) (13:24): Since the beginning of this public health crisis, Labor's focus has been on saving lives and saving jobs. As the Leader of the Opposition has said on many occasions, Labor is looking for outcomes, not arguments. That is the spirit in which we have approached the Privacy Amendment (Public Health Contact Information) Bill 2020 and the government's contact-tracing app more generally.

My colleagues and I believe that a contact-tracing app can be a valuable tool for protecting Australians from coronavirus. But, to be a valuable tool, the app has to work and Australians must have complete confidence that their privacy is protected and that the data collected by the app will never be used for any purpose other than contact-tracing during the current health crisis. Without that confidence, millions of Australians will not download the app and its value as a public health tool will be severely compromised, even if it works effectively in a technical sense.

At the outset, the Prime Minister said that at least 40 per cent of the Australian population needed to download the app for it to be an effective tool—that means about 10 million Australians. The government is well short of that figure at the moment. I understand that about 5.5 million Australians have downloaded the COVIDSafe app so far, but my colleagues and I hope that this bill and Labor's support for it will help to build the public confidence that is needed to persuade many millions more to download it.

One of the reasons why I support the passage of this bill is the very positive engagement that I have had with the Attorney-General over the last week. Following the release of the draft legislation, last Monday evening I approached the Attorney-General with a number of suggestions for improving the bill and boosting public confidence. To his credit, the Attorney-General considered, in good faith, all of the concerns I raised with him, and he has sought to address most of them in the version of the bill that is now before the House. Those amendments have improved the bill in a variety of ways. For example, there is now greater clarity about what data is protected by the strict privacy safeguards contained in the bill.

The bill now provides for greater oversight of the COVIDSafe app and the handling of COVIDSafe data by the Office of the Australian Information Commissioner. The bill now makes it clear that no intelligence agency or law enforcement agency can be given a role in administering the COVIDSafe data store. Where it is unlikely to prejudice a law enforcement investigation, the bill now allows the Office of the Australian Information Commissioner to continue an investigation even where the investigation overlaps with an investigation by law enforcement. And the bill now includes a number of public reporting requirements so that the Australian people can be kept informed about the operation and effectiveness of the app and the level of compliance with the privacy safeguards contained in the bill. This is now a stronger and better piece of legislation as a result of constructive engagement between Labor and the government. For that, I would like to give particular credit and extend my thanks to the Attorney-General and his office.

I understand that a number of my colleagues will speak about some of the suggestions from Labor that were not adopted by the government. While each of those concerns is important, they must be kept in perspective, particularly when it comes to the issue of privacy. To be clear: this bill will introduce the strongest privacy safeguards that have ever been put in place by any Australian parliament. That is despite the fact that the
COVIDSafe app is voluntary and the data that it collects is, compared to other personal information that's routinely collected by governments and corporations, relatively innocuous. This bill takes privacy seriously.

I would also like to assure Australians that this is not a case of set and forget. Labor will keep an eye on how the measures in the bill are being implemented to ensure that they are effective and working as intended. I expect the Attorney-General will be doing the same. Necessarily, this bill had to be drafted quickly and it has not gone through the usual parliamentary committee processes of review. As such, it has not received the same degree of scrutiny that a bill would typically be subject to. For that reason, I welcome last Friday's announcement by the Senate Select Committee on COVID-19 that it intends to oversee the COVIDSafe app and this legislation by reviewing the rollout of the app—

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

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

COVID-19: Child Care

Ms CHESTERS (Bendigo) (13:30): I feel quite lucky and privileged to be back this week and able to bring my new baby daughter with me. Not every mum nor every parent can take their child to work. It's important, at this stage of her life, that she's able to be close. I raise this because I know how critical and stressful it is for new mums and new parents to enter their children into early childhood education or child care when they’re quite young. Like all, I was quite excited when the government announced free child care, only to be disappointed, because, with this government, the devil is always in the detail. What I’ve learned from educators and centres in my electorate is that they are close to going backwards. When they hit the 70 per cent point of children in their centres they will not earn enough from this government, in terms of guaranteed funding, and they will start to go backwards. This is incredibly frustrating for centres and educators, and heartbreaking for parents who have been turned away and can't get a place. Equally, it is frustrating that the City of Greater Bendigo childcare centres did not qualify for special funding. I urge the government to reverse this decision. These childcare centres are home to many children whose parents are essential workers. We cannot afford to have these centres closed.

Bennelong Electorate: COVID-19

Mr ALEXANDER (Bennelong) (13:32): I rise to commend the government on their excellent work in response to the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic. In particular, I would like to commend the recent announcement of an additional $200 million as part of a new community support package to help vulnerable Australians who have been impacted by the coronavirus. Bennelong is fortunate to possess a number of wonderful community organisations who’ve stepped up to this unprecedented challenge and assisted a great many people in need. I would like to draw special attention to the work of Christian Community Aid, North Ryde Community Aid and Information Centre, and CatholicCare Diocese of Broken Bay, amongst many others, for their excellent work. Bennelong has been fortunate to share in an additional $959,000 this year to support the work of these and other community organisations. The government is working closely with these groups, providing them with additional support and finance that they require to support our most vulnerable.

This crisis has shown that Australians can and will rise to meet any challenge. We have strong communities that rally together in the face of uncertain and dangerous futures. It is because of our community spirit that we will endure this crisis and come out stronger. I am proud to say I work in a government and a parliament that is devoted to helping our communities, and I commend Minister Ruston for her work in this area.

Perth Electorate: COVID-19

Mr GORMAN (Perth) (13:33): I’m so proud of how the Perth community and the Perth electorate have responded during this pandemic crisis. Our community has, I believe, the highest number per capita of rainbows and teddy bears in windows of any electorate in the country. The Forsyth Gardens retirement village residents gained social media fame with their socially distant street party. We've seen many small businesses innovate. Childcare centres have been struggling through change after change after change. Whopper Snapper Distillery made 13,000 litres of sanitiser out of 130,000 litres of wine. Some would say that's a waste; I think it's a great achievement. Beaufort Street Books had international authors join them on Zoom. Future Bayswater have the farmers market. The Pan Pacific hotel are providing homes for people who are homeless. Finlay & Sons and many other great cafes have continued to serve their community.

Our local councils have done a fabulous job. The City of Perth has $10-a-day parking for workers. The City of Vincent has arts grants for people who have been forgotten during this crisis. The City of Bayswater has a $5 million local stimulus package. The City of Stirling has a hotline for vulnerable people. The Town of Bassendean...
is revitalising its town centre. We've seen the Batman and Robin of Western Australia, Mark McGowan and Roger Cook, providing leadership for all Western Australians.

As I said in this parliament in March, we need and want the Prime Minister and the government to do well. Equally, I'm proud of how the opposition leader and our side have conducted themselves during this time. But doing well means doing something about jobseeker; doing well means doing something about JobKeeper. That will provide certainty for small businesses, vulnerable communities and our education sector.

**COVID-19**

**Dr ALLEN** (Higgins) (13:35): Over these last few months our country has faced one of its most formidable threats ever. As Australians, we should be proud of our strong and early response to the COVID pandemic. We have carved our own curve. This is because Australians right across this country have responded to personal restrictions that many would never have imagined in our lifetime by doing social distancing, despite missing loved ones, including vulnerable parents in aged care; by closing businesses, built with blood, sweat and tears, to ensure the safety of others; by homeschooling our children while trying to juggle our jobs online and still keeping family harmony.

Now that these measures have been successful, it is time to carefully ease these restrictions in a stepwise manner. We have the right safety nets in place to contain outbreaks should they occur—the PPE, the ventilators, the testing regimes and, now, the COVIDSafe app. If we don't move forward now, we risk a new threat—one that is not from COVID but from the response to it. We risk greater rates of depression, anxiety, domestic violence and even suicide if more people lose their jobs or businesses and are isolated from social supports. We should continue to listen to our medical health experts, who are informing our government's response that it is time to step forward carefully into the new future that awaits. The virus is not eradicated. (Time expired)

**Macquarie Electorate: Richmond Bridge**

**Ms TEMPLEMAN** (Macquarie) (13:36): In February I spoke about the plan to duplicate the bridge at Richmond and North Richmond in the Hawkesbury area. I expressed the fear that, despite all the consultation, the final decision on this project would be based purely on budget. It turns out my fears were well founded. Information received by my office shows the number of corridor options for the federal funded bridge have been narrowed from five to two because the costs are significantly outside of the funding envelope. In other words, the money promised by the Morrison government won't cut it. The duplicate bridge will only have a one-in-20-year flood level with approaches that are—wait for it—at a one-in-five-year level. It's a budget bridge. It's the cheap option, not the best option.

More than 700 people responded to my community survey on this project. Nearly three-quarters said they wanted a route that went around, not through, Richmond and North Richmond. In 2019 Hawkesbury council moved to support the bypass. Yet again the real needs of the Hawkesbury are being completely ignored by the Liberals. We wanted a bypass at Windsor. We got a three-lane bridge that almost flooded earlier this year. Who builds a three-lane bridge in the 21st century? They do. Now we have the budget bridge that isn't even being considered as a flood evacuation route in one of the most flood prone areas in New South Wales. What should be - a third crossing will simply funnel heavy traffic through the same old roads.

Labor pledged that we would build at least— (Time expired)

**Menzies Electorate: Infrastructure**

**Mr ANDREWS** (Menzies) (13:38): I rise today to update the House and, indeed, my constituents in Menzies, about a number of major infrastructure projects which were promised for them last year and, indeed, are funded by the Commonwealth. These include projects to increase the number of commuter parking spaces at Eltham station, an area which is—not at the current time during this COVID-19 crisis—normally very overcrowded. The park and ride at Doncaster project will be completed as part of the North East Link, one of the major infrastructure projects underway in Victoria. There are also additional works to be undertaken on the crossing of the Yarra River between Main Road in Eltham and Fitzsimons Lane in Templestowe. The crossing itself is four lanes, but there are major blockages at each end of that and this work will be undertaken to deal with those blockages. There are also 17 school pick-up and drop-off points in the Nillumbik Shire, eight of which have already been completed and the other are to be completed, hopefully, in the remainder of this year. Then beyond that there is a new system of crossing lights at the Applewood Retirement Village on Tram Road in Doncaster. These projects, along with work being undertaken currently on Ayr Street in Doncaster and Lynnwood Parade in Templestowe, are part of the Morrison government's commitment to the people of Menzies.
Housing Affordability

Ms CLAYDON (Newcastle) (13:39): If there's one thing that COVID-19 has taught us it's the critical importance of housing. While housing has been key to this health crisis, it's also key to the nation's economic recovery. We didn't come to this crisis in very good shape. We had a diabolical underinvestment in social and affordable housing in particular. In the private sector, rents and housing prices have spiralled out of control leaving Australians struggling to keep a roof over their heads.

Shamefully, more Australians are now homeless than ever before. But now the future looks even more precarious. The pipeline and construction activity is drying up while more Australians are facing dire financial pressures than any other time in living memory. Historically housing construction has played a vital role in recovery from economic shocks. We need to increase housing supply, especially in social and affordable housing. We need to repair existing social housing stock, we need to boost construction activity and we need to protect jobs and drive local economic growth. That is why this week federal Labor called for a national housing stimulus plan to protect jobs, drive local economic activity and deliver on one of the most fundamental basic human rights and that is access to safe and secure housing for all our citizens.

The federal government desperately needs to take the lead and to work with the private sector and superannuation funds to invest in this critical area. Now is the time for this government to make amends for the last seven years of utter neglect.

Bass Electorate: COVID-19

Mrs ARCHER (Bass) (13:41): There will be many stories of the ways that COVID-19 has impacted us all, but today I want to share the story of one constituent whose moving story I came to know after sending him a 90th birthday card. John Wallace survived World War II, the Blitz and rationing before emigrating from the UK to Australia with his bride, Margaret, in 1952. John spent his working life at the Coats Patons factory and Margaret worked as a personal assistant to the head of the Launceston General Hospital before retraining as a teacher. John was active in the local George Town community as a Rotarian and continues to play golf today with his 96-year-old golf partner.

Recently Margaret has moved to a nursing home due to ill health. Because of the restrictions in place this year for the first time in 68 years of marriage the couple were unable to be together for their wedding anniversary. John's son David wrote to me: 'My wish for them is that the awesome strategy that both our state and federal governments are undertaking to subdue COVID-19 will prevail and my parents will be together again.'

Thanks to our community who have done the right thing, no matter how difficult, in staying home over the past few months. John and Margaret can be reunited tomorrow as restrictions ease slightly. To the people of Bass I say: thank you. Your efforts are working but it's not over yet. Please remain vigilant. For John and Margaret, I wish you every happiness.

Employment

Ms STEGGALL (Warringah) (13:42): Historically the youth are the most impacted in recessions, but this recession will also disproportionately impact women. Employment in the arts, retail and hospitality sectors, hit the hardest by the shutdowns, is dominated by youth and women. As it considers economic recovery plans the government must consider them specifically.

In February the youth unemployment rate in Warringah was already 10.4 per cent, compared to the overall unemployment rate of 2.3 per cent. Since then the largest impact of net job losses for young people under 20 has been almost 10 per cent. Young women across all sectors earned less before this crisis and have been hit hardest now. They're more likely to be ineligible for jobseeker due to the partner income test. Their recovery and career prospects will be made all the harder by cultural barriers and an embedded gender pay gap.

My office has been fielding correspondence from many distressed young people, many on casual contracts, unable to access JobKeeper programs. They're unsure of their next pay cheque, where it's coming from, and they are disillusioned with the support that is available to them. I'm concerned about the lasting mental effect on this youth. To date ReachOut's coronavirus-specific mental health support content has had over 90,000 views. We need to support our youth and this generation as they will face the many problems we have ahead.

Trade with China

Mr CHRISTENSEN (Dawson) (13:44): Australia is at a crossroads. We can keep giving in to communist China's threats or we can stand up for our sovereignty and our economic independence. With more than 36 per cent of our exports being sold to China, representing 7.9 per cent of GDP, it's clear we have put too many eggs in the one basket. China now owns over 9.1 million hectares of our country: farms, factories, airports, resort islands, seaports, wind farms, solar farms and coalmines. They own more water than there is in Sydney Harbour—water
that should be in the hands of Aussie farmers. Being so entangled with an authoritarian regime has left our nation open to economic blackmail and boycotts, like those mooted by China's ambassador and the actions recently against both our barley and beef exports.

The parliament's Joint Standing Committee on Trade and Investment Growth has launched an inquiry looking into these and other matters. This inquiry is the Australian people's opportunity to have their say by making a submission to that inquiry. We want to hear people's thoughts on our economic exposure to China, on foreign investment and whether people think that the current economic relationship with China is harmful to the national interest. It is time to speak up on China's economic infiltration into and economic blackmail against our country. Enough is enough. We must take a stand for our national sovereignty.

**International Nurses Day**

Mr CONROY (Shortland) (13:45): Today is International Nurses Day, the 200th anniversary of the birth of Florence Nightingale. To all the nurses out there, I say, 'Thank you, thank you, thank you,' for all that you do for our community. Shortland has thousands of nurses. Australia has 300,000 nurses, and, in fact, I have the privilege of being married to a nurse. So I know how important they are—how every day they get up and look after all their fellow Australians, and how every day they risk their lives to look after Australians. Sadly, we lost 104 nurses in armed conflicts and wars around the world, and they are risking their lives right now with the COVID-19 outbreak. According to the International Council of Nurses, 90,000 healthcare workers have been infected with COVID-19 while treating their fellow human beings and, very sadly, 260 nurses have died around the world due to treating patients who were infected with COVID-19.

Even in this country, we're seeing a lack of PPE. We're seeing nurses and other healthcare workers risk their lives with inadequate PPE. They're risking their lives with homemade PPE. They go to the hardware store to get masks. This is the state of affairs around the world and in some parts of this country. It is unacceptable. Workers should not risk their lives at work. Nurses, sadly, are doing that every day. I want to say to nurses on behalf of the 150,000 people of Shortland: thank you for what you do, thank you for the sacrifice you make and thank you for making our world a better place.

**Stirling Electorate: Coronavirus Care Campaign**

Mr CONNELLY (Stirling) (13:47): Australians look after their mates, whether that's on the battlefield, during the bushfires or right now as we fight the economic and social impacts of coronavirus. Today I want to focus on the people of Stirling and how they came together to serve each other. I and my office staff have found it personally rewarding to have established our Coronavirus Care Campaign, linking locals who want to volunteer with organisations who need support. To date, over 100 people have signed up to the campaign. Well done to Hiten and the team at Dada Bhagwan, who have been delivering free meals to people in self-quarantine and to frontline workers since week one. The local Indian community have continued their passion for service, supported by leaders like Indian Society WA President Supriya Guha and past president Surya Ambati, as well as Jim Seth and Amit Khullar, leading by their personal example of giving. Not-for-profit aged-care provider ECHO Community Services have also ramped up their support services at this time of need. Alongside all of these organisations there have been people who have responded to our call for volunteers under this campaign.

From me, from my team, and, most importantly, from the community of Stirling, we offer you today our very warmest and heartfelt thanks.

**COVID-19**

Ms BIRD (Cunningham) (13:48): Parliament needs to resume a more regular meeting pattern. All members need to be able to bring to the attention of this parliament, as we face an unprecedented national challenge from the pandemic, the concerns and feedback of our local electorates and constituents. Even this week's sitting provides extremely limited opportunities for this to be done. In my electorate, I wish to record feedback, in a constructive way, on issues with people who miss out on the JobKeeper scheme and on the need to understand the pressures on casual and other irregular workers, such as those in the entertainment industry. There are also serious issues in the childcare sector and for our universities. I will try to raise these in the limited opportunities we are provided.

I would like to finish by extending a deep thank you to all the amazing local workers who continue to provide their skills and dedication to our local community. On International Nurses Day, I acknowledge our nurses as well as medical and support staff. I also pay respect to the work of our educators across early education, schools, TAFEs and universities; retail workers; cleaners; transport workers; our mental health, homeless services and family and domestic violence workers; public servants, who are so significant; our union representatives protecting workers in difficult times—so many workers have stepped up, and I thank them. *(Time expired)*
Mr CONAGHAN (Cowper) (13:50): I rise to congratulate four brave rural firefighters from Crescent Head Rural Fire Brigade. Their calm actions during a bushfire saved their friend and senior deputy captain Brian Beilby's life and earned them the commendation of the New South Wales Rural Fire Service Commissioner. Greg Kings, Mary Rogers, Kym Trickett and Cameron Dann received a bravery award on St Florian's day last week. The four heroes were at a bushfire on Seale Road, east of Kempsey, on 27 May last year. At that time Senior Deputy Captain Brian Beilby became unwell, so he rested in the truck while his team inspected the fire. A short time later Mary Rogers checked on the welfare of Senior Deputy Captain Brian Beilby and found he wasn't breathing and had lost consciousness. Ms Rogers immediately called for help and CPR was performed by Brigade Captain Greg Kings and Cameron Dann, and an ambulance arrived to transport Mr Beilby to hospital. Upon reflection, the rescuing RFS members said that they were just keeping calm and dealing with the situation at hand. Well, we know it's a great deal more than that. It is because of their generous hearts and the countless hours of volunteering and building up such skills that they were able to respond calmly during an emergency and save the life of their friend. Thank you, Greg Kings, Mary Rogers, Kym Trickett and Cameron Dann.

Health Care

Ms COLLINS (Franklin) (13:52): If COVID-19 has taught us anything, it's taught us how important our frontline workers are. Today, on the 200th anniversary of the birth of Florence Nightingale, International Nurses Day, I want to say a particular thank you to all of those wonderful nurses out there who are working day in, day out throughout this COVID-19 crisis. A particular big shout-out to the nurses in north-west Tasmania, in what has been a horrific outbreak that they've been dealing with on our north-west coast. A big shout-out also to all the wonderful nurses who work in aged care, particularly those in aged-care homes where we've had COVID-19 outbreaks. We've seen two particularly bad outbreaks in nursing homes in Australia recently. I want to say a very big thank you to all the workers in those facilities who have put themselves on the line day in, day out to care for those residents. It is critically important work, and we need to acknowledge what they have been doing every single day: getting up and doing eight changes of personal protective equipment every time you have to go into the facility or out of the facility or into the COVID-19 wards. It is incredibly time consuming, let alone mentally consuming of these people. We need to say a very big thank you.

I also want to say a big thank you to the other frontline workers who have been helping us during COVID-19: those who have kept our food supply happening, our retail workers, our transport workers, our childcare workers, our teachers, our cleaners and our social and disability workers. We thank you one and all.

Murray-Darling Basin

Mr DRUM (Nicholls—Chief Nationals Whip) (13:53): This morning a long-awaited report into the Lower Lakes by the CSIRO was published. The need to have the origins of Lake Albert and Lake Alexandria investigated was necessary due to earlier scientific work by Professor Peter Gell being altered, albeit slightly, in wording, but quite significantly in its historical classification as either fresh water, estuarine or predominantly sea water. I understand that Professor Gell still has concerns about the recommendations in this report. The classification of the Lower Lakes is critical to the future of the 2½ million Australians who live up and down the entire Murray-Darling Basin. Currently enormous quantities of water are required to flow past Wellington in South Australia to make its way into the Lower Lakes. Some of this water finds its way into the Coorong, and then a large amount of this water finds its way out to sea. However, it is estimated that between 800 and 900 gigalitres—that is, 800 to 900 thousand million litres of fresh water—simply evaporate in the Lower Lakes every year. These Australians understand the value of this evaporated water at around $480 million every year. They understand that if this were made available to the agricultural sector it would see this nearly half a billion dollars multiplied many times over with the growth of so much agricultural produce. This report does not give the agricultural sector the result it was looking for. However, until we see a complete restructure of the Murray-Darling Basin Authority this imbalance of water management, skewed to the environment over agriculture, will continue into the foreseeable future.

Child Care

Ms RISHWORTH (Kingston) (13:55): Free child care for everybody made a headline, even more so when the Prime Minister said all Australians working are considered essential workers. Understandably, families around Australia all assumed they would get free child care. It was certainly a change from the minister, who called Labor's plan to provide more support for early learning at the last election communism. Well, welcome, Comrade Dan. But, like many things this government does, free child care is just an illusion for many. The big fundamental problem is that the government didn't fund free child care. My office has been flooded with calls and emails from early learning services from around the country who are struggling to keep their doors open after their funding has
been slashed. These services are now cutting operating hours, cutting staff and cutting places to try to balance their books. I've heard from many families who are being denied places, including healthcare workers who have been asked to come back early from maternity leave to help in the crisis and are missing out on a childcare place. I have spoken to family day care educators who are now expected by the government to work the same hours for half the pay. And I have heard from early learning centres who have had applications for exceptional circumstances funding rejected with no explanation or justification. The constraint on access to childcare places will be a significant handbrake on the recovery of the Australian economy. How will people be able to go to work when they can't get a childcare place?

**Exports**

Mr ENTSCH (Leichhardt) (13:56): All of us in this chamber have seen the effects of the coronavirus on our respective communities. Our live seafood sector was one of the first hit, and it was hit hard, with the majority of orders cancelled overnight. The Australian government acknowledged this and immediately put into place measures to support our fresh seafood exporters and the thousands of associated local jobs. As Asian markets recently started to reopen, the orders started coming in thick and fast. The government announced a weekly Qantas freight flight from my home city of Cairns to Hong Kong, which will be chock-a-block full of 45 tonnes of seafood sourced from our fishermen. This flight builds on an existing Qantas Sydney-Cairns-Hong Kong weekly flight and its 25 tonnes of freight space. These flights are now locked in for local live lobster and live coral trout, and other fishers across the region will have the certainty that they need to get back to business, knowing that they can get their product to overseas customers once again.

David McAtamney from ISP Fish Market says that he will definitely be using this service to export frozen seafood, including lobster tails, to Hong Kong. ISP Fish Market Cairns has a rich history exporting seafood into Asia. In fact it was the first company to load freight on the inaugural Cathay Pacific flight out of Cairns in 1993. There's no doubt that there's still a long way to go on the road to recovery, but the signs are positive. This announcement certainly gave my region and a critical industry a much-needed boost.

**Health Care**

Mr ALBANESE (Grayndler—Leader of the Opposition) (13:58): Today, 200 years since the birth of the great Florence Nightingale, we celebrate International Nurses Day. In celebrating the work of nurses, I acknowledge the Australian Nursing and Midwifery Federation, the biggest union in this country. I consider myself very fortunate to have a former nurse on my team, Ged Kearney. Nurses and health professionals are at the front line of the fight against coronavirus. Nurses across Australia and the world are risking their health and putting their own lives on the line to protect ours. We will never forget their courage in this time. Of course we also think of those who have lost their lives to the coronavirus around the world. The pandemic has highlighted the care and dedication that nurses provide each and every day, whether in hospitals, surgeries or aged care. Together we recognise their care, their commitment and their compassion. We've all experienced the empathy and professionalism of a nurse. They care for us at home and in hospital, in residential aged care and multiple other settings in our cities and our regions. I acknowledge those nurses who came forward, spoke up and exposed what was happening behind closed doors in powerful testimony to the aged care royal commission. On behalf of the Australian Labor Party, I say thank you to our nurses.

The SPEAKER: In accordance with the standing orders, the time for members' statements has concluded.

**CONDOLENCES**

Causley, Mr Ian Raymond

The SPEAKER (14:00): I inform the House of the death on 27 April of the Hon. Ian Raymond Causley, a member of this House for the division of Page from 1996 until 2007. As a mark of respect to the memory of Ian Raymond Causley, I invite all present to rise in their places.

Honourable members having stood in their places—

The SPEAKER: I thank the House.

Mr Katter interjecting—

The SPEAKER: I know the member for Kennedy was a close friend of Mr Causley. There will be a number of opportunities during the week. Perhaps the Federation Chamber in the adjournment debate tomorrow might be the best place and the longest period of time.
Taylor, Leading Senior Constable Lynette
King, Senior Constable Kevin
Humphris, Constable Glen
Prestney, Constable Joshua

Mr MORRISON (Cook—Prime Minister and Minister for the Public Service) (14:01): on indulgence—When we all heard of the deaths of Leading Senior Constable Lynette Taylor, Senior Constable Kevin King, Constable Glen Humphris and Constable Joshua Prestney in Melbourne last month it sent a shudder, I'm sure, through all of us. We all felt it—not only Victorians but every Australian—because we know those who wear that police uniform, wherever they do it anywhere in the country, stand between us and the harm that can befall any of us. Families of those police officers who serve understand this only too well.

A loss during a time when we're all feeling vulnerable at this point is felt more sharply. They were four police officers doing their duty: keeping the peace, enforcing the law, upholding the community's trust and keeping us safe. In normal times, after such a terrible event and such an awful loss, a city would stop and a state would pause. Today, representing a nation, we do that on behalf of all Australians. These times demand that we don't assemble; they require us to grieve apart, as so many Australians have had to do in recent months. It's one of the hardest things, I have no doubt, during this time of the COVID-19 restrictions. But Australians and Victorians did and still honour Lynette, Kevin, Glen and Joshua. Blue ribbons were placed on front doors, flowers were laid at police stations and 142,000 people left tributes on a memorial page. Melbourne's landmarks shone blue while fire stations across Victoria sounded their sirens, four blasts for four fallen and brave officers. And on their last journeys home, people stood on the sides of roads, officers stood to attention on overpasses and cars pulled over because heroes were passing.

Today, for a few moments here in our nation's parliament, we pause as well to remember Leading Senior Constable Lynette Taylor. She served for 31 years with Victoria Police. She was mother to Nathan and Alexander who, while grieving her loss, must be so proud of her service. Lynette and her husband, Stuart, were building a home down the coast, looking out to Bass Strait. That's where they were going to retire.

Five days before the tragedy, Lynette pulled over an unregistered driver. The driver had forgotten to pay, because she was moving house during this difficult time. She was flustered and distressed. The driver said Lynette was kind, professional and empathetic. After a breath test was administered, Lynette gently said, 'Can you go home and pay for it?'

We remember also Senior Constable Kevin King, who had been with Victoria Police for just six years. He was a father to William, James and Henry. He and his wife, Sharron, had been together for 35 years. Kevin was, in his family's words, 'a big softie who would do anything for absolutely anyone'. And I can think of no better vocation and occupation than what he chose, to be a police officer, to fulfil that promise. He loved the Richmond Tigers, as some in this place do also. And he loved his guitar. He loved to strum in the sun. He turned 50 in February. Sharron and the boys gave him a long-awaited guitar amplifier, even though they feared the family room would be turned into a music studio.

Constable Glen Humphris moved to Victoria to begin his policing career only in 2019. He was doing his probationary training at the time of this terrible incident. Glen was originally from the Central Coast of New South Wales and he had later moved to Newcastle. He loved the outdoors, triathlons, running, cycling and camping. He met his partner, Todd, four years ago. Their first date was on a 30-kilometre bike ride. He moved to Melbourne to support Todd, who was taking up a role with Defence. They were a service family, Victoria Police and our Australian Defence Force, protecting Australia and protecting Australians. Todd accompanied Glen's casket on the long journey back to the Hunter, travelling along the Hume under escort. The cavalcade stopped at the Murray for a repatriation ceremony, where the care of Glen was passed over from the Victoria Police to the New South Wales Police Force, a reminder that there is only one police family in Australia.

And we remember Constable Joshua Prestney, who was 28. He also loved music and had studied a bachelor of creative industries in Melbourne. He liked playing the guitar, but, after seeing how much his brother, First Constable Alex Prestney, loved being a policeman, Josh changed direction. He joined Victoria Police last May and was handed his badge by his brother when he graduated in December. How proud his brother must have been. Those same hands would clutch a flag-draped coffin six months later. The day of the crash was only Josh's second in the highway patrol—so much ahead of him. To his family and his partner, Stacey, he was creative, he was insightful, he was a loving and genuine soul. His parents said of Josh and Stacey:

They were perfect for one another and had made plans for their future together.

And of their own grief Josh's parents simply said, 'We are broken.' So today we are broken with you.
When my father passed away earlier this year, the member for Fowler, Chris Hayes, also the son of a police officer, graciously sent me a copy of the 'Police ode', and I have taken great comfort from it and I hope it will create the same sense for those who have lost their loved ones. It reads thus:

As the sun surely sets:
dawn will see it arise,
for service, above self,
demands its own prize.
You have fought the good fight:
life's race has been run,
and peace, your reward,
for eternity begun.
And we that are left,
shall never forget.
Rest in peace friend and colleague,
for the sun has now set.
We will remember.
We will remember.
Hasten the dawn.

May our brave and dedicated officers rest in peace. We owe them more than we can speak of. And may their families draw great comfort from their country's love.

Mr Albanese (Grayndler—Leader of the Opposition) (14:09): on indulgence—I join with the Prime Minister in paying tribute to these Australian heroes: Constable Josh Prestney, Constable Glen Humphris, Senior Constable Kevin King, Leading Senior Constable Lynette Taylor. Hold on to their names—four names that were joined together as members of Victoria Police, four names that were joined in duty, in service, in honour. But they should never have been joined together in this way these four Australians who signed up to protect us, these four Australians who were just doing their jobs on an ordinary day on an ordinary stretch of the Eastern Freeway, four Australians who went to work but never came home, four Australians with family, with friends, with workmates.

Even in the strangest of times, with the world up-ended all around us, what happened on that bleak April night shook the nation. Victoria Police have never experienced a greater loss of life in a single day, and the blow is felt in the heart of every single person who serves in that force. It is a blow that is felt in every police force and every law enforcement body across the nation. We can scarcely imagine their final moments.

It should never have been this way. Time and again we see our fellow Australians risking themselves for the rest of us, whether it's our firefighters, our medical workers, our defence personnel or our police officers. They know the risks, but they go to work anyway, and for the sake of the rest of us they put their lives on the line.

It was such a cross-section of life that was taken that night. Between them, they spanned the spectrum of a police career. Josh only graduated from the academy late last year, a proud day when his badge was pinned on his uniform by his younger brother, Alex, who is also a police officer. Lynette joined the force in 1989 and along the way had been awarded the National Medal, the National Police Service Medal and the Victoria Police Service Medal. Glen brought with him a lifetime in other fields, including carpentry and sports science, and took to policing like it was just meant to be. And Kevin was described by a colleague as 'an older head with a lot of life experience who always made good judgement calls and decisions.' Such different people united in their desire to serve and to help—to help their colleagues, to help their fellow Australians, to approach the task of enforcing the law with humanity and with empathy.

Each of these four deaths would have affected us. For them to have all been taken together like this has hit the nation hard, and we're hit so hard because we still have that strong sense at the moment that we're all in this together, that we all have a part to play to ensure our society is everything that it can be, that we can be as good as we can be. Glen, Lynette, Kevin and Josh were all a part of that, and even for those of us who did not have the good fortune to have known them personally it is impossible not to feel their absence, a sense that there is now a void where there shouldn't be.

While we grieve for them, we embrace those they have left behind—their families, their loved ones, their mates and that other family each of them had: their colleagues. We can only begin to imagine their sense of loss and shock. For them the world is turned upside down. The grief may soften in time, but it will not fade. I say to them: We cannot fill the hole in your lives. We cannot ease your anguish. We can only offer the consolation that you are
in the nation's hearts. We grieve for you and your loss not just of your loved one but of everything in which they were a vital ingredient. We grieve for the dreams that will not be fulfilled; the music that will not be played; the phone that will not ring; the jokes, the conversations and the quiet moments that will not be shared; that joint elation that will no longer brighten the good times; and the support that will no longer lighten the bad. Expressions of love can only travel in one direction now.

I turn to the words of Glen's partner, Todd Robinson:
… he wore a uniform, but he was a person under that uniform who came home to someone, and that day he didn't.

Our hearts are wide open to all of you—to Todd; to Lynette's husband, Stuart Schultz, and their children, Nathan and Alex; to Kevin's wife, Sharron Mackenzie and their children, William, James and Henry; to Josh's partner, Stacey, his parents, Andrew and Belinda, and his brother, Alex. We will remember you, Josh, Lynette, Glen and Kevin. We will remember you for the lives you lived and the people you were. We give thanks for your service. May you all rest in peace.

Honourable members having stood in their places—

MINISTERIAL ARRANGEMENTS

Mr MORRISON (Cook—Prime Minister and Minister for the Public Service) (14:15): I thank the opposition for their assistance in coordinating the attendance of ministers today. I inform the House that the Minister for Defence Industry will be absent; the Minister for Home Affairs will answer any questions on her behalf. The Minister for Resources, Water and Northern Australia will be absent; the Deputy Prime Minister will answer on his behalf. The Minister for Immigration, Citizenship, Migrant Services and Multicultural Affairs will be absent; the Minister for Population, Cities and Urban Infrastructure as the acting minister will answer on his behalf. The Minister for Decentralisation and Regional Education will be absent; the Minister for Education will answer questions on his behalf. The Minister for Regional Health, Regional Communications and Local Government will be absent; the Minister for Health will answer questions on his behalf. Finally, the Minister for International Development and the Pacific and Assistant Defence Minister will be absent; the Minister for Veterans' Affairs will answer questions on his behalf.

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

COVIDSafe App

Mr BOWEN (McMahon) (14:16): My question is to the Prime Minister. On 15 April, the Prime Minister said that at least 40 per cent of the Australian population would need to download the COVIDSafe app for it to work. Can the Prime Minister update the House on what proportion of the population have downloaded the app and what steps the government has taken to encourage further take-up?

Mr MORRISON (Cook—Prime Minister and Minister for the Public Service) (14:16): That reference was made after some discussions we had with the Singaporean government about the app that had run in Singapore. We had taken, as their gift, the code that had been used for the TraceTogether app, as the shadow minister. I'm sure, is aware. While we have no real target, what is important is that as many people download the COVIDSafe app as is possible, and I thank all members of this place for their cooperation in sending a common message out to Australians that this is one of the key protections that need to be in place, as we go back into our economy and into our society. As restrictions are eased, this is one of the key protections that are in place. Just over 5.6 million people have now downloaded that app. There is a total population of those who could download the app of around 16 million. I will allow the member to do the maths, but it is around one-third of that population that so far has downloaded that app. Recently, I was part of a regular group that is now gathering of what are called 'first movers' around various countries who have had some success in our battle against the virus, and there has been great interest in Australia's success to date with this app. We are only about two weeks down with this app. In other countries, they have been in place—for months in Singapore's case—and still have not reached the levels that we have in Australia.

So we remain confident, as we continue to work together and encourage Australians to download the COVIDSafe app, that we will continue to see those numbers rise and that we will continue to ensure that there are protections in place for Australians as they move around. Australians would have seen the significant investment we have made in those communications plans. People have seen that on their television screens, newspapers and social media. It has been endorsed by important groups, particularly nurses—and we recognise International Nurses Day today—who stood with the minister and the Australian Medical Association president, giving it that strong endorsement.
The tech community has also given it very strong praise when it comes to the safety that's around this app. This is important, because we want this app to work as an invitation to Australians to participate in ensuring that these protections are in place. Particularly now that restrictions are easing, we would further encourage Australians to do this. Many Australians would have been at home and the only people they may have seen were their household family members and the pets. Now, as they go back out into the community, they will come across more people. To protect those people and themselves and their family, I would continue to encourage Australians to download the COVIDSafe app today.

Mr ALBANESE (Grayndler—Leader of the Opposition) (14:20): on indulgence—Just very briefly, to make sure that it's very clear, Labor joins the Prime Minister in calling upon Australians to download the app.

COVID-19: Economy

Dr ALLEN (Higgins) (14:20): My question is to the Prime Minister. Will the Prime Minister outline to the House how the Morrison government is continuing to act on its plan to protect lives and livelihoods from the coronavirus pandemic and its economic effects?

Mr MORRISON (Cook—Prime Minister and Minister for the Public Service) (14:20): I thank the member for Higgins for her question and for her strong advice and encouragement to the health minister and myself and during the course of our response, given her experience in these and many other areas. Can I also acknowledge International Nurses Day today. This is an important day to recognise those who are out there right now protecting all Australians and showing the care that is needed to assist so many, particularly those—although they would be very few in number—in our ICUs today as a result of the response that we've had to the COVID-19 crisis. They are still there and they will be there no matter what the challenge to Australia is on this matter. Ever since the COVID-19 outbreak started, going back to early January, the government has had a very clear plan as to our response. The first point in that plan has always been to fight the virus and to take the medical advice about how we can achieve that.

Together as a country we are winning when it comes to addressing the COVID-19 pandemic here in Australia. With the great cooperation and efforts of the states and territories, we have been able to flatten that curve, we have been able to reduce the growth in the case numbers and, importantly, we have been able to put the protections in place—increased ICU capacity, increased availability of PPE and testing kits and the COVIDSafe app, which I've just been asked about. All of these things provide protection against the COVID-19 virus and have ensured that we are now one of the safest countries in the world when it comes to this virus—certainly among developed countries. Australia's story is one we can be proud of when it comes to responding to this issue. We did that by fighting the virus and ensuring that we took the right steps—from closing borders, to putting the health steps in place, to putting restrictions in place—to ensure that we could get on top of the virus and put ourselves into a good position. And that of course led at the same time to ensuring we extended an economic lifeline right across Australia, through the JobKeeper and jobseeker program, the doubling effectively of the jobseeker payment through the COVID supplement and the cash flow measures that the Treasurer went through today in his statement to the House, providing that important lifeline to get Australians through the worst of this crisis. And then last Friday, and in the weeks that preceded that, the national cabinet moved together with a clear three-step process to reopen the Australian economy. But we must move carefully and cautiously, with states and territories moving at their own pace, and we must not be complacent. The virus is not defeated. It's certainly still out there, and we cannot be complacent and we must remain on our guard. Having done that and in rolling that out, we rebuild the confidence and the momentum and we reset for growth, because it's the growth of our economy that will ensure that we continue to guarantee the essential services Australians rely on, that we get the jobs back in our economy, that we keep Australians safe and that we can look after this amazing country we call our own.

Employment

Mr ALBANESE (Grayndler—Leader of the Opposition) (14:23): My question is to the Treasurer. In what year will unemployment return to pre-coronavirus levels?

Mr FRYDENBERG (Kooyong—Treasurer) (14:23): We, on this side of the House, are doing everything we can to keep unemployment as low as possible. As the Leader of the Opposition is aware, and I made public in my statement today, the forecast from Treasury is that unemployment will reach around 10 per cent. That's a doubling of unemployment in the June quarter. Now, when we came to government, unemployment was 5.7 per cent, but in February it fell to 5.1 per cent. Then the economy was struck by the economic impact of the coronavirus. So we are doing everything we can to maintain that formal connection between employers and employees, the JobKeeper package at $130 billion with 5½ million employers currently covered—

The SPEAKER: I just say that the Treasurer is entitled to a preamble, but the question was very specific so I'll just draw him back to the question.
Mr FRYDENBERG: It will take some time before unemployment comes back to the pre-coronavirus levels. But what I do know is that we are doing everything we can to keep people in a job and businesses in business.

COVID-19: Economy

Mr ALEXANDER (Bennelong) (14:25): My question is to the Prime Minister. Will the Prime Minister update the House on the implementation of the national cabinet's agreed three-step plan to reopen a COVID-safe Australia and economy?

Mr MORRISON (Cook—Prime Minister and Minister for the Public Service) (14:25): I thank the member for Bennelong for his question. Can I also say, at the commencement of this answer, that the three-step plan that was announced last Friday that is now being implemented by the states and territories would not have been possible without the work that was done to put the protections in place from the closing of the borders early in February through to the work that is being done to get access to personal protective equipment, the testing kits, the COVIDSafe app, all of this, but critical amongst that was the amazing discipline and support shown by the Chinese-Australian community. I know the member for Bennelong, as so many represent here, represents those Australians, and their initial lockdown and isolation in response to the COVID-19 virus was something extraordinary and set the tone and example for all other Australians to follow. I know the member for Bennelong would be very proud of his community to that end, as the member for Chisholm would and so many others.

Last Friday we announced the three-step plan, the first step being to carefully reopen our economy, and that process is now well underway as we're allowing gatherings of up to 10 people. This has been a very difficult thing for Australians to live with in recent months, but their patience has paid off and we thank them for that patience as we now move to reopen the Australian economy.

The second step moves to another level of reopening of the Australian economy. That particularly draws on the wisdom and experience of businesses and industry to develop their COVID-safe plans. When Australians are returning to work, as we are here in this place—as we have been working in our own electorate offices or other places around the country but returning to this parliament—COVID-safe arrangements have been put in place. I particularly want to commend the work that has been done by the Minister for Industrial Relations and the Attorney-General, working together with Greg Combet and the COVID commission, to ensure that there are Safe Work Australia guidelines and protocols to be followed to ensure that Australians can return to work in a safe way.

We're seeing children back at school. We're seeing those in-classroom learnings undertaken again as I know the Minister for Education and I are very pleased about. That is the best place for children to learn, in a classroom. We may lose many things throughout the course of this COVID-19 crisis, but we have taken all steps we can to ensure that a year's worth of a child's education is not lost. I welcome the decisions that have been taken by the states and territories.

The third step really goes to the next level of getting us to a place in July where we have a COVID-safe economy, with Australians back in jobs, businesses open again and we are at a whole new level of our economy operating and we'll see more and more Australians in a position to be supported by the economy and not the taxpayer. Because, at the end of the day, this government has no other funds than those provided by the Australian people. We are grateful for that support and the hard work of Australians and businesses who provided that taxation revenue. We will ensure that it's always put to the best possible use in supporting Australians at this time.

Economy

Dr CHALMERS (Rankin) (14:28): My question is for the Treasurer. In what year will Australia's gross debt start to decline?

Mr FRYDENBERG (Kooyong—Treasurer) (14:28): The member for Rankin wants us to announce forecasts tonight that we would normally do on budget night. The reality is there's great uncertainty in the economic environment and therefore when it comes to forecasts about debt and forecasts about unemployment, we make those on budget night. What we have done today is provide a ministerial statement to the House with new numbers for the member for Rankin around business investment, around dwelling investment and around consumption. The member for Rankin was out this morning, asking for a statement with numbers and facts and figures. It was all there for him. The reality is: it's a very difficult economic time and a very uncertain economic time.

Fuel

Mr WILKIE (Clark) (14:29): My question is to the Prime Minister. Prime Minister, Tasmanians are still being ripped off at the bowser. Higher freight costs and little competition don't explain why motorists yesterday paid 30c a litre more in Hobart than in Melbourne or why Tasmanians have paid over $12 million in excess fuel

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costs since March. Yes, the ACCC has looked at it before and will look at it again. But that's meaningless so long as the commission is a toothless bystander. So, Prime Minister, will you be the one to finally fix this? Will your government give the ACCC the power to intervene and to rein in the fuel industry and everyone else, for that matter, who are treating consumers like mugs?

Mr Morrison (Cook—Prime Minister and Minister for the Public Service) (14:30): I thank the member for his question. This is a matter that goes to the ACCC, as he's indicated in his question, so I will ask the Treasurer to respond specifically.

Mr Frydenberg (Kooyong—Treasurer) (14:30): I thank the honourable member for his question. The ACCC monitors petrol prices on a daily basis and can take court action in the event that there is uncompetitive conduct. I can inform the member that between 1 March and 10 May this year petrol prices across Tasmania fell by 21 per cent and by 22 per cent in Hobart. As the honourable member knows, petrol prices in Tasmania are typically around 15c higher than the national average. The ACCC has found that is due to higher transport costs, higher operational costs and higher retail margins. On 16 December last year, the government renewed its direction to the ACCC to monitor the prices, costs and profits relating to the supply of fuel products in Australia for a further three years. I would encourage all Australians to shop around and get the best possible deal.

Regional Australia

Mr Christensen (Dawson) (14:31): My question is to the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Infrastructure, Transport and Regional Development. Will the Deputy Prime Minister inform the House how the Morrison-McCormack government is ensuring regional Australia is in a strong position to recover from the coronavirus pandemic?

Mr McCormack (Riverina—Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Infrastructure, Transport and Regional Development and Leader of the Nationals) (14:32): I thank the member for Dawson for his question. Whenever there is a crisis such as this regional Australia gets hit first and gets hit hardest. That said, regional Australia very much pulls its weight whenever there is a crisis in ensuring that the nation gets through it. Regional Australians are doing their bit. This is anecdotal evidence only, but I know that so many have downloaded the app. People have told me that they're downloading the COVIDSafe app. That is encouraging, and I encourage them to encourage other others to do just that. We've put in place measures to assist rural and regional Australia. Agriculture, infrastructure and resources have continued, despite us being, in many cases, housebound. Rural and regional Australians, those who have been able, have certainly been getting out and helping this recovery effort.

We've put in place the international air freight mechanism and twice-weekly flights of Tasmanian salmon to Taiwan. This $110 million measure has ensured twice-weekly flights of Western Australian rock lobster to China and 25 flights with 42 tonnes of lamb out of Melbourne to markets in Dubai, Kuwait, Jordan, Bahrain, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates.

I know on 21 April the minister for regional communications announced the latest round of the Mobile Black Spot Program. There was $34 million announced, the bulk of which will be announced in round 5A. There's one person who knows how important it is to receive texts, no matter where you are, be it regional New South Wales and someone's farm. If you want to send a text to somebody, it's so important that you can both send that text and, indeed, share it with somebody. I know the value of that. I'm sure that all members in this House understand the value of being able to send, receive and, indeed, share texts.

On the Relief and Recovery Fund, in Wagga Wagga on 28 March I announced the $198 million measure for regional airlines. I know how important that's been to ensure regular flights to those 138 centres which would otherwise have been left literally high and dry, stranded, because of COVID-19. There's also the $100 million underwriting programs which have been so valued by those regionally based airlines. There are tourism projects. I heard the member for Grayndler talk about vulnerable artists. I share that view with him. We need to make sure, particularly for regional Australia, their events and their artists are well protected and well covered. That $1 billion relief and recovery effort is doing just that.

Budget

Mr Albanese (Grayndler—Leader of the Opposition) (14:35): My question is to the Prime Minister. Does the Prime Minister regret saying that the budget was already back in black?

Mr Morrison (Cook—Prime Minister and Minister for the Public Service) (14:35): The Leader of the Opposition may have an ability that I don't have, and that is a crystal ball to see into the future and see that the coronavirus was going to impact on the Australian economy. Every time we have spoken about the economy, we have done it on the basis of the knowledge that we have and the certainties that are present at that time. It was, indeed, the case, as the midyear economic statement showed in December, that that is where the budget was. At
that time, we were already in that position and that's where we were going. I can tell you that the reason we were in a position of having already brought the budget back to balance and being on the way to that surplus was the painstaking work our government did over six years.

This is an important issue. Our government has already demonstrated our ability after major crises to actually do the work and get budgets back into a positive position and ensure that we can get debt down when we're hit by a crisis, as we have been. I remember standing in this place last year when those opposite were encouraging us to spend and spend, and I came to this dispatch box and said, 'We must be careful, because we don't know what can happen in the future and the shocks that the Australian economy may be hit by.'

Well, that's exactly what happened. If we'd followed the prescription of those opposite we would have impaired the budget and we would not have been in the position that the Treasurer and I, and the government, have been in to extend the largest economic lifeline to this country we have ever seen. We were able to do that from a position of confidence, because we have spent six years ensuring that we got the budget under control, that we moved from a time when we inherited from the Labor Party a debt growing—

The SPEAKER: The Prime Minister will resume his seat. The Leader of the Opposition on a point of order.

Mr Albanese: Thank you, Mr Speaker. It was a very clear question—

The SPEAKER: Yes, you just need to go to the point of order and please don't repeat it—we've got it.

Mr Albanese: It goes to relevance. The Prime Minister hasn't answered the question of whether he regrets saying the budget was already back in back.

The SPEAKER: The Leader of the Opposition will resume his seat. Just before I call the Prime Minister: it was a short question, and I note that in the Leader of the Opposition's mind it was very specific. But when you ask about whether you regret something, it's pretty hard for me to curtail the answer. So the Prime Minister is in order.

Mr MORRISON: Thank you, Mr Speaker. The point I was about to make is that when we came to government, our debt was growing at 30 per cent a year. Prior to this crisis we had brought that down back to a growth rate of around zero, and we did that over six years.

But I was asked about regrets. I can tell you one thing, Mr Speaker: the Australian people don't have regrets about what they did on May 19 last year. Because of the decisions and actions that have been taken by this government, we have ensured that we've been able to move through what has been a one-in-a-hundred-year event, and we remain focused on providing the leadership and the direction to ensure that we can continue to do that. We've extended the economic lifeline, and we will be in a position, through our careful economic management, to ensure that we grow our economy and to ensure that we put as little burden on future generations as is absolutely necessary to ensure Australia gets through this crisis.

COVID-19: Economy

Mr ENTSCH (Leichhardt) (14:39): My question is to the Treasurer. Will the Treasurer update the House on the Morrison government's response to the economic impacts of the coronavirus pandemic and outline how the government is building a bridge to recovery?

Mr FRYDENBERG (Kooyong—Treasurer) (14:39): I thank the member for Leichhardt for his question, and acknowledge that in his electorate around half of his local economy is supported by tourism: the Great Barrier Reef and other wonderful national parks. The impact of the coronavirus has been devastating on Australia's tourism sector, not just because the international borders have been closed but also because of the restrictions and limitations on domestic travel. So our thoughts are with the people of Leichhardt, as they are with Australians right around the country.

We are in the midst of a hundred-year event with the coronavirus. It's a health and an economic shock like this country has ever seen before. The fact is that some four million people globally have contracted the virus: 280,000 lives have been lost. In the United States, 80,000 lives have been lost, and in the United Kingdom 31,000 lives have been lost. Tragically, 97 people have lost their lives here in Australia but, through our early response and the wonderful work of our health professionals and our health system, we haven't had the same number of cases as many other comparable nations.

The economic shock has been significant, with the Australian Treasury forecasting GDP to fall by around 10 per cent in the June quarter—the largest fall on record—and unemployment to reach around 10 per cent, a doubling of the unemployment rate. Our response has been comprehensive in scale and in scope and is unprecedented in terms of the amount of fiscal financial support that is making its way into Australian households and Australian businesses.

Our JobKeeper program has seen 5½ million employees to date be covered by those businesses that are formally enrolled in that program. Our cash flow boost, a $32 billion program, has already seen over $8½ billion...
go out the door to nearly 500,000 businesses. Our $750 cash payment has seen $5.2 billion go to seven million Australians on income support—pensioners, people with a Commonwealth seniors health card, disability support pensioners, veterans and those on family tax benefits. We've also given people access to their own money through the super system, and some $11 billion has been accessed, tax-free, by the Australian people. And the progress that was made by the national cabinet to see a gradual easing of restrictions has been estimated to contribute over $9 billion a month to the Australian economy.

So Australians need to follow the health advice and Australians need to get back to work, and that will be good news for the Australian economy.

**COVID-19: Economy**

Ms O'NEIL (Hotham) (14:42): My question is to the Prime Minister. Why does the Prime Minister say the economy will snap back after the coronavirus crisis when the Reserve Bank is forecasting unemployment as high as nine per cent at Christmas?

Mr MORRISON (Cook—Prime Minister and Minister for the Public Service) (14:43): I would have to correct the member. She may not have read the transcript carefully of those comments that were made back in April. What I was referring to was the other side of the six-month period, and that was the change that would need to occur regarding the temporary measures we've put in place for JobKeeper and for businesses to be able to restart. And that is certainly my hope. But back in April there was the knowledge of economic issues as they were at that time, and that has changed since then—there is no doubt about that. Reference is made to the Reserve Bank governor. The Reserve Bank governor was with the Treasurer in Saudi Arabia early this year—

Mr Frydenberg: February.

Mr MORRISON: In February of this year. Even at that time, the full implications of the COVID-19 crisis were not known. Some weeks later the outlook in relation to the nature of the recovery that would occur had changed dramatically—it had gone from a V-shape to a U-shape—and it is still not clear.

The opposition, of course, is at liberty to go back and refer to comments that were made back in April, and that is fine, but they cannot do so without adding the further context of the statements that the government has made since that time, taking into account more recent information.

But I can say this: I am looking forward to the time—and, under our policies, we'll be moving there as quickly as we can—when businesses can reopen, because that is the objective, and when employees can come back into their businesses and when children will be back in all of their schools, getting their lessons in the classroom.

Mr Tehan: That's good news!

Mr MORRISON: That is good news! I know businesses want to be able to do that, to go back into the arrangements they were in before, as soon as they can. That is the point of the reopening of the economy. But I would caution this chamber about getting complacent about the challenge that is still ahead. Australians right now are still facing an economy in which many are without employment, where businesses are still closed. And while it is important to look ahead, right now our government remains very focused—right here, right now—on the needs of Australians and the economic pain they are going through. That's why the JobKeeper program is in place. That's why the jobseeker program is in place. That's why the cash flow assistance is in place. That's why we've relaxed restrictions so that those who have had a shock to their income can access their own savings, their own money, at a time when they really need it, to help them get through. It is a point that I know those opposite disagree with, but it's one that is helping Australians to get through.

Our focus is building that bridge. Our focus has been to work with premiers and chief ministers around the country to have a coordinated plan to get Australia through what is one of our most difficult times. The opposition might want to pick on this word or that word. They are entitled to do those things. They can look at my words. They can look at their own words. They can look at anyone's words. What I'm looking at is the need to get Australians back into work. *(Time expired)*

**COVID-19: Health Care**

Mrs ARCHER (Bass) (14:46): My question is to the Minister for Health. Noting that today is International Nurses Day, will the minister outline to the House how the Morrison government is responding to the coronavirus pandemic to ensure that we are flattening the curve?

Mr HUNT (Flinders—Minister for Health and Minister Assisting the Prime Minister for the Public Service and Cabinet) (14:46): I thank the member for Bass, who has been a great advocate for the health professionals and the nurses in her electorate and around the country. In particular, on this International Nurses Day, we remember and acknowledge the fact that our nurses are there at our birth and so often at our death. They are there at many of the
most profound and important moments in our lives. And they have been there during the course of this pandemic, at the front line of Australia’s response to coronavirus.

When the member asks how Australia has been able to respond, we’ve been able to respond only because of the help, the work, the support and the courage of our nurses, our doctors, our pathologists, our allied health workers, our pharmacists and all of those involved in the protection of our citizens. We’ve been able to respond only because of the contribution of the Australian population, who have themselves taken on board the difficult social distancing measures and the isolation—physically but also sometimes emotionally—and at the same time have backed and supported each other. And we’ve been able to respond because of the national cabinet, which the Prime Minister built, in conjunction with the premiers and the chief ministers, acting as a single national body guiding our actions. Those actions that we have taken as a government have included our containment measures: in particular, our border controls, which began on 1 February with the difficult and challenging closure of the border with China, but it was the right thing to do; our testing, with well over 800,000 tests in what is described by the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine as being at the global forefront of accuracy for global testing; and our containment through tracing and now the work of the COVIDSafe app, which has added to the work of our public health officials and the isolation measures, all coming together.

In terms of our capacity, we have boosted our primary healthcare services. We’ve introduced telehealth, with over 8½ million telehealth services that have supported Australians, who might otherwise have been isolated, whilst protecting our healthcare professionals. We have supported our aged-care workers, who have been absolute heroes during this crisis. When one compares what has occurred overseas with what’s occurred here, it is clear that they have saved and protected lives. And we’ve boosted the capacity of our hospital services: 20,000 nurses have enrolled in ICU training; over 5½ thousand have completed the training, with the rest on their way, and another 3,000 are on their way to returning, with 77 per cent of those having completed their work.

So, today we say to our nurses: we thank you, we honour you. And you, along with others, are the reason Australia has helped flatten the curve.

**COVID-19: Economy**

**Dr CHALMERS** (Rankin) (14:49): My question is to the Treasurer, and it refers to the answer that the Prime Minister just gave about snapback. Given what the Prime Minister has just said, does the Treasurer stand by his comment on 13 March, ‘The Prime Minister was very strong on how there would be a snapback’? They were his words—that the economy would ‘snap back’.

**Mr FRYDENBERG** (Kooyong—Treasurer) (14:50): I stand by all my words, including that the Australian economy is better served by those on this side of the House. The reality is that the Reserve Bank, as recently as last Friday, in its statement on monetary policy said that beyond the next few months the speed and timing of the economic recovery is very uncertain. This uncertainty makes it extremely difficult to formulate reliable economic and fiscal estimates over the next few months.

We are doing everything we can to support the Australian economy by cushioning the blow with an effective doubling of the old Newstart, now the jobseeker payment, and with the JobKeeper program—at $130 billion, the most significant economic lifeline that this country has ever seen. I ask myself: why does the member for Rankin keep talking down the Australian economy instead of joining the BCA, who said that our announcement was a country-saving moment? ACOSs and VCCI and other chambers praised the government’s announcement, as well as Deloitte’s Chris Richardson, who recently said that the JobKeeper payment was a ‘game changer’. We on this side of the House are doing everything we can to keep Australians in jobs and businesses in business.

**COVID-19: Education**

**Ms FLINT** (Boothby—Government Whip) (14:51): My question is to the Minister for Education. Will the minister please update the House on how the Morrison government is ensuring that Australia’s children are getting the best possible education during the coronavirus pandemic?

**Mr TEHAN** (Wannon—Minister for Education) (14:52): I thank the member for Boothby for her question. I know she will be very pleased with the fact that 87.6 per cent of students were at school yesterday in South Australia and 99.2 per cent of childcare services are open in South Australia. That is quite an achievement when you think of where we were two months ago when this pandemic started to hit. The fact that we’ve been able to provide that continuity of education right through the last two months when it comes to child care and when it comes to schools is something this nation should be extraordinarily proud of. When it comes to the approach that the government has taken, what we have done is based all our policies on expert medical advice. We have listened to the AHPPC, and they have said right throughout this pandemic that it’s been safe for our schools to be open, with the right protocols in place, and that it’s been safe for our childcare centres to be open, with the right protocols in place. That’s why we put in place our $1.6 billion Early Childhood Education and Care Relief...
Package, because we wanted to make sure we were providing the assistance that was needed for our childcare sector so that they could remain open throughout this pandemic.

I say to all those early childhood educators who have been in those childcare centres providing that continuity of care, a very big thank you on behalf of the nation. You've made sure, especially for those vulnerable children who needed the continuity of care and for the children of essential workers, that there was a place where they could go: a centre that they knew and that they could get the care that they needed.

When it comes to schools, everyone in this House should also be incredibly pleased to know that every state and territory now has a plan to ensure our schools are open for face-to-face teaching right across this nation. That will occur by early June. Obviously, we're already seeing that in some states, but now, right across the nation, every state and territory has a plan in place for that face-to-face teaching. Once again, that is something we should be incredibly proud of—that we've been able to achieve this, given what we've been hit with in the last two months by this coronavirus pandemic. We are going to make sure that that continuity of education delivers for students not only this year but also in the future, particularly for year 12 students, because we know that they need the certainty to be able to get the ATAR outcome they want and to be able to go on to higher education or vocational education, or to get a job.

**JobKeeper Payment**

Mr STEPHEN JONES (Whitlam) (14:55): My question is for the Treasurer. How many Australians are now earning more than their normal wage because they're receiving the JobKeeper subsidy of $1,500 per fortnight?

Mr FRYDENBERG (Kooyong—Treasurer) (14:55): I will have to take that question on notice because I don't have that number available. What I can tell the honourable member is that we decided on a flat $1,500 payment because—and it was a very Australian way to do it—we didn't want to see a situation where, if you earned more, you would get a greater payment. That is unlike the United Kingdom scheme. I was advised by the Treasury of the limitations of that scheme. At $130 billion, this is a very significant support for the economy at a very difficult time.

**COVID-19: Industry**

Mr VAN MANEN (Forde—Chief Government Whip) (14:56): My question is to the Minister for Industry, Science and Technology. Will the minister please update the House on how Australian industry is responding to the challenge of the coronavirus pandemic and how industry is benefiting from the JobKeeper payment?

Mrs ANDREWS (McPherson—Minister for Industry, Science and Technology) (14:56): I thank the member for his question. The coronavirus pandemic has presented challenges on an unprecedented scale for Australian industry. Their resilience has been absolutely outstanding. Australian industry have been able to respond to the rapidly changing situation because they have been backed and supported by a range of measures, most importantly our JobKeeper payment. The member for Forde would be pleased to know that in our home state of Queensland we have the wonderful example of Packer Leather, a fifth-generation Australian business, a family business, a manufacturing business. They are delighted that the JobKeeper payment has meant that they are able to keep their 100 local staff. This company was established in 1891, so they have survived the Spanish flu, two world wars, the Great Depression, the rise of plastics, foreign competition, offshore manufacturing and a number of recessions. Today, that company is an international leader in the production of high-quality and innovative performance leathers, with a reputation for quality and innovation. They're a great example of the Australian fighting spirit and the sort of businesses that the JobKeeper payment is assisting.

Since the crisis began, I've been working with Australian industry, holding a number of roundtables and speaking directly with CEOs from right across Australia. Our underlying goal has been to ensure that as many businesses as possible continue to keep Australians in jobs, and the JobKeeper payment has been vital to that.

Beyond that, our priority has been to make sure that supply chains are secure and that we can maintain vital supplies and services. We've seen factories working around the clock to restock supermarket shelves. We've seen manufacturers pivot and adapt to produce the essential medical supplies that we need, including gowns, masks, gloves and sanitisers. We've seen the Australian business community act as one, leaving rivalry and their own economic interests at the front door as they put the nation first. It's been both our duty and our privilege to support them with the JobKeeper payment. We've been able to deliver that because of our strong economic management.

You will find the frontline heroes of Australia's coronavirus response in our hospitals, but backing them at every step have been industry and workforce heroes. You will find them on the farm and on the factory floor. You'll find them in the cab of a truck and behind the supermarket checkout. For their dedication during this crisis we say: thank you. We are proud to back you during this challenging time. You are vital to Australia's post-COVID recovery.
COVID-19: Employment

Ms PLIBERSEK (Sydney) (14:59): My question is to the Treasurer. What does the Treasurer have to say to the one in three hospitality workers who've lost their jobs, the one in four workers in the arts and entertainment industries who've lost their jobs, the up to 11,000 casual workers in Eden-Monaro who can't access JobKeeper, the 21,000 university workers who are likely to lose their jobs over the coming months and the thousands of workers at dnatrait whose jobs are at risk and who are now facing the unemployment queue because the government won't extend the JobKeeper wage subsidy to more workers?

Mr FRYDENBERG (Kooyong—Treasurer) (15:00): This is a very difficult time for Australians and a very, very difficult time for the Australian economy. It's a devastating global pandemic with a major economic shock. As a result, this government has acted decisively and comprehensively with $320 billion worth of economic support—equivalent to 16.4 per cent of GDP.

When it comes to the JobKeeper program, the forecasts were for around six million people to access it. As the Prime Minister has said to the House, and as I've said today, currently, based on the 800,000-plus businesses that have formally applied to the JobKeeper program, that covers around 5½ million Australian workers. As I said in my ministerial statement, more than a million people are on the jobseeker payment. As the honourable member will know, we've effectively doubled the previous support through Newstart with a $550 jobseeker coronavirus supplement.

These are temporary, these are targeted and these are proportionate measures. When it comes to the JobKeeper program, when it comes to the cash flow boost, when it comes to the early access to superannuation and when it comes to the $750 cash payment we've seen more than $25 billion go out the door. The secretary to the Treasury, well known to those opposite and respected by both sides of this House, said to the COVID Senate committee that the money is running out remarkably quickly, and that is the point. We are doing everything we can through the existing systems to get the financial support to the people who need it most.

Australian Bushfires

Dr GILLESPIE (Lyne) (15:02): My question is to the Minister for Agriculture, Drought and Emergency Management. Will the minister provide an update to the House on the Morrison government's continued support for bushfire affected communities, noting any additional challenges to these efforts?

Mr LITTLEPROUD (Maranoa—Minister for Agriculture, Drought and Emergency Management and Deputy Leader of the National Party) (15:02): Despite the challenges of COVID-19, the government and the Bushfire Recovery Agency have not forgotten those victims in this summer's bushfires. We've continued to work, and yesterday we committed the last $650 million of the $2 billion recovery fund. That's in addition to those relief payments that were put out immediately—the $1,000 per adult and $400 per child, which we doubled. In fact, proudly, that program that we administered through the Department of Human Services was able to be done for the majority of those people, getting it in their pockets within 40 minutes—something that I think we as Australians should be very proud of—to help those in their time of need to get money into their pockets.

Yesterday, we took the next step. What we're also proud of is that, as of yesterday, we had spent $537 million of the $2 billion. That has come out of the Australian government's pocket and been put into the victims' pockets. We said we would only have $500 million spent by 30 June, but such is the demand and need that we have continued to work with the states in a collaborative way to get this money out. We expect that, by 30 June, we will have probably spent over $1 billion of that $2 billion fund. That will be out of the government's pocket and into those victims' pockets. That's something that we as a government and we as a nation should be proud of—that we're there to support those in their time of need. Yesterday was a strategic move around moving from immediate relief to long-term recovery. The centrepiece of that was a nearly $450 million investment in local economic recovery plans.

This recovery cannot be Canberra-led; it has to be led locally, and that's what we're trying to do. We're trying to empower those communities with the tools to do that. Let them decide what building back better looks like—not someone from Canberra, Sydney or Melbourne but somebody that's ensconced in that community, somebody that's living and breathing it. We've said to those communities that we are there to help.

We've also invested nearly another $150 million in the environment on top of the $50 million that we put out in emergency funds to help those injured species straight after the fires. We're now going to rebuild their habitat. We're also looking to improve telecommunications, with $27 million worth of improved telecommunications. We found there were gaps during the bushfires. It's important we acknowledge that, work with telcos and try to make it better for the future to protect more Australian lives.
There is $15 million for the forestry industry, which has probably been hit harder than most. In understanding the forestry industry, you just don't plant a tree and are able to harvest it within 12 months; it takes 20-plus years. So we needed to give them support to get them through.

One of the most important aspects of this package is the top-up to mental health. There is $13½ million to have locally targeted mental health programs for those communities that have been impacted. People across the fire zone are healing at different stages, and we need to understand that and tailor that. But we need to say to them that there should never be a stigma to ask for help. This nation and this parliament will stand with you in your economic but also your emotional recovery.

**JobKeeper Payment**

Ms CHESTERS (Bendigo) (15:05): My question is to the Treasurer. How much money has the government given to businesses which are receiving the JobKeeper payment and using it to subsidise their balance sheet, whilst employees are running down their leave entitlements?

Mr FRYDENBERG (Kooynong—Treasurer) (15:06): With respect to the honourable member's question, the whole purpose of the JobKeeper payment is to keep people in work by reducing the cost of labour. It is helping businesses at a very difficult time. It's maintaining the formal connection between the employee and the employer. More than $2 billion has already gone out the door under the JobKeeper payment and more will go out in coming weeks.

**Australian Bushfires**

Mr WALLACE (Fisher) (15:06): My question is to the Minister for the Environment. Will the minister please outline to the House the work that the Morrison government is doing to restore Australia's native wildlife and their habitats following the devastating bushfires?

Ms LEY (Farrer—Minister for the Environment) (15:07): I thank the member for Fisher for his question and for his advocacy for his electorate. He introduced me to the fabulous Terri Irwin from Australia Zoo on a visit in January. I know that she is standing by for our zoos and aquariums package, which is designed to help organisations that exhibit native wildlife, and I know she was talking about opening her zoo in a COVID-safe manner. The jobs, the communities and the activities that are deeply and inextricably linked with our natural environment are certainly front and centre when it comes to the announcements that the Morrison government has made this week. Notwithstanding the pandemic, we've not forgotten the savage impact of the bushfires on our native wildlife and landscapes, with 12 million hectares burnt. In January the Treasurer and I announced $50 million for emergency rescue and recovery but we said that it was a down payment and that more would come. The Morrison government this week has fulfilled that commitment with a further $150 million to do the heavy lifting when it comes to the rehabilitation and long-term recovery of our natural landscapes. This will be delivered through partnerships with land managers, community groups, seed banks, conservation volunteers and Indigenous Australians—all dedicated to on-the-ground recovery action. It will be science led. An expert panel led by our Threatened Species Commissioner has been meeting quietly and confidently. They've listed 119 animals and 471 plants. Through that lens, this fund will be dedicated to recovery.

Before COVID, on the South Coast, I met with environmental rangers connected with their local natural resource management groups to discuss the work they're doing in weed management, cultural burning and rehabilitating coastal saltmarsh and with oyster farmers on the Clyde River affected by silt which is flowing into the river but which will be restricted now with the work that is being done to prevent erosion. The Deputy PM and I drove through a shattered landscape from Holbrook to Jingellic. That patchwork of farms in the bush will be helped by this package. We remain committed to helping protect and support the long-term recovery because we know that by caring for our natural environment we're also caring for the communities and the economies that rely on it. Our response will help secure the future of treasured native species such as the koala, the Kangaroo Island dunnart, the northern corroboree frog and amazing plants like the Wollemi pine, banksias and bottlebrushes, and our World Heritage areas in the Blue Mountains and the Gondwana Rainforests.

As I said, the natural world is inextricably linked with the communities that depend on it, and we are here for both.

Mr Morrison: Mr Speaker, I ask that further questions be placed on the *Notice Paper*.

**STATEMENT BY THE SPEAKER**

Department of Parliamentary Services

The SPEAKER (15:10): I've got a very brief statement to inform members of something they should know about. I'm pleased to advise the House that, obviously along with a number of other agencies, the Department of Parliamentary Services has worked with Services Australia to redeploy 55 DPS staff who are available to help in
the national effort. Amongst other things, they are processing the many thousands of jobseeker payment claims. Having received full training from Services Australia at its Tuggeranong office, the DPS staff are currently processing around 200 claims a day. A number of Hansard staff have also been seconded to the Department of Health to assist with accurate and timely messaging, which they're good at.

I'm also pleased to advise that DPS has worked collaboratively with Services Australia to establish a satellite processing centre here in Parliament House. Currently 32 staff are working out of the Enid Lyons Alcove and the Sir Richard Baker Room. That space is available because our dining rooms and the alcoves are closed. The remaining staff who are working at Tuggeranong will return to work with them within the next week. This centre at Parliament House is important because it provides flexibility to process the jobseeker claims. Any DPS staff who need to suspend their work to go and do work of the parliament are able to do that and return to their duties and keep everything moving here.

DOCUMENTS

Mr PORTER (Pearce—Attorney-General, Minister for Industrial Relations and Leader of the House) (15:12): 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.

Commonwealth Ombudsman

Mr ALBANESE (Grayndler—Leader of the Opposition) (15:13): This would normally have been budget day, and we well recall that day, one year ago, when the government declared that the budget was 'back in black'—not that it would be but that it was, as a statement of fact. What we saw from that point on, as we had seen in the preceding years, was a government that didn't have a plan for the economy. Post May 2019, they engaged in a victory lap, running around thinking how good they were, telling us how well the economy was going and being totally complacent about the need to keep their eye on the ball. What we saw was a doubling of debt under this government. We saw stagnant wages, we saw incredible prices, and when, overall, the global economy was powering along, they still doubled the debt. We saw stagnant wages, we saw business investment down and household debt up, we saw consumer confidence down, we saw productivity actually going backwards and we saw, in response to that, nothing but complacency. There they were with their 'Back in Black' mugs, congratulating themselves while they were treating the Australian public like mugs, as they have ever since, because they had no plan going into this crisis and they clearly have no plan going out.

The fact is that the Australian people during this crisis have answered the call. I pay tribute to the nurses, the cleaners, the supermarket workers, the public transport workers—all those people who in an age of celebrity have just gone about their jobs. People don't know their names. People do know, though, that we have all relied upon them. And it's about time they were treated with respect by this government, because this pandemic, if it's shown anything, has shown that Labor's values of fairness, of security, of the power of government to make a positive difference in people's lives are the right ones in a crisis and they are the right values for the recovery, because, as the Prime Minister says from time to time, we are indeed all in this together.
But what we actually have from this government is the idea of snapback, and what snapback means is cutbacks. The idea is that the economy can just snap back to where we were: snap back to insecure work, snap back to stagnant wages, snap back to contracting out essential services, snap back to a time where we ignore the need to have an energy policy or to have a climate change policy in this country, snap back to a time where people were paid $40 a day trying to seek work even though the government has acknowledged that that simply wasn't good enough and that that's why they had to introduce the jobseeker payment.

We saw in their narrative again today a dismissal of the role that Labor played in saving Australia from the last time there was a crisis: the global financial crisis, when Labor invested to keep us out of recession. Unlike the rest of the world, which was going negative and where millions of people lost their jobs, here in Australia we kept the economy going forward. The fact is that we present vision statements and they present a rear-vision view of the world. Back, back, back is what they want.

The fact is we can emerge from this crisis with strength, can increase work security and can learn the lessons which are there. All those people who are working from home are changing the nature of work, boosting productivity and increasing the quality of life for individual workers, and we can deal with issues like urban congestion by taking cars off the road. These are the sorts of issues that we should be discussing at this time. There is the need to drive manufacturing. We need to increase Australian capability. We shouldn't have been in a situation whereby we didn't have personal protective equipment for healthcare workers and essential workers, but we were there. We're seeing the price of this government begging the car industry to leave this country: the loss of innovation, the loss of investment in skills, the loss of investment in capital.

The fact is that they also have said to us during this crisis that one of the reasons why we are doing better than many countries is that we're listening to the science. Who knew? We're listening to the science and listening to experts. Well, we need to listen to the science all of the time, not just sometimes. And they've discovered valuing early childhood education. A policy that they dismissed as communism during the last election campaign they have now adopted, but only for a brief period of time. We need to support pay and giving our people the skills for the jobs of the future. We need a safety net that doesn't consign people to poverty.

Labor has not been and will not be obstructionist. Contrast our actions with the actions of those opposite during the global financial crisis. We can have a bit of an insight into what they would do if the positions in the chamber were reversed: have a look at the behaviour and opportunism of the Victorian Liberal opposition. Have a look at other Victorian Liberal federal members here: Minister Tehan and his angry meltdown on the Insiders program, accusing Dan Andrews of taking a sledgehammer to the education system. Of course, he had to withdraw just a couple of hours later with so much egg on his face you couldn't tell the bloke from the yolk!

The fact is that this government has a whole bunch of Victorian backbenchers—there's another one: the member for Deakin. The member for Higgins referred to flu as killing more people than the coronavirus. At a time when the whole government was saying that we needed to give people the message about being responsible, that was her position. And then we had, of course, the member for Goldstein, who said about the Victorian Premier:

… he's probably enjoying the clampdown too much …

That's what he said. People have died. They have families. People have lost their jobs. People are isolated, and the response is that the Victorian Premier is enjoying the clampdown. That's the response that we've seen from those opposite.

The fact is it contrasts greatly with the way that we have engaged responsibly. We have supported each of the stimulus packages. We have suggested wage subsidies even when they opposed them. We have supported increased support for mental health. The shadow minister for health has been out there making practical suggestions. The shadow Treasurer has been out there making practical suggestions; making a difference; looking for solutions, not arguments; and making sure that the principle of no-one held back and no-one left behind is at the core of this issue. But the fact is some people have been left behind: casuals, workers at dnata, visa holders—many people who've just been forgotten during this crisis.

The fact is we want an economy that works for people, not the other way around. That's why we're putting forward practical suggestions on housing through our shadow minister, the member for Blaxland. During this period our homes have been a fortress, and housing can help our recovery as well. The alternative is that it's about to drop off the cliff in three months time, and those opposite are completely oblivious to this. What we need is a package that supports social and affordable housing. You have industry getting together with unions all calling for this. During this crisis as well, when they needed it, their anti-union rhetoric stopped. But wait for it to start up again; wait for the old class war rhetoric to be cranked up. The fact is unions and business do have common interests, and we've seen the trade union movement work during this crisis to ensure that people are kept safe, that people are allowed to stay in their jobs and the economy's kept going forward.
Mr SUKKAR (Deakin—Assistant Treasurer and Minister for Housing) (15:23): It was much better with a teleprompter than what we just saw, what was just delivered then—I thought that was one of the more remarkable aspects of yesterday. It’s clear—there’s no doubt—that most countries around the world look at Australia and what we’ve been able to achieve with some envy. There’s no doubt that in his discussions with world leaders that the Prime Minister has had those world leaders asking us: what have we done?

Of course this MPI is predominantly focused on the economy, but there’s no way we can discuss the state of the economy, where we’ve been, where we’re going, without reflecting on the health achievements. Because the devastation we have seen in the economy, the devastation to businesses, to individuals and to families from an economic let alone a health perspective has been driven by something that nobody saw even months ago. Even at the beginning of this year when we were returning from summer, preparing for a new parliamentary year and families preparing for the year ahead—whether that was school, whichever prospects they had in their jobs, their businesses, their lives and their holidays planned—nobody could have foreseen what we have faced.

It was only a few weeks ago that things, I think, looked extraordinarily grim. As we looked at the experience of other countries from a health perspective, getting on top of the health issue was the only way that we were going to be able to chart a strong path back to economic recovery, and that’s what we’ve done. The opposition leader talks about being cooperative, but it absolutely kills him to come out and acknowledge that fact. In fact, he didn’t do it for 10 minutes. He did not once acknowledge that Australia by any measure has done almost as well, if not better, as any other country that’s faced what we have faced. And it’s because of the decisions of this government working cooperatively through the national cabinet process, the genesis of which was the Prime Minister’s foresight to bring governments around the world—a single table to make those decisions. Not once was that acknowledged by the Leader of the Opposition, yet that is the bedrock for the economic recovery that we will be charting.

The immediate issues that individuals, families and businesses are facing are still the focus of the government. There’s no doubt in question time that we saw a whole lot of fairly petty questions—what date, what time will this happen into the future—when people are still grappling with challenges now. We are six weeks into a significant health and economic challenge, and I think it’s worth reflecting on what we’ve done.

We’ve obviously spoken a lot about the JobKeeper package. As the Treasurer said in question time, 5½ million employees covered by about 800,000 businesses are now utilising that scheme to remain in business, maintain where they are unable physically to conduct business, as there are many, and maintain a connection with employees who aren’t able to work. We’ve already seen $25 billion flow to households. In addition to the $130 billion JobKeeper, we’ve had a $750 payment go to retirees and other recipients of government benefits. They will be in receipt of a second payment providing those families with the immediate support they need. We have put in place a cash flow boost for small business and, again, we have seen billions of dollars paid out to small businesses to help them keep afloat—a minimum of $20,000 up to $100,000 for small businesses. So whether it’s vulnerable households with direct payments, whether it’s small businesses with the lifeline of direct grants from the government through the cash flow boost or whether it’s the JobKeeper package, there is $130 billion to maintain that connection between employees and businesses that can’t operate. It also acts as a very strong wage subsidy for those businesses that have continuing operations but have seen, in the case of small and medium businesses, a 30 per cent downturn in their total turnover, or, in the case of large businesses, a 50 per cent downturn in their turnover.

These are three incredibly important measures that complement the health response. The health response, whether it’s sourcing PPE or sourcing hundreds of thousands of tests, has all been conducted and funded cooperatively through the national cabinet process but more often it’s funded directly by the federal government, which has enabled the health outcomes that I speak about. We now have ICU capacity that gives states and territories the comfort that they need to reopen their economy or certainly to start the process through the staged process that the federal government, through the national cabinet, outlined last week.

In addition to all of that, early on we saw the need to improve the social safety net for those people who, through no fault of their own, were going to be left without a job and left without an employer who would be able to avail them of JobKeeper, and that was the coronavirus supplement, which, as the Prime Minister outlined today in parliament, effectively doubled jobseeker to the over a million people who are now receiving that payment of approximately $1,100 a fortnight. Again, that is another part of this government’s plan to ensure it’s good for individuals and it’s also good economics.

Making sure we support those households, those individuals, those small businesses, those large businesses, those employees who maintain a connection with their business is, in the end, a huge impost on the Treasury coffers—the Treasurer referred to $320 billion—but that will repay dividends in spades. I think there’s good evidence to show that Australia will be in a very good position in comparison to other countries when we come
through this global pandemic, which, quite frankly, has affected every single one of our major trading partners in a similar way to varying degrees.

We've also put in place additional measures that will help in the recovery, including the instant asset write-off expansion and the support for apprentices and trainees that we're providing. Quite early in the coronavirus pandemic we saw how devastating it would be for an apprentice who's part way through their apprenticeship, who's done the hard yards, whether they're in their first year or their fourth year, and who, through no fault of their own, would have almost the entire future direction of their career potentially devastatingly impacted by COVID-19. Putting in place that $1.3 billion subsidy for apprentices builds on all of the other measures that I've outlined. Those measures, in the end, will be good economics for this country—a huge impost now but a huge investment into the productive capacity of the Australian economy. I am confident that Australia, an outward-facing, trading economy, will ensure that that productive capacity, whether it's in our SME space or an individual skill set or in the economy more broadly, will be in a better position to take advantage of the inevitable opportunities that have come from this extraordinarily difficult time in the global economy.

I say to members opposite: at times your criticisms would carry more weight if you acknowledged the outstanding work that's been done and if you acknowledged the integral role and leadership that the Prime Minister and this government have provided. It's been the bedrock that has made Australia the envy of the rest of the world. When the Leader of the Opposition sits there criticising a state government opposition, he sounds awfully like the opposition that he's criticising, and he did that even without a teleprompter!

**Mr STEPHEN JONES** (Whitlam) (15:33): Can I extend our sincere apologies to the minister, who claims that he has not yet received enough praise from the Labor opposition—our sincere apologies! Can I say to the minister that, when praise has been deserving, it's been given. But, with a million Australians out of work and thousands of businesses closing their doors, with Australians not knowing whether they're going to have a job at the end of the year, what this country needs is not a cheer squad. It needs a parliament, it needs an opposition, it needs a plan for the future, and it has none of this.

What this country needs is competent administration. It requires an open and transparent government and a vision for the future that's been done and if you acknowledged the integral role and leadership that the Prime Minister and this government have provided. It's been the bedrock that has made Australia the envy of the rest of the world. When the Leader of the Opposition sits there criticising a state government opposition, he sounds awfully like the opposition that he's criticising, and he did that even without a teleprompter!

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What this country needs is competent administration. It requires an open and transparent government and a vision for the future that's been done and if you acknowledged the integral role and leadership that the Prime Minister and this government have provided. It's been the bedrock that has made Australia the envy of the rest of the world. When the Leader of the Opposition sits there criticising a state government opposition, he sounds awfully like the opposition that he's criticising, and he did that even without a teleprompter!
What this country needs at the moment is not a cheer squad but a plan for the future. It needs competent administration and it needs parliament to be open so that we can put the spotlight on the failures of this government. Yes, we'll praise it when it gets it right, but our job is to ensure that the Australian people get the government and the parliament they deserve. (Time expired)

Mr HOWARTH (Petrie—Assistant Minister for Community Housing, Homelessness and Community Services) (15:38): It's great to be back in parliament and be able to speak today. A lot of Australians are doing it tough right now, more than ever before. The coronavirus is unprecedented in our lifetime. We've never seen anything like this current health crisis. The Morrison government is acting to ensure that all Australians are supported through this crisis. We've seen firsthand how the government is managing the economy in the interests of all Australians. We're seeing that right now, beginning with the effective management of our current health crisis.

Australia's position, of course, is the envy of the world. We know that Australia and some other countries, like Taiwan, are doing exceptionally well. Australia, with its low death rate, low infection rate and high testing rate is brilliant. But what the Prime Minister has said to me and others is that, while that's good, in order to really measure success we need to maintain that great health record and open up the economy. The Australian government, of course—and the Prime Minister, working within the National Cabinet—has shown strength and acted efficiently and effectively to deliver, for Australians, best international practice. The government hasn't left people behind. We've seen massive investment, some $320 billion, to keep Australians in jobs and connected with their employers, keeping businesses in business, supporting households and keeping investment flowing. These measures of course include the JobKeeper payment, which keeps employees connected with their employers, because without that payment so many more people—tens of thousands or hundreds of thousands more—would have been looking for work.

The jobseeker payment has helped so many people who, for the first time in their lives, have actually been looking for work and dependent on government. These are people who have never depended on government before, who have been getting on with their life, raising their family, paying off their house and working hard, and who, through no fault of their own or their employer's, have found themselves without work.

We've supported the community with things like the Community Support Package, with emergency relief for food, petrol and all sorts of things. I was down at Encircle in my electorate of Petrie the other day, with the driveway service, loading parcels into cars for people who haven't used that service before—and I'm not talking about homeless people. In relation to homelessness, of course, we invest over $1.6 billion a year through the states and territories. I must say the states and territories have done a great job in helping people to be housed, particularly those people at risk of coronavirus—people who are in boarding houses, sleeping rough or in overcrowded situations. And don't forget Commonwealth rent assistance. We invest over $4½ billion a year there.

When I talk to people in my electorate, the feedback they give me is important, and I'm listening. Any good federal member should. Ryan Elson said today: 'I think the federal government, on the whole, is doing a great job. We need to have business return as soon as possible, though. In our future, less reliance on overseas manufacturing is a must and we must return to manufacturing in Australia.' Today, the Minister for Industry, Science and Technology spoke about Packer Leather, in my electorate, which employs some 100 people. I think also of Ty Hermans, a man who lives in my electorate. Ty runs Evolve Group, which is reshoring manufacturing from China back here. Evolve currently makes PPE equipment and Seabins. The Seabin is a new product now being manufactured at Evolve. They go to cleaning up our oceans, collecting plastic and so forth. I've just installed three of them at Newport Marina.

Here is another comment, from Ian Leslie: 'Given the circumstances, the Australian government is doing a great job. Yes, there is a lot of spending, and we can build our way out of it by Australian programs.' Christine Standfast says: 'We need to open businesses that can. This 10-person hospitality venue is too restrictive.'

Not only do we need to listen to health professionals; we also need to listen to our businesses about how they can make their businesses COVID-safe, so we can open up the economy as quickly as possible and get people back to work. I'm so proud of my electorate, the people in it and what they've done. I put that on the record.

Ms KEARNEY (Cooper) (15:43): There are competing views about what a post-COVID economic landscape will look like. There is the back-to-the-way-it-was scenario, held by the government. Whether this is a snapshot or a slow return seems to be in debate amongst those opposite, but they definitely want to go back. But there is another view, which is that COVID-19 has changed our world fundamentally and will change, in significant ways, the way we work, invest and develop. The Leader of the Labor Party yesterday outlined a vision for this country, a vision of what could be with the right will and policies. The shadow Treasurer today spoke of an opportunity to ask what sort of country we want in this next stage of our history, post the COVID crisis. Both speak of hope and
the opportunity to build a better future, not going back to what we know was a world of anxiety, underemployment, insecure work and an economy being put in reverse, where inequality was growing.

Our Labor leader has defined a new view to build a better future, putting everyday people at its heart. It's a view that governments have a role to play in steering that future. Those opposite do know there is a role for government in pulling levers to drive the economy. We know they know because they've done just that during this crisis. They've worked with the opposition and trade unions to work out what the levers have to be, because it's not in their DNA to even begin to understand that type of response. We were happy to help.

It isn't perfect. We've highlighted the significant shortfalls with the jobseeker and JobKeeper schemes—about those tragically left without support. I notice that the previous speaker, the member for Petrie, did not mention the workers at Dhata—many of which are in his electorate—who have been tragically left out. We worry about the future under this government—that this new-found role for government in supporting incomes and livelihoods will evaporate in an ideological cloud.

The Leader of the Opposition has said that the crisis should change our social and economic priorities. It has shown us the importance of focusing on skills and training, supply chain diversity, research and development, commercialisation of ideas, advanced manufacturing with local markets, regional development, social housing, retirement, social income and, so importantly, job security, decent work with decent conditions and of course the support of the unions that look after their members. This vision is not fanciful.

In the northern suburbs of Melbourne, around Geelong and in many other places we have hundreds of small, innovative, brave manufacturers. Many are exporting. Manufacturing still employs around 900,000 Australians. They're good jobs. But there could be many more. With proper collaboration between universities and companies, with incubators and investment funds, with real assistance for exporters and with procurement policies we could double the size of our manufacturing sector. But governments at all levels have to believe in it and have the courage to act—the courage for change.

Social housing projects will see the sustainability of the construction industry and more jobs. The crisis has shattered businesses and people's incomes. It has highlighted the fragile nature of the workforce. That's why a focus on skills, a return to decent jobs and the jobs compact will be a key requirement. If we are to maintain social cohesion and have a workforce able to build the infrastructure of the future, then the unemployed, older workers needing to re-enter the workforce and others will need real support. As a nurse, I particularly welcome the view of our leader that we need to have decent jobs in the public sector, including in the rapidly growing health and welfare sector. We've seen in the crisis the importance of these jobs.

I'd like to thank everyone in this House, including the Prime Minister, the Leader of the Opposition and so many of my colleagues, for their thoughts and condolences during a very difficult time for me and my family. It meant a lot to us. I thank you. My father-in-law, Mike, died of coronavirus. He was a thoughtful and wonderful man. We saw firsthand the role that nurses played in caring for him and others affected by the virus. Today is International Nurses Day, and I want to send a big thank you to all the nurses.

We've seen in this crisis that jobs like nursing are essential. They're not second-rate jobs. They're not just add-on jobs for women to work part-time for a bit of extra money. They are real, critical and economy-stabilising jobs. The looming problem for our social and economic transformation will be the political battle to come and how we view things like the care industry. The conservatives amongst us will want austerity, deregulation, lower wages, fewer environmental and workplace protections, and a host of other changes. We on this side of the House have a vision that we can build a better future.

**Dr ALLEN** (Higgins) (15:48): I rise today to speak on the very important subject that the government must manage the economy in the interests of all Australians. Well, it's a good thing we are. I don't need to explain to you, Mr Deputy Speaker, that we are currently fighting a war on two fronts—the public health of the nation, including ensuring the mental health and wellbeing of individuals is cared for and considered, and the economic impacts of a shutdown that we had to have and that has protected our nation's health. To make a successful and prosperous nation you must have a strong and solid economy. You need consumer confidence in the markets, strong trading partnerships internationally and a mix of small, medium and large enterprises that support a strong workforce. As John Howard once said, 'You can't fatten a pig on market day.' During successive Liberal-National governments we have balanced the budget and we've ensured that when times get tough there is enough in the bank to help us all survive, and survive we will. The swift and decisive action of the Morrison government meant that protections were in place for the economy when they were needed. The JobKeeper package offered to businesses to help them to ensure that they endure the shutdown means that they will still be there when our society resumes, when we are back eating at cafes and in restaurants, visiting clothes stores and going to the gym.
In my electorate of Higgins I have had hundreds, if not thousands, of emails and phone calls thanking the Morrison government for the JobKeeper program. Small business owners, whose work is their passion, are the best people to run their businesses. They have put in the long hours, employed people in our community and given their all. Often the margins are slim, the rent is high and it costs a lot to keep the lights on, but they keep going because they are committed to the survival of their business. The Morrison government knows this. We know the extra hours spent balancing books and doing rosters and time sheets. When the government had to make tough decisions and ask Australian businesses to help us help the nation, they did just that, so it was only right that the government returned the favour.

In Higgins alone I can see the results of the JobKeeper program. Hema Maps in Caulfield is owned by Sam, who lives in my electorate. It's a wonderful business. Hema Maps employs 44 full-time staff and produces a range of award-winning maps and navigational products, including apps for tourists to visit regional Australia, New Zealand and North America. There's not a lot of travelling going on at the moment. In late February they were drawing up plans to stand down 80 per cent of their workforce, effective immediately. Sam knows the importance of providing people with the dignity of employment. You can't imagine how thrilled he was at the JobKeeper program. Sam has been able to keep his staff employed. He will be able to get his business going through the tough times and be positioned to meet the recovery when it comes.

There's also Tailored Cafe in Korrang Road Carnegie. It's owned by Sean. He is delighted by the JobKeeper program because it's keeping two of his staff employed. It will enable him to keep his business afloat. By being able to stay open, when things get back to normal he'll be able to increase his business and return to work and trading.

Levi's is a fantastic cafe in Murrumbeena. In fact, it's got the best eggplant toasties in Australia. Go down there. They're absolutely amazing. Harry tells me that we have helped him to save his business. He has had five full-time staff who have been kept on the books and the business is dynamic enough to weather this storm with those staff. He only opened recently and he's thrilled that he can keep going.

In Australia we know that there's a forecast that the GDP will fall by 10 per cent in the June quarter, our biggest fall on record. This is not a small issue. We know our unemployment rate is expected to reach around 10 per cent, but if we didn't have JobKeeper it would have been 15 per cent. These are incredibly important measures. I'm proud of the strong leadership of Scott Morrison, Josh Frydenberg, the executive and our government to help Australia to ensure that we recover.

Ms PAYNE (Canberra) (15:54): Today in his statement the Treasurer pronounced the pandemic to be 'a health and economic shock the likes of which the world has never seen'. He is, of course, right. So why, in the face of this catastrophic economic and health outlook, is he refusing to protect everyone in Australia? Why is he planning to cut back supports for everyone else on 24 September?

We have seen a good response from the government, and I absolutely acknowledge that response. Introducing the JobKeeper wage subsidy, that Labor and the union movement had advocated for from day one, was absolutely a good thing. People needed to keep their jobs and be supported to do so through this crisis. Doubling the rate of jobseeker, formerly Newstart, is also a very good move, but it shouldn't take a pandemic to realise that people can't live on $40 a day. There are significant gaps in the package. This government has left behind students and young people; arts and entertainment workers; disability support workers; temporary visa holders, including recently arrived refugees; international students; childcare centres, and the parents who rely on them—if you're going to have free childcare you have to support the centres to actually deliver it—councils, and the communities who rely on them; and universities, and the students who rely on them.

Today would have been budget day. We had the Treasurer's speech this morning, which was devoid of a vision for what comes next as we rebuild after this crisis. He ended his speech by invoking the 'fighting Australian spirit'. What is the fighting Australian spirit, Treasurer? Are you saying that people are literally going to have to fight to survive when you turn off support for the almost seven million Australians who will access jobseeker or JobKeeper in the next few months? We have a government returning to their tired old playbook, calling on working people to bear the brunt of COVID-19 through lower wages and poorer conditions. We have a government that talks about aspiration but has cut out people from jobseeker for having the aspiration to change their job in the last 12 months—one million casual employees. We have a government asking people to pay for their own assistance by compromising their superannuation, their retirement savings.

This is a government that will snap back to their tired, old conservative ways after this crisis. In fact, they have already committed to snap back to inadequate assistance for jobseekers from 24 September. The coronavirus has demonstrated just how important a strong social security system is. It has demonstrated its power to alleviate
poverty and to stabilise the economy. This, throughout our history, alongside decent wages and conditions provided through our tradition of arbitration, has been so important to making us the society we are today.

This crisis presents an opportunity for us to address inadequacies in the current system by building on its strengths. By doubling the jobseeker rate with the temporary coronavirus supplement the Morrison government has acknowledged that people cannot live on $40 a day. This is about a choice. We can build an economy and a society that supports all of us to have an opportunity based on decent wages, decent working conditions and decent social security for all of us when we're out of work.

Yesterday the opposition leader, Anthony Albanese, outlined a vision for rebuilding after this crisis, a vision based on egalitarian values, on listening to science and on an inclusive economy. We have a once-in-a-century opportunity to rethink and review, to really rebuild. Government has a real role in building that, not only in crisis, and in delivering a society that enables all of us to have happy, healthy and fulfilled lives.

As the shadow Treasurer said this morning, the Australian economy wasn't strong before the pandemic; we on this side of the chamber have been saying that on a daily basis in this place. It was like speaking to a stone wall. This government would not acknowledge the serious problems with the economy before the crisis. We've had seven years and three treasurers. The pandemic arrived without warning, but the economic downturn certainly did not. What we are likely to see from this government after this is a double-down on trickle-down, an agenda of austerity and deregulation. The snapback is a fallacy, and the long reel of stats provided by the Treasurer today makes that clear. The government will snap back to usual—no plan, just a tired, conservative agenda.

Mr Alexander (Bennelong) (15:58): 'Unprecedented' is an overused word at the moment. This is an unprecedented pandemic with unprecedented cost and unprecedented responses from this government. But the fact remains that everything we are seeing right now is unprecedented to most of us. There are only a tiny fraction of our constituents who were alive during the Spanish flu and even less who remember it. We have to go back to the Great Depression to remember times of economic destruction as bad as these and back to wartime to remember the last time Australia faced a determined enemy and a national response this big. Half of my office are even too young to remember the 1990s recession—not me.

We have been forced to act big and act quickly in response to this crisis. Thankfully, this government has been supporting our economy to ensure it has been growing strongly for years. Unemployment was low—the participation rate was near a record high, at 66 per cent—and, for the first time in over a decade, we were back in surplus, albeit briefly. We were fortunate that we faced this crisis from a position of budgetary strength, which has allowed us to take the tough decisions to survive this crisis intact and, then, to pave the road to recovery better than before.

This government moved quickly and thoroughly. There is no time here to talk to every measure the government has put in place, which is testament to the huge amount of support we are providing. A total of $320 billion is being injected into the economy by all arms of government in order to keep Australia in work and to keep businesses in business. That's equivalent to 16.4 per cent of the GDP. This includes $17.6 billion for the government's first economic stimulus package, $90 billion from the Reserve Bank of Australia, $15 billion from the government to deliver easier access to finance, $66.1 billion in the second economic support package and $130 billion in JobKeeper payments. As the Treasurer mentioned earlier, there have been over 80 regulatory changes made since the virus broke out, all designed to facilitate the continuation of business—the survival of business. Our economic support package includes support for households, including casual sole traders, retirees and those on income support; assistance for businesses to keep people in a job; regulatory protection; and finance support for businesses to stay in business.

The government is taking unprecedented action to strengthen the safety net for Australians who are stood down or lose their jobs and is increasing support for small businesses facing a tough six months ahead. However, the biggest improvement to our budget is the huge benefits we will see from keeping Australians alive and healthy. We are not alone in facing an economic crisis, but our country is one of the lucky few that does not also have a massive health crisis to mitigate. Australians will be able to return to work and social life sooner because we have not let this crisis run free and because we have all listened to the critical health advice. Today, on International Nurses Day, we must remember and thank from the bottom of our hearts all the health professionals who have kept us safe. They will allow us to get back to normal sooner. But we must also thank everybody who has been staying at home rather than going out, calling their friends rather than meeting them, and putting the health of their neighbours ahead of their personal freedom. Thank you, everyone.

We must stay vigilant. As the Treasurer mentioned, it will cost New South Wales alone $1.4 billion per week if they have to go back into lockdown. Nationally, that's $4 billion per week. This will all be over soon and we will need to find new ways to get our economy rolling, infrastructure projects to stimulate our economy and grow our

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settlement, new funding mechanisms to limit the damage to our budget and get better value for our taxpayers. These are the sorts of things we must do to get our economy back on track again. The government has done incredibly well to bring our economy back to a place of strength over the past seven years. Now we have dealt with this new crisis with speed, clarity and efficiency. Soon we will be in the fifth set, and I am confident we will have the projects, policies and ideas to bring us back to prosperity.

Dr MULINO (Fraser) (16:03): I begin by acknowledging that today is International Nurses Day and I pay tribute to all the nurses in Fraser and in Australia more generally. I pay tribute to my colleague Ged Kearney and to all the other nurses and healthcare professionals in this chamber. I also pay tribute to my father, a nurse for more than 30 years, who served and saved many. Of course, as other speakers have pointed out, there has never been a time when it has been more appropriate for us to pay tribute to our nurses and other healthcare professionals.

Today we are talking about one aspect of the crisis that we face. It is true to say that our healthcare professionals have dealt incredibly well with the health dimensions of the crisis that we currently face. It is important that this chamber also examines the way in which we, as a society and as an economy, deal with the economic aspects of the crisis that we are currently facing. As the Leader of the Opposition and the shadow Treasurer have pointed out, we come to this place as a constructive opposition. I might point out that we currently don't come to this place as frequently as we'd like, but, nonetheless, when we do get to come here, we come as a constructive opposition. That doesn't mean that we lazily acquiesce to all that's put forward to us by the government, because to do so would be to abdicate our duty as an opposition. But it does mean that we are here to focus on solutions and not to pointscore. It is in that spirit that I make some observations on the way in which this economy has been managed in the past, is managed in the present and may be managed in the future.

One of the speakers opposite said that you can't fatten a pig the day before market. In fact, the context here is that, if we look at the economy and the way in which it had been managed, it is a pig which had been getting thinner over the last seven years, in the lead-up to this crisis. This was not a pig being fattened for market. If it, as a pre-COVID economy, had been taken to market, the returns would have been very lean. We saw productivity growth go backwards for the first time on record. We saw wages growth at its worst on record. We saw household incomes going backwards for an extended period of time. This was an economy that was underperforming. What were the consequences? The consequences—for example, for fiscal policy—were that debt had doubled. We had an economy where there were claims that the budget was back in black when, in fact, it wasn't. On the fiscal policy front, we had far less flexibility than we ought to have had. On the monetary policy front, the independent Reserve Bank had felt the need to reduce interest rates on multiple occasions to far below GFC levels. So, when it came to fiscal policy and monetary policy settings in the lead-up to the COVID crisis, we were in a far weaker position than we ought to have been.

Now it's true to say that nobody could have predicted the exact timing of this pandemic and nobody could have predicted the exact severity of the bushfire season we've just come out of. But there were many, many experts who had said that a pandemic would occur at some point and it was clear that bushfires were getting more and more severe. So it is true to say that we should have been more prepared than we were. Even though we didn't know exactly when these events would occur to disrupt our economy, we knew they would probably occur at some point, and it is fair to say, I think, that our economy was far less prepared than it should have been.

What about the present? We have been a constructive opposition; we have voted for every single piece of legislation this government has brought to us in this chamber. But let's look at the current scheme. Let's look at the JobKeeper program—as the shadow Assistant Treasurer has said, a good idea being badly implemented. When I've talked to dnata workers in my electorate and they've asked me: 'Why am I not covered by this when I've worked for years and I've contributed taxes for years—when I've been a good citizen, contributing to this society and economy for years? Why am I not covered by this scheme simply because of a quirk in the ownership of the company that I work for?' I've had no good answer. All I can say to them is that I'll come to Canberra when parliament sits and I'll call on the Treasurer to do what he can do under the regulations: to fix these anomalies at a flick of his pen. And I'll do the same for all the other groups who are currently being arbitrarily excluded from this scheme.

I was approached with a similar question by casuals who have worked for less than 12 months but who have a real connection with their employers. They are casuals who have worked for many years in an industry but who may have switched between employers. I say to them, 'I'll come into this chamber, when I'm given the chance to, and call on the Treasurer to fix these anomalies.'

And what about the future? As other speakers have said—as the previous two speakers on this side have said—the Australian public deserves so much better than snapback to an economy that wasn't working, to an economy that was growing too slowly. We need to move forward to a positive vision—an egalitarian, pro-growth vision that
Mrs ARCHER (Bass) (16:08): The need to manage the economy in the interests of all Australians has always been important to the Morrison government and, going forward, it is more important than ever. I'm sure, like many in my northern Tasmanian community, I started 2020 with a great sense of optimism about what the year might bring. In the electorate which I am so proud to represent there were so many positive signs of economic progress. There were positive employment figures, construction and tourism were booming, and Tasmania was in a stage of unprecedented economic growth. I have spoken before of my desire to keep that momentum going and to build on it.

Though the murmur of coronavirus was there in the background, it suddenly seemed to loom large and urgently and, as a government, we needed to act quickly and decisively to protect the health of all Australians while balancing the devastating economic impact this unprecedented crisis would bring. And, though this is far from over, I stand here today incredibly proud of the decisions made by this government to ensure that the lives of Australians are safe while also ensuring that the financial lives of Australians are protected. We only need to look to other countries in the world to see the potential devastation we could have faced.

The leadership that has been shown during these challenging times has been exceptional. In my own community over the past few months, while there are certainly stories of financial pain and hardship—particularly from small-business owners—there have also been so many who have expressed their relief and gratitude to the government for initiatives, such as JobKeeper, which have enabled them to stay afloat and keep on much-loved and highly valued staff. Indeed, Northern Tasmania's business community has strongly endorsed the actions of the federal and state government responses.

On JobKeeper: the Launceston Chamber of Commerce noted that there will be many local businesses who will reap great benefit from this, and that it will be the difference between a business closing for good and one which can hibernate until the recovery can occur. Peter Barron, owner of Flinders Island Aviation, is providing essential passenger freight and mail deliveries to the Furneaux islands. Peter's business is receiving JobKeeper for his four employees, from pilots to admin staff, to keep his operation afloat. It is incredibly important for these remote island communities that the business was able to carry on operations and not suspend services.

Karen Burbury, owner of multiple restaurant businesses across Bass, which were always booked out prior to COVID-19, had to see the businesses that she'd spent years building up close suddenly. Karen has been able to access JobKeeper for a significant number of employees, and has also accessed cashflow boost options. And, just today in our local newspaper, Jason Kerrison, owner of the very popular Prospect Fish Shop, described the JobKeeper initiative as 'sensational'. Others, like Gray's Hotel in George Town, have bent over backwards, and stretched and scrimped, to do what they could to diversify their business so that they could keep their employees going until they were able to access JobKeeper.

For those who are unable to access JobKeeper, jobseeker payments have also given relief to those searching for work and those who suddenly—many for the first time—find themselves unemployed. For these members of our community and those who have suddenly lost a second, but essential, income stream, accessing super has also become a lifeline. I recently encountered a mum with two children. She worked part-time, but also held a second casual job in the beauty industry. After seeing all her hours lost in her secondary job, she has been able to access part of the $10,000 super allowed to keep them going for a few months and to provide some additional relief.

Of course this is a situation that nobody wanted or expected to find themselves in, but we cannot deny that we're in a strong economic position to deliver that much-needed economic program that will allow thousands of businesses across Tasmania to get up and running over the coming months. We should not forget that we went into this health and economic crisis in a strong and stable financial position, which ensured that we had the capacity to respond quickly. There will be an increase in government debt, and we understand that this may take many years to repay, but I commend the Treasurer and his team for designing these measures in a way that protects the structural integrity of our budget into the future.

I look forward to the ongoing work with my community during the months and the years ahead to ensure that we can emerge from this stronger and more resilient than ever before.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Llew O'Brien): The discussion has concluded.

BUSINESS

Days and Hours of Meeting

Consideration resumed of the motion:

That so much of the standing orders be suspended as would prevent the following from occurring:
(1) the House of Representatives to meet on Wednesday, 13 May 2020 and Thursday, 14 May 2020;
(2) the Federation Chamber not to meet today, and to meet on Wednesday, 13 May 2020 and Thursday, 14 May 2020;
(3) immediately following the resolution of this motion the Treasurer to make a ministerial statement, with the Shadow Treasurer to respond; and
(4) any variation to this arrangement to be made only by a motion moved by a Minister with leave granted by the Manager of Opposition Business.

to which the following amendment was moved:
"(5) the first item of business on Wednesday, 13 May 2020, be the presentation of a revised program of sittings for 2020".

The DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Llew O’Brien) (16:14): In accordance with standing order 133, I shall now proceed to put the question on the motion moved earlier today by the honourable member for Watson for an amendment to the motion moved by the Leader of the House, on which a division was called for and deferred in accordance with the standing orders. No further debate is allowed.

The SPEAKER: The matter before the House is the amendment moved by the honourable member for Watson to the motion moved by the Leader of the House. As I explained earlier, I'll put the question in the negative. So the question is that the amendment moved by the member for Watson be disagreed to.

The House divided. [16:18]

(The Speaker—Hon. Tony Smith)

Ayes .................. 35
Noes .................. 30
Majority.............. 5

AYES
Alexander, JG
Andrews, KJ
Archer, BK
Christensen, GR
Drum, DK (teller)
Entsch, WG
Flint, NJ
Howarth, LR
Ley, SP
Marino, NB
Morrison, SJ
Porter, CC
Robert, SR
Taylor, AJ
Tudge, AE
Wallace, AB
Wood, JP
Zimmerman, T

NOES
Albanese, AN
Bowen, CE
Butler, MC
Chesters, LM
Collins, JM
Fitzgibbon, JA
Husic, EN
Kearney, G
King, MMH
Mulino, D
O’Neil, CE
Pilcher, TJ
Ryan, JC (teller)
Stanley, AM (teller)
Templeman, SR

PAIRS
Bell, AM
Broadbent, RE

Hill, JC
Leigh, AK
Question agreed to.

Original question agreed to.

COMMITTEES

Public Works Committee

Report


Reports made parliamentary papers in accordance with standing order 39(e).

Communications and the Arts Committee

Report

Dr GILLESPIE (Lyne) (16:24): On behalf of the Standing Committee on Communications and the Arts, I present the committee's report entitled The next gen future: inquiry into the deployment, adoption and application of 5G in Australia, together with the minutes of proceedings.

Report made a parliamentary paper under standing order 39(e).

Dr GILLESPIE: by leave—This report is an excellent report, and I would like to commend all the members of the committee. We traversed the nation, we had over 500 submissions and we had multiple bits of evidence introduced. This report, into the deployment, adoption and application of 5G in Australia, is really important. It establishes that 5G is coming and it's going to revolutionise so many parts of industry. It will make the Internet of Things become connected through the technology that delivers ultralow latency and huge amounts of data. For the
average person, mobile telecommunications via their mobile phones is ubiquitous, and there is a relentless requirement for more data. As a result of this, we need new, modern technology.

The fourth industrial revolution needs an architecture to connect the Internet of Things, the machine-to-machine learning, robotics, virtual telecommunications, videoconferencing with ultra-low latency and accuracy, smart cities, smart telecommunications and smart cars that are driverless—all these things will be enabled. It will have huge applications in Defence, in universities, in smart campuses and in schools, all because of the ultralow latency and the huge amounts of data that get delivered so much quicker. It’s an evolution from 3G to 4G to 5G, and, as a result, a lot of information has become available on the internet, which has cast aspersions on its safety. We have heard lots of information, from lots of reputable government and international bodies, asserting that the technology is incredibly safe.

Due to technological qualities of 5G—beamforming and network slicing, and the multiple input, multiple output technology involved in 5G—the amount of energy that is received is actually lower than 4G, which is lower than 3G, and it is safe. There’s ARPANSA, ACEBR and the international body ICNIRP—all these bodies evaluate things. There were concerns by some people in the community that have been influenced by misinformation about the technology. There is less energy in a 5G phone that people are exposed to. You get more exposure from a baby monitor or from a microwave. It is safe technology.

I commend this report to the House and I move:

That the House take note of the report.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Goodenough): The debate is adjourned and the resumption of the debate will be made an order of the day for the next sitting.

Reference to Federation Chamber

Dr GILLESPIE (Lyne) (16:28): I move:

That the order of the day be referred to the Federation Chamber for debate.

Question agreed to.

BILLS

Privacy Amendment (Public Health Contact Information) Bill 2020

Second Reading

Consideration resumed of the motion:

That this bill be now read a second time.

Mr DREYFUS (Isaacs—Deputy Manager of Opposition Business) (16:29): To continue from before question time, another issue that I raised with the Attorney-General during discussion about this bill relates to the funding of the Office of the Australian Information Commissioner. In short, I do not think that the evidence of the Attorney-General’s Department at last Wednesday’s hearing of the Senate Select Committee on COVID-19 that the commissioner requires no additional resources to fulfill her new oversight responsibilities is credible. In fact, it is incredible. You do not have to take my word for it. Just last October, the Information Commissioner told Senate estimates that her office is already underresourced. The Attorney-General has advised me that his department is engaging with the commissioner to ensure that she has the necessary resources to perform the important oversight functions provided for in this bill, the Privacy Amendment (Public Health Contact Information) Bill 2020. While I welcome that engagement and look forward to receiving an update over coming days or weeks, there is no question in my mind that additional funding is urgently required. The only question is how much.

It is also important to remember that for years the government has refused to appoint a standalone information commissioner, a standalone freedom of information commissioner or a standalone privacy commissioner. Instead, one person currently occupies all three of these important and demanding roles. As I’ve said repeatedly, this is unacceptable. In light of the new responsibilities that this bill would confer on the Office of the Australian Information Commissioner, now more than ever the government needs to appoint a standalone, dedicated privacy commissioner. The appointment of a full-time and properly resourced privacy commissioner rather than a commissioner forced to split her time between three different and demanding roles would make a further valuable contribution to building public confidence in the COVIDSafe app. It should not take a public health crisis for the government to show that it takes seriously the privacy of Australians.

In conclusion, let me be as clear as I can. I have downloaded the government's contact-tracing app, and I want other Australians to download the app, too. But I understand, and my Labor colleagues understand, that many millions of Australians have legitimate concerns about downloading the app. Those legitimate concerns should not be derided or minimised. Those concerns must be taken seriously and, to the extent possible, addressed.
believe this bill goes a long way towards addressing a number of those concerns. But it does not address every concern, and there are many issues that cannot be addressed by legislation alone. Ultimately, those concerns can only be addressed by the government.

If we are to come anywhere near the Prime Minister's target of at least 10 million Australians downloading the app, perhaps the most important thing that the government can do now is to be open and transparent with the Australian people. To gain the trust of Australians, the Morrison government must trust Australians. Publishing the source code for the app was a good start, but it was only a start. The government must be as transparent as possible about everything to do with the COVIDSafe app, whether it be providing additional technical information in relation to the app or being upfront about how the app is working in practice.

The government should be transparent about other matters, too. For example, the government should explain why it awarded the COVIDSafe data storage to Amazon Web Services instead of an Australian cloud service provider. And it should provide concrete assurances to the Australian people that the inexplicable decision to award this contract to Amazon does not mean that the data collected by the COVIDSafe app could, or will, be accessed by anyone outside Australia.

The government should also provide the Australian people, including older and culturally and linguistically diverse Australians and Australians with disabilities, with clear, easy-to-understand and accurate information about the app.

Finally, and most obviously, Australians will have no reason to download or keep using the app if the technology does not work or if the technology is not secure. For that reason, the government must urgently address the technical and security concerns that have been raised about the app by technology experts and members of the public.

I'd like to once again thank the Attorney-General for the constructive way in which he has engaged with Labor when it comes to this bill. I commend the bill to the House and I move:

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

"whilst not declining to give the bill a second reading, the House:

(1) notes that:

(a) since the beginning of this public health crisis, the Opposition has sought to work constructively and in good faith with the Government to ensure that Australians are kept safe during this health emergency;

(b) the Opposition made a number of constructive suggestions to improve the bill prior to its introduction into the Parliament and the Attorney-General considered, in good faith, all of those suggestions;

(c) to be a valuable public health tool, the Prime Minister has said that at least 40 per cent of the Australian population – or 10 million Australians – would have to download the Government's COVIDSafe contact tracing app;

(d) to date, approximately 5.5 million Australians have downloaded the COVIDSafe app; and

(e) the passage of this bill, which incorporates a number of suggestions made by the Opposition, is likely to encourage more Australians to download the COVIDSafe contact tracing app; and

(2) is of the view that, in order to reach the Prime Minister’s 40 per cent target, there are other things the Government can and should be doing to build public confidence in the COVIDSafe app, including:

(a) explain to the Australian people why the Government preferred to trust overseas multinational Amazon Web Services over a range of Australian certified cloud service providers when it came to awarding the COVIDSafe data storage contract;

(b) take concrete steps to reassure and guarantee to the Australian public that none of the COVIDSafe app data stored by an overseas multinational cloud service provider can be accessed by foreign nationals, including Amazon employees and contractors and overseas law enforcement and intelligence services;

(c) provide additional funding to the Office of the Australian Information Commissioner, and appoint a standalone Privacy Commissioner, to ensure that the Commissioner is able to properly perform the important oversight functions provided for in this bill;

(d) urgently address the security and technical concerns that have been raised about the COVIDSafe app by technology experts and members of the public; and

(e) provide the Australian people, including older and culturally and linguistically diverse Australians and Australians with disabilities, with clear, easy to understand and accurate information about the COVIDSafe app".

The DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Goodenough): Is the amendment seconded?

Mr Snowdon: I second the amendment.

Mrs WICKS (Robertson) (16:37): I rise in support of the Privacy Amendment (Public Health Contact Information) Bill 2020, which will amend the Privacy Act 1988 to ensure the security of data collected through
the COVIDSafe app. This amendment is important to ensure that the personal details of all those who have registered for the app are secure, which goes to the heart of concerns about privacy.

I am extremely proud of how Australians have responded to calls from our Prime Minister and health professionals to download the COVIDSafe app. Over five million Australians have done so, and when I'm out and about in my electorate of Robertson it is really clear that residents on the Central Coast know how valuable this app is in helping to protect our community. Only last week, I was talking to: a local resident who was telling me how she had downloaded the app and she was conscious to carry her phone with her at work rather than placing it in a locker at the back of her work premises, as she normally would do; a local retail worker who said to me that he wanted to make sure he had the app to protect the elderly and vulnerable people who he serves every day; and a local mum who said to me that she's more comfortable now going outside to exercise, knowing that the app provides an extra layer of protection. These are just some of the examples showing how Australians are committed to doing their bit, so that we can continue to consider easing this current phase of restrictions. As the Minister for Health has said, the more people who download the COVIDSafe app, the faster we can trace outbreaks of the virus and the greater the protection it provides. This will enable Australians to get back to doing the things that they love sooner, like attending sport on a Saturday morning, catching up with friends for lunch or having the family over for dinner.

As somebody who worked in the telecommunications industry for a number of years, I am acutely aware of the importance of building data systems with integrity. I believe that this bill provides a robust framework, and it makes it very clear to the Australian public that there is only one purpose for the app, and that is to ensure the accurate tracing of COVID-19 cases to help save lives and livelihoods. It's important to note that the app does not track a user's location or movements. Instead, it uses Bluetooth to record a digital handshake with other phones nearby, storing this information in an encrypted file on the user's device. If a user tests positive for COVID-19, they're asked to provide their permission to upload this information. State and territory health agencies will then be able to use this data to trace who the person has had contact with over the past 21 days. The app is simple, but it will assist in speeding up current manual tracing processes, helping frontline health workers to more quickly stop the spread of the virus.

To assist the effective functioning of this process, the bill provides several protections, which I'd like to outline to the House. Firstly, the bill outlines that it's an offence to require participation in the COVIDSafe app and makes it clear that downloading the app, having it operational and uploading data are voluntary. Secondly, the bill restricts the collection, use or disclosure of app data and punishes breaches with up to five years imprisonment or significant fines. Access will be restricted to state or territory health agencies undertaking contact tracing or those involved as a data store administrator. Not even law enforcement agencies will have access to this data. Users can also ask that their registration data be deleted, giving them full control of their information. These measures and the serious penalties that exist for anyone who breaches them show how seriously the government takes the protection of Australians' personal data.

The amendments also detail the role of the Office of the Australian Information Commissioner in dealing with possible data breaches, making assessments and conducting investigations. Breaches may also be referred to the Australian Federal Police for eventual prosecution. This provides a clear means of enforcement, demonstrating to the community that any breaches will be taken seriously and that their personal information will be safeguarded.

The bill will also make it an offence to hold information on a database outside Australia, clarifying that data will not be exposed to foreign entities and will remain secure. I know some concerns were expressed to me locally in my community about this issue, and I want to assure people in my community that the government has taken strong steps to protect their data.

Finally, the bill addresses what will occur once the app is no longer required to help fight the coronavirus. The federal health minister will be advised by state and territory health officers, through the Health Protection Principal Committee, on when the COVIDSafe app is no longer needed. The bill then requires that the data store administrator delete all app data and notify authorities so a review can be conducted to ensure compliance. This provides another layer of protection and reinforces that the sole purpose of the app is to fight the spread of the virus and save lives and livelihoods.

In concluding my remarks, I'd like to encourage residents across the Central Coast to download the COVIDSafe app or to consider downloading the COVIDSafe app if they haven't already had a chance to do so. As the Prime Minister has said, this is especially important in the weeks and months ahead as some restrictions begin to be relaxed. This means we will be connecting more with others at the supermarket, at local restaurants and cafes, while out getting some exercise, or at work. The app only takes a few minutes to download, but it is such an important step in helping our frontline health professionals, who are working so hard to trace and control outbreaks of the coronavirus. While we've been successful in flattening the curve, it's important that we don't
become complacent. By taking basic measures, such as observing social distancing, practising good hygiene and downloading the app or considering downloading the app, each of us can help to protect not only ourselves and our family but our communities and our nation. I commend this bill to the House.

Mr BOWEN (McMahon) (16:44): The Labor Party will be supporting this legislation and facilitating its passage through the House this evening. This is in keeping with the constructive approach that the opposition has taken since the beginning of this crisis to support things which are worthy of support and point out areas of potential improvement but not to seek areas of disagreement needlessly. The Labor Party has been consistent in supporting the concept of this app. We have not engaged in undermining the app or questioning its impact on privacy or the role of government, like some members of this House who aren't in the Labor Party have done. We have indicated our support in principle for the app, and we support this legislation. We suggested that it would be appropriate to have a legislative framework surrounding the app.

I acknowledge that the Minister for Health has brought down a determination under the Biosecurity Act. It is a good determination, a strong and robust one, but of course, as honourable members would understand, it can be changed by the minister. To provide further certainty, legislation, which can only be changed by a vote of both houses of parliament, would be a sensible step, and this legislation does that. The legislation provides two pillars. One is to ensure that the information gathered can only be used for the purposes intended, not accessed by any other government agency, not even used in a court case for either a prosecution or a defence, not for any purpose other than for the state health agency for contact tracing and for ancillary efforts to ensure the app is working as is intended. That is the only intended use and the only permissible use under law once this legislation passes.

The other pillar of the legislation is to ensure that it is truly voluntary—not only can it not be a requirement of government that the app be downloaded; it cannot be a requirement of an employer that its employees download the app. I've noticed that a few employers have tried that. It is not on. It is not permissible. It is not legal. No employee can be required by their employer to download the app. Even if the phone belongs to the employer it is not lawful. Nor can it be required by anybody else—a shopping centre, a shop or a hospital—for entry. The app must be voluntary in spirit as well as in the letter of the law. This legislation, I am confident, achieves that.

We have made a series of suggestions, through the member for Isaacs, to the Attorney-General. Most of those suggestions have been taken up by the government in changing the bill, and we welcome that. These have been very sensible suggestions by the member for Isaacs, the shadow Attorney-General, on our behalf, and I do acknowledge the Attorney-General for taking most of them on board. They are things such as the clarification and improvement of the role of the Privacy Commissioner, which we do think is sensible, and I know the shadow Attorney-General has also suggested more resources for the Privacy Commissioner, which I think is a very sensible suggestion.

I want to cover a few issues, though. Obviously, there is the matter of the take-up of the app. There is international evidence that a take-up of 40 to 60 per cent of the population is required for the app to be truly effective. I asked the Prime Minister about this today. The Prime Minister has previously used the 40 per cent figure himself. I see the government has changed the goalposts a little at various points and changed it to 40 per cent of smartphone users. That, to my way of thinking, is not the appropriate measure. You can get COVID-19 whether you have a smartphone or not. I note that Australia has one of the highest take-up rates of smartphones anyway, at 91 per cent of the population. They are relatively similar figures, but the fact of the matter is that 40 per cent of the population at least needs to take up the app for it to be truly effective. The Prime Minister said there was no target today. I, with respect, differ from that. I think there should be a target and it should be at least 40 per cent.

There are also a range of technical concerns that have been raised at various places, and I note the government have said that they're aware of those and are working to remedy them. It does not work as effectively on old operating systems. In some operating systems, it doesn't work at all on older phones, which are often owned by older Australians. That is a problem. It doesn't work effectively, or at least there are some concerns, with glucose-monitoring apps that many Australians who are diabetics have on their phones. I know that Diabetes Australia has recommended to members not to download the app for that purpose. That is a concern.

There are concerns around people understanding that it's got to be on, operating in the background, and that Bluetooth has to be on. There are many Australians who aren't clear about that. Indeed they're not always simple concepts and not all of us are as understanding of those concepts. I've had to check a few times that the app is on and in the background and that my Bluetooth remains on for it to work. I do think these are issues. It could be the case that, if the government had waited for the Google-Apple app, some of these matters would not have arisen. That is a matter for the government. They're entitled to make that decision for themselves. Our job as parliamentarians is to provide the legislative framework.
The final matter I will refer to is the government's decision to outsource the data responsibilities for the app to Amazon. This has caused, to be frank, considerable concern in elements of the community. It is referred to in our second reading amendment. Our second reading amendment is of course a statement of principle. We are not seeking to amend the bill in detail. That would not be in keeping with our undertaking to the government to facilitate its passage through the House this evening and facilitate its passage through the parliament this week. But it is a matter for the government to explain as to why Amazon was chosen. As I understand it, Australian providers were not given the opportunity to bid for this work. I think that is unfortunate. I understand the government was in a hurry and I understand that only large and reputable providers can carry out this work, but I do think it's at least arguable that Australian providers could have done so. While they don't deserve to have a leg up, they do deserve to have the opportunity to bid for an Australian government contract. I note that we're advised that this was a decision of the Department of Home Affairs, not a decision of the Department of Health or DTA. I think that is a curious decision, and the government would do well to give more detail about that and the protections. I saw the chief executive of Amazon today saying, 'Well, we'll try and resist if the United States seeks under their legal powers to access the data but we may not succeed.' That's simply, to my way of thinking, not good enough, and it's important that Australians are reassured about that. Australian law doesn't trump US law, and US law doesn't trump Australian law. This bill does make it clear that the data must be kept in Australia. It is an offence if it's not kept in Australia. I think that's appropriate and it has our support, but there are concerns around the decision to give the work to Amazon. I think my friend and colleague the member for Chifley will expand on some of those concerns and other honourable members may well as well.

I don't wish to detain the House, because I do want to leave plenty of time for my colleagues to make a contribution, nor take up time unnecessarily that would stop a colleague having time, so I will conclude at this point. I do thank the House for its consideration and thank the Attorney-General. You've indulged me. And given the two of them are here, I thank the members for Hotham and Gellibrand for their engagement with me personally on the issues, as well as the member for Chifley. They are deeply engaged in the technological community and understand the highly technical matters and they've been of great assistance to both me and the member for Isaacs as we navigate through this legislation.

Ms O'NEIL (Hotham) (16:52): I'm very grateful to the member for McMahon for his contribution. He led a great process within our party to try and think through some of the ways that we could push to get the best bill out of the parliament on this crucial issue. I think we've done a really good job of that. We've worked across the two sides of parliament to make sure of it. We have done something here that is quite unusual, and that is to genuinely improve a bill and get a really good outcome for Australians. I firmly believe that the app that's been designed could—I use that word very deliberately—be a critical part of the way that Australia can start to recover from the COVID-19 economic and health crisis.

The legislation that's before us, the Privacy Amendment (Public Health Contact Information) Bill 2020, puts into law some aspects of the legal structure that will essentially sit around the app. Part of the controversy today is the things that are in the bill, but I think there is a lot more controversy about the things that are not in the bill: the way the app has been rolled out and the way the government described what it was going to do. I think it hasn't been set up for success in the way that those of us on this side of the chamber would have liked to see. I'll talk about some of those issues, but I think, like most of us, my perspective on all the policies that we're discussing as a parliament at the moment is very much informed by how I've experienced this crisis—that is, from the extensive contact that I've had with the people that I represent and how their lives in many instances have fallen apart over a series of weeks and days. The family that always comes into mind when I am thinking about the different policies being put forward and how they will affect Australians is one that lives in Oakleigh South in my electorate. The parents and a daughter, who is 19, live together. All three members of the family lost their jobs in three days. The impact of that on the welfare of that family—not today, not next month but probably in six and 12 months time—is just enormous. Those are the people that I have in my mind when I think about issues like the bill before us.

One of the real concerns I have about the way this debate is being conducted by the government is about a lot of the rhetoric that's surrounding how far we are through this crisis. We get told that the curve has been flattened. We get told that we are past the peak. The Prime Minister and the Treasurer have talked about this notion of 'snapback'. That really worries me because I think it completely underplays the size of the task that's ahead of us. We are six weeks into this thing. We are not going to be out of it until we either have a cure for the coronavirus or eradicate the coronavirus in Australia, which looks very much like it's not going to happen. There has never been a cure for a coronavirus in history, yet our entire political discussion is predicated on the notion that this thing is past the worse of it. I respect some of the good work that has been done on the other side, but I think we are in for a very difficult year. I'm not going to say that what the government is having to guide us through is impossible,
because it must be made possible, but what we are talking about here is opening up an economy, letting people go back to work, in the middle of a global pandemic that might last for another 18 months or perhaps longer.

The challenge that we are going to face over the coming weeks, as states start to take away the restrictions on movement and on work, is something that no other country in the world has been able to manage yet. Almost all of the countries in the world that we were looking to as best-practice examples perhaps two or three weeks ago have had to put new restrictions down. Even in China, where they did everything possible—and I mean everything possible—to rid Wuhan of this virus, they are again in lockdown there. We see that in Singapore and South Korea, which were the great examples to show us that we could manage an economy and get people back to work in the middle of a pandemic, they are having to reintroduce restrictions. So the size of this task is absolutely massive.

Of course, health is the main priority here; I absolutely accept that. We've seen brilliant examples of leadership coming from Victoria. The leadership shown by our Premier has been exemplary, and the public trust in the way that he is managing the process has been so important in helping us get through to this stage. But I also think about that family in my electorate that he has lost their jobs. My constituents need to go back to work. They need to go back to work because they need to get food on their table and they need to get their lives back and rolling, and they are very worried. We know all the things that we need to do. We know the structures that we need to set up in this parliament. We need extensive testing. We need isolation of cases. We need a way for workplaces to be made COVID-safe. We need Australians to follow the rules and regulations about social distancing, and handwashing and hygiene, and we need tracing. We need a fast way to track where Australians are going only so that we can help them and so that we can stop this pandemic from spreading further through our country.

I am absolutely desperate for the government to succeed on this, and it is quite rare for me to be able to stand up and genuinely say that about a bill that is before us. The concern I have is that every indication that I see in the press conferences about the app, the way this conversation has just wildly swung as we've got to the point we are at today, makes me very nervous about whether this process has been set up for success. I've downloaded the app. It's open on my phone right now. I get pinged by notifications several times a day, as I'm sure many of you do too. I want it to work, but I think some of the history here is ringing alarm bells for me. I'm supportive of this legislation because the truth is that most—not none—of the concerns I have about this bill are not about the legislative structure that we've set up. I think the law before us is a good law. I think one of the takeaways from the conversation about this bill is that we can have a good conversation about a technology issue in this country. That's much better than some of the ones we've had with the government in recent years.

We're supportive of the concept of this bill. We're supportive of the concept of a contact-tracing app. We've raised some concerns where they've been warranted. The bill we have before us isn't perfect, but I do want to acknowledge that the government have been good about the way they've engaged with some of the issues that Labor have raised. I went into this discussion absolutely believing that we would need to have an extensive set of amendments moved by Labor and discussed by those on the other side, and probably a whole lot of divisions. We're not having that today. Labor's not moving amendments, and there's a really good reason for that. Almost everything that we raised with the government as areas of major concern were actually dealt with by the government and fixed in the bill that's before us.

I just want to mention some of the specific things that Labor raised and fought for, and that we were able to work through with the government during that process. One of the things that was a very significant concern for people who have a human rights and privacy perspective was the issue about how people would be protected when they were asked to download the app, or essentially coerced into downloading the app. One of the instances that people were concerned about, for example, was that they wouldn't be allowed to go back to work and that bosses would say, 'You're not to come back until you've downloaded the app.' People were worried about not being able to enter certain premises because the owner of the property might say, 'We're only allowing people in who have downloaded the app.' One of the things that's very important about this, to maintain public trust, is that the app is voluntary. We were able to make a change to how the government proposed the voluntary nature of the app so that it was genuinely enforced, and that was by giving a much stronger role to the Privacy Commissioner in how she'll be able to manage situations where people feel they've been coerced.

We have required six-monthly reporting, on behalf of the Minister for Health and the Privacy Commissioner, on the app. Again, it's critically important that we watch this process. This is new for Australians. We want people to genuinely believe that technology can be used for the public good, and to do that it's important that we continue to monitor how the situation is progressing.

We secured additional oversight and certification responsibilities to ensure that the Commonwealth complies with its obligation to delete COVIDSafe data when the app is no longer in use. One of the really important things we were promised and that we were able to enshrine in this law was that at the end of this pandemic all the data
that had been collected by the app would be deleted. No record will be kept of what was recorded by the app, of the various people you were in touch with.

There are a number of other changes and improvements that have been made to the bill, but it's crucially important for people who are listening to understand that the reason Labor are not moving amendments is that we did a lot of work before we got to the chamber. We consulted with technology stakeholders and we consulted with people who have a focus on digital rights, and we made sure that the things they were worried about actually got dealt with in the bill—and I acknowledge the government's willingness to work with us on that. That's why we have a bipartisan commitment to passing this bill today.

I said that the real concern here is actually not what's in the legislation but the broader way technology issues are handled by this government and the unfortunate place that this COVID app debate takes in that context. The moment this idea was released, the moment the concept of an app was discussed, people's hackles were immediately up. There was an immediate sense of suspicion about what the app would do, how it would collect data and how you'd be able to control what information was kept by it. I think it's really important for us to step back and see why that suspicion was there. It was there because the government, time after time after time, had shown that it actually couldn't bring about a big technology change in a way that was consultative, that respected people's rights and that allowed everyone to have a say, or say how it was going to be for the public good rather than some sort of coercive purpose.

We don't have to look far into the past to find examples. Everywhere we turn, every time the coalition have tried to do something that relates to technology, they have totally stuffed it up, so why would we trust them with our data? I think that's how a lot of people felt when they were going into this. I'm even thinking about things like the National Broadband Network. Labor had this great proposal of fibre to the home for 90 per cent of Australians, but under this government we ended up with this mishmash of mixed models. It was a totally missed opportunity to do something to futureproof our country and our economy.

There was the absolutely kneejerk and ham-fisted approach taken on the encryption legislation prior to the last election. I don't think there is a single moment in this parliament's recent history where we have trashed the trust that people have in us to deal with technology issues more than what happened there. It was a truly appalling instance of Australian public policy. And the fact is we're trying to crawl back from these incidents. That's the issue.

One of the other awful examples is also one of the first things the government did with this incredible capability of artificial intelligence that can help us solve so many public policy problems—that is, robodebt. In an appalling, error-filled way they went around and persecuted some of the most vulnerable people in the country. It's just so regrettable that these are the issues that the government chooses to apply technology solutions to when there are actual public policy problems that are more important, that are more crucial to use artificial intelligence for. But how are we going to get the trust of the Australian people for the next important issue when we just trash their trust in its use through something like robodebt?

We even saw it in more flippant examples. We had the minister responsible come out and pretend—let's not say 'pretend' but say 'infer'—the myGov website had been hacked, when there was no basis for that. Of course it turned out not to be true. Why do these things? We've got to be a lot more careful and thoughtful about how we integrate technology into public policy, because we can do so much better and we need to do so much better.

That has extended right through to the way the government handled the introduction of the COVID app. We had the government announce the app before they knew what it was going to do—why would they do that?—so instantly everyone was on the back foot because no-one was able to give a clear answer about anything. We had the Prime Minister say that it was going to be mandatory, and then days later he had to unwind that. The government started this whole public discussion about the merits of the app, trying to get people on board, without explaining how it was going to work and how people's privacy would be protected. And they still haven't shown Australians the source code in an open-source format so that the technology specialists out there who are so concerned about some of the ways that technology is being used in public policy can have their concerns allayed. It's just an absolute mess.

What we're seeing here today is that we're trying to come to the party—we want people to trust government in doing this—but government is doing everything it can to lay boulders in its own path to making this technology app work. We know this is crucial, because for the app to work it has to have mass take-up. We heard the shadow health minister talk about the need for somewhere in the order of 40 to 60 per cent of Australians to download the app. There are medical specialists who say it must be much higher for us to get use out of this app. What we are talking about here is how, if we are ever going to get to that point, we need everything to go right all the way along. We don't need the Prime Minister to come out and say he's putting forward an app and it's going to be
mandatory and he isn't able to exactly explain what it's going to do. This could have been handled a lot better, but let's try to use this as a starting point to refresh this conversation. We've got a bill before the House. I think the app is very important. Labor will be doing what it can to try to make this work.

Mr SHORTEN (Maribyrnong) (17:07): I'm rising to speak in support of the Privacy Amendment (Public Health Contact Information) Bill 2020, because from the start of this crisis we in Labor have called for sensible, practical measures to help Australia overcome the challenge of the COVID-19 virus. I think the response of regular Australians has been excellent. Individuals, through their actions, have flattened the curve. But, of course, the pandemic is far from over. Had regular Australians not heeded the call and taken the actions they did—sometimes ahead of government—I think we would be in a much worse situation than we are today. Our hospital system, particularly intensive care, could have been overwhelmed, as we've seen in other jurisdictions and other countries.

Having flattened the curve, Australians seek to assemble and step out again in greater numbers. It is important therefore that our health system has all the tools in the public health system to prevent and detect the virus. A tracing app that assists health authorities to determine the extent, location and spread of outbreaks is a critical tool. Tracing, tracing, tracing will be part of allowing Australians to step back from the lockdown provisions that we've seen. Labor has consistently supported the concept of the tracing app, as our health spokesperson and our leader have said. Again, we support the legislation, which will protect privacy and safety. I congratulate the Labor MPs and the government MPs who've managed to fashion a satisfactory set of privacy laws.

This is part of Labor's approach to being in this all together and leaving no-one behind. Labor has not provided an obstacle to the government's plans on this app. Labor has removed hurdles by seeking to improve the legislation. Labor is giving the government a clear runway to do its job. Now it is down to them to make this app work. So far, the performance hasn't been satisfactory enough. My opposite number, the minister responsible for the Digital Transformation Agency, is my old friend Minister Robert, affectionately known in some quarters as the 'master of disaster'. In an interesting interview on 'Sky after dark' he said that if we're ever to go skiing again—no doubt a thought that most struggling Australians have straightaway in this virus—we have to download the app. He also said that the app works 'fantastically well' on all smartphones, whether they're locked or unlocked. The only problem is that, like many of the decrees that emanate from the minister, the facts are different to what he says.

There have been real issues with the functionality of COVIDSafe that could have been fixed quickly—fixed rather than denied, dealt with rather than papered over by the minister. The fact of the matter is that there are functionality and Bluetooth issues on Apple iPhones. This should ring alarm bells, because iPhones account for more than 50 per cent of smartphones in Australia. The older the smartphone and its operating system, the less effective the app is. When the app is running in the background it competes with other apps for the limited amount of Bluetooth functionality. This is a problem. In addition, it has created its own health concerns. People with diabetes who need to have continuous glucose monitoring—CGM apps, for instance—have been warned that they might be compromised by the COVIDSafe app being on the same device. Pick your poison! Experts and users alike have reported that the app's Bluetooth functionality works best when it's in the foreground of the iPhone. This means, though, that when the phone is locked, as most of our phones are most of the time, it does not work properly.

Now, this isn't just some people on the internet talking down or talking poorly of the minister or the government. I listened very carefully to the submission to the Senate committee hearing on 6 May by the CEO of the Digital Transformation Agency, Mr Randall Bruggeaud. He said:

What we can say is that the quality of the Bluetooth connectivity for phones that have the app installed running in the foreground is very good, and it progressively deteriorates and the quality of the connection is not as good as you get to a point where the phone is locked and the app is running in the background.

This is a problem. I suggest that the minister request a briefing from the DTA chief executive on how his app works—or, as the case may be, doesn't work.

We support this app in principle. It requires public trust. The thing needs to work in order to help instil the trust. It needs to have sufficient uptake. The government has said at different times that the aim is to have it taken up by 40 per cent of people. Now we've found out—the Prime Minister has said—that it's 40 per cent of adult Australians and, indeed, 40 per cent was a number from Singapore and the government didn't really mean 40 per cent. This is not designed to engender public confidence. Will the app work or won't it?

I also have to raise what a lot of constituents have raised with me. Why has the data been stored with the US company Amazon? Surely there are Australian companies who could have done the work? If we've learnt one thing about this virus and global supply chains it's that the more we can do things locally, the more that we can
rely on Australian know-how, the more independence and greater control we have. And why hasn't the government been able to get the app to work properly on iPhones?

But I speak in this debate on the basis of hope, and there is reason to hope. Since the recent conversion of the government to Keynesianism, the Morrison government make me believe that they're capable of coping with other changes from initial positions. It is said that there are no atheists in a foxhole. It turns out there are no small-government libertarians in the current government during a pandemic. But I believe that a recurring problem for the government is a lack of willingness to listen to outside experts and to make sure that they can build the public trust to the level sufficient to take this app up.

The app does have issues; some are being fixed and others can be fixed. What we don't need is a Napster app for the iTunes age. We don't need a Blu-ray in the age of Netflix. We cannot have the usual approach from this particular minister of saying: 'Everything's fine. Nothing to see here. Move along.' We don't need to have a minister who blamed imaginary hackers—before the parliament rose—for the myGov crash. What we need to do is just take responsibility.

Labor has been cooperative with the government. It is providing it with the environment in which it can pass its legislation. But I think the quid pro quo from the government to the Australian people is to make sure that the app works. I'm indebted to the members for Chifley, Hotham and Gellibrand for helping to educate me and Labor about how to make the system work properly. But I say to the government: 'Where there is a problem, just fix it.' This should not be a situation where they resort to type and criticise imaginary enemies and imaginary problems when they can actually deal with the issues themselves. This is what Labor does with this legislation: no obstacles, no hurdles, no barriers, no Labor to blame. What Australians want from the government is just to make it work, like Australians have flattened the curve.

Mr WATTS (Gellibrand) (17:16): I'm pleased to have the opportunity to speak on the Privacy Amendment (Public Health Contact Information) Bill 2020. We all have a role to play in our nation's fight against the COVID-19 pandemic, and I'm pleased that for this week at least parliamentarians are being allowed to do their job in this place, providing representation for our communities and accountability and scrutiny of the government. If footy players are getting back on the training pitch, we can certainly do our job in this chamber.

On the whole, the bill before the House today is a good one. The bill provides an enduring legislative framework for the protection of information collected by the government's new COVIDSafe tracing app. In many ways the privacy protections included in this bill are, to use a word of our times, 'unprecedented' in Australian law. These protections are important not only for delivering on the substantive privacy outcomes but also for boosting public confidence and helping increase the take-up of this app. Labor has worked constructively with the government on amendments to further strengthen these privacy protections, and I thank the shadow Attorney-General for his work, as well as thanking other members of the Labor side, including the members for Chifley, Hotham, Maribyrnong and the shadow health minister. I also thank the government for their constructive and cooperative approach in this regard. The result is a bill that will provide the strongest privacy protections for any data ever collected in Australia. The way that Labor have constructively worked with the government on this bill reflects our support for the idea of a contact-tracing app to assist our public health experts in the next stage of our response to COVID-19.

Many Australians—around five million people, or 20 per cent of the general population—have shown their willingness to do their bit to support this endeavour by downloading the app to their phones. The government has been able to tap into an enormous wellspring of solidarity and community support in reaching this level of take-up. It is a genuinely impressive response from the Australian community that we should all be proud of. However, the ultimate effectiveness of this app will depend on more than just this initial public response. Those who want this app to succeed should be clear-eyed about these challenges. We need to understand the app's limitations so that the government can continue to improve it and so that the public can adapt their behaviour to take its limitations into account.

The first thing that's important for everyone to understand is that the COVIDSafe app's objective is to protect the community, not the individual. The contact tracing enabled by the COVIDSafe app is designed to stop the spread of COVID-19 throughout the community, making us all, collectively, safer. But the public must understand that installing this app will not provide any form of individual protection to them. It's not a prophylactic; it's not individually preventative. It is misleading to describe this app as being 'like sunscreen'. That might be effective as a sales job to drive downloads, but it is misleading when it comes to the COVIDSafe app's individual health benefits. Unfortunately, there is an emerging misconception amongst some in the community that the app does provide some form of personal protection or, say, a warning if COVID-19 infected people are nearby. It doesn't, and it's important that people who have installed the app do not behave as if it does.
If people think installing the app is a licence to engage in risky behaviour, it will undermine the work of the public health officials that we are trying to assist here today. Even if you have installed the app, you still need to carefully follow the medical advice of our health experts in your state or territory on social distancing. The second challenge for the effectiveness of this app that needs to be confronted is its performance limitations. The COVIDSafe app is not a silver bullet for contact tracing. Government, health officials and the general public need to be aware of its technological limitations to guide their behaviour. Unfortunately, a fortnight after the public release of this app, the functionality of the app on iOS devices—nearly half the market—is still unclear.

Troublingly, statements from the government about the way the app works on iOS devices have varied over time. In the hours before the app was launched by the Prime Minister, the government's COVIDSafe information page stated:

COVIDSafe app needs to be open to work effectively. Keep the app open and notifications on when you're out and about, especially in meetings and public places. Activate the in-app power saver mode (flip your unlocked device upside down or face down while the app is running). This keeps the app open with a dim screen so that it can detect other devices running COVIDSafe app.

But shortly before the Prime Minister's press conference releasing the app this text was altered:

Keep COVIDSafe running and notifications on when you're out and about, especially in meetings and public places.

This inconsistent messaging was reflected in statements from government ministers and public servants. On the day of the launch of the app, the Minister for Government Services declared:

To be effective, users should have the app running in the background when they are coming into contact with others. Your phone does not need to be unlocked for the app to work.

Yet, later, the head of the DTA, Randall Bruggeaud, hedged and said:

… the quality of the bluetooth connectivity for phones that have the app installed running in the foreground is very good, and it progressively deteriorates and the quality of the connection is not as good as you get to the point where the phone is locked and the app is running in the background.

This was only compounded when these statements about how the app actually works were tested against real-world performance of the app by the Australian tech community.

Today the actual effectiveness of the app on iPhones in background mode remains obtuse. It certainly isn't catching all of the potential contacts between locked iPhones or between iPhones where the app is operating in the background. These performance issues have real consequences. The most obvious is its impact on the public health messaging required from the government. Public health messaging shouldn't require citizens to follow GitHub forks to know what to do to use the app the right way. If the app requires users to take actions in order for the app to work effectively, the government messaging needs to make this clear, and it's not just users who need to understand this either. These technical limitations may well have implications for employers too. Mobile device management policies, including the policies of the Department of Parliamentary Services, frequently require the automatic locking of devices for corporate phones. This applies to handsets for people in this chamber. Those managing these systems need to understand the impact of these policies on the operation of the app. Public health officials need to understand this too in order to be able to judge the tracing capability available to them through this app for managing further outbreaks.

Epidemiologists studying the transmission dynamics of COVID-19 have sought to model the effects that app based contact tracing could have in helping to contain the epidemic in a country. Epidemiologists at Oxford university have found that around half of COVID-19 transmission occurred before individuals were symptomatic, and they developed a model looking at how contact-tracing via an app could help reduce this form of onward transmission. Their modelling tested the impact of a contact-tracing app based on a range of assumptions and concluded that if 80 per cent of smartphone users—or 56 per cent of the general population—used the app then it could effectively contain an epidemic in a country. Lower take-up rates of the app would still assist in reducing infection and death rates, though, as well as in reducing the prospects of subsequent lockdowns.

Importantly, however, underpinning each of these scenarios in the Oxford university modelling was an assumption:

… 80% of modelled contacts are registered by the app, either for technical reasons, or due to some contacts involving people not carrying their phones.

We've seen a range of take-up targets for the number of people downloading the COVIDSafe app floated by members of the government in recent weeks, ranging from the Prime Minister's 40 per cent of the total Australian population, to the Prime Minister's 40 per cent of smartphone users in Australia, to the Chief Scientist's target of at least a third of Australians, which was the Chief Medical Officer's target as well. We haven't, however, heard
what proportion of potential contacts between apps the government is expecting the current configuration of the app to register. It's a key variable in the modelling. This figure has big consequences.

As Dr Adam Dunn, a biomedical informatics expert at the University of Sydney, explained to the ABC that if 70 per cent of Australians downloaded the app and the app registered all potential contacts, up to half of all theoretical contacts would be caught by the app—50 per cent effectiveness. In contrast, if 40 per cent of the population downloaded the app but only half of the potential digital handshakes between downloaded apps were completed then only four per cent of potential contacts—fewer than one in 20 contacts—would be caught by the app. This is why the effectiveness of the app the government has designed in registering contacts matters.

We should be clear that the reduced effectiveness of the COVIDSafe app on iOS devices is the result of a design decision taken by government—specifically its decision not to wait for the new Google-Apple API for contact tracing. The Prime Minister's decision to move away from his initial complete rejection of the need to use the Google-Apple API for this app, stated in mid-April, is welcome. But it's now important that the government prioritises incorporating the Google-Apple API iOS integration as soon as possible to maximise the number of potential contacts caught. Once this new version is released, we'll also need a new public information campaign to encourage people to update the app to catch the 10 to 20 per cent of users who don't regularly update the apps on their phones. This app could play an important role in helping us move beyond the current coronavirus restrictions, so it's important that the government gets its implementation right.

Finally, I want to make a few comments on this bill from the perspective of my shadow cybersecurity portfolio. The provisions in this bill and the government's overall approach to this app highlight an ongoing philosophical problem in the government's approach to security. For the government, security seems to be founded on secrecy and obscurity. They won't be accountable to the parliament about the cybersecurity posture of Commonwealth entities, because they believe talking about the security posture is a security risk, as though adversaries rely on Senate estimates for vulnerability scanning. They respond to good-faith reports of security issues by threatening the employment of academic researchers and seeking to make independent security research a crime. They gag security researchers with views that scare them from speaking at government security conferences. They instinctively overclassify, creating needless obstacles to cybersecurity threat intelligence sharing and genuine engagement with the private sector stakeholders. Security doesn't work this way.

Transparency doesn't create security threats; it reveals them. Security vulnerabilities continue to exist whether you talk about them or not. Accountability doesn't undermine security; it strengthens it by identifying problems and creating incentives to fix them. The broader technology and security communities aren't a threat to be managed; they're an opportunity to be engaged. While the process that the government has pursued in the development and release of this app has offered more transparency than is usual from the government in this space, it's still fallen short of that seen in peer nations. I want to thank Vanessa Teague for her diligent work in compiling international comparisons of government transparency and accountability in this respect.

It wasn't until two weeks after the public launch that the government released the source code for the iOS and Android versions of the app. In comparison, both the UK and Singapore released the source code for their apps either before the launch or at the time of the launch. The Australian government has stated that it will not be releasing the source code for the national COVIDSafe server supporting the app. In contrast, Singapore has released a source code for both the app and the server. Both Singapore and the UK released white papers explaining the security and encryption decisions made in the implementation of the app at length. The UK has published a detailed paper from the technical director of the National Cyber Security Centre. We haven't seen anywhere near the same security transparency from the Australian bodies who have reviewed the app. We're told that it received the thumbs up, but there isn't anything detailed that external researchers can engage in to validate this. We don't know, for example, why the COVIDSafe design team chose to rotate handset encrypted IDs every two hours instead of every 15 minutes or why they chose to obtain only a single new temporary ID from an essential server at a time. Contrary to the recommendation in a traced-together white paper is that daily batches are downloaded, leaving handsets without a new ID if they're outside internet coverage.

Finally, there's no vulnerability disclosure process for this app. Members of the Australian tech community—public interest technologists—who want this app to succeed have donated countless hours to analysing the code of the COVIDSafe app, looking for bugs and vulnerabilities, and they have found issues with both the security and the performance of the app. While on the whole most researchers believe that the bugs and vulnerabilities they've found would not have dissuaded them from downloading the app, given the potential public benefits, it would be better for these unintended privacy issues to be remedied. As one researcher, Jim Mussared, put it:

Don't Panic! Users are advised to be aware of these issues but in most cases might reasonably conclude that they are not significant enough to warrant not using the app.
I still have the app installed and will continue to do so. I support the COVIDSafe application and want to see lives saved, but, at the same time, it’s very important to me that these privacy issues are addressed. But when Jim disclosed security issues via the public-facing email address for the app, as well as via emails to the DTA, ASD, ACSC and the Cyber Security CRC, he received no response to his issues for eight days. It was only when the issue began to attract media attention that he received a one-line acknowledgement via email. An update to the app released the day that he received this response did not address the issue that he had raised.

At a minimum, a functioning vulnerability disclosure process should set expectations for how an organisation will engage with outside reports of vulnerabilities and bugs and subsequently respond. An email address that operates as a black hole is not a vulnerability disclosure process. The best technology companies in the world seek external feedback. They operate with these vulnerability disclosure processes. The US military does this. The UK government has a government-wide vulnerability disclosure platform operated by HackerOne, and Australia should follow suit.

We shouldn’t exaggerate the impact. Vulnerability disclosure processes and their extension bug bounty programs are supplements to good security practice, not replacements for it, but we’ve already seen the value that an extra set of eyes can offer to improving the security and performance of this app, and the government should avail itself of it. All of us in this chamber, all of us in the Australian community and all of us in the Australian technology sector want the government to succeed with this app. The government should listen to those trying to help it in this initiative.

**Dr HAINES** (Indi) (17:31): Since the Minister for Health first announced that this app would be central to Australia’s fight against the pandemic, many constituents have contacted me concerned about what this app entails. They wanted to know that their personal data would only be used to respond to the pandemic and would not be exploited by government. What would happen to their personal data after deleting the app? Could they be forced to download the app or upload their personal data, particularly by their employers? To be fair, I wondered these things myself.

When I first studied the government’s proposal, I laid out three tests the app would have to meet to win my support. It had to be voluntary, temporary and secure. ’Voluntary’ means people cannot be forced to download the app by their employer, the government or any services they wish to use. ’Temporary’ means that, once this pandemic has passed, the app will be dismantled and the data it stored will be completely erased. ’Secure’ means legislated privacy protections for all those who download it. The privacy safeguards in the bill meet my three tests and they will allay the concerns of many Australians who, when asked to download the app, have justifiably hesitated. While there are clearly gremlins to be ironed out, the public benefit outweighs the issues that have been identified thus far.

This app, of course, is only necessary because Australia continues to face an enormous public health crisis. As a former nurse and a rural health researcher, I understand acutely the impact that this pandemic is having on our health service. The nurses and doctors on the front line of this fight are my former colleagues. Today, on International Nurses Day, I think especially of our nurses and the centrality of their role in the fight against this pandemic. For their expertise, their professionalism, their courage and their compassion as they take on this pandemic, I honour them. When I think of this app and what it could do to help keep a lid on this virus, it’s them I think of.

As we relax restrictions, we know there will be outbreaks. To deal with this, the app alone is not enough. The app is not an alternative to social distancing; it’s a complement. I’m concerned that the government’s messaging on this has been confusing. It’s not a catch-all for contact tracing; it’s an adjunct to contact tracing. I’ve even heard stories about people thinking the app itself provides immunity against the virus. We need to be crystal clear that the same lessons we followed still apply even as restrictions lift: stay home when you can, maintain a safe distance from people and wash your hands.

COVID-19 has always been more than a health crisis. It’s also, of course, an economic one, and this app, by assisting us to trace and contain outbreaks, helps us start carefully and cautiously to reopen the economy. This is critical because the economic picture is dire. Throughout April I conducted an extensive survey of almost 400 businesses across my electorate of Indi to understand precisely how they’ve been impacted by COVID-19 and whether the support the government offered is sufficient to support them through this difficult period. The results of that survey are sobering. One-third of businesses told me they had lost 100 per cent of their revenue due to the lockdown. Ninety-seven per cent of businesses have been negatively affected. On average for those 400 businesses was a loss of 70 per cent of their revenue. Over a third of them laid off employees.
But beyond the headline figures three things absolutely stood out. Firstly, in my electorate tourism has been so hard hit. Accommodation and food businesses were among the hardest hit. Ninety-nine per cent of accommodation providers and 91 per cent of food businesses reported severe impacts.

Secondly, JobKeeper is leaving many behind. Sole traders in particular were more likely than anyone else to have looked into JobKeeper and decided not to apply. Now, many people have legitimate reasons not to apply, but many sole traders told me they wanted to but were not eligible or didn't think they were eligible. One participant said there are entire industries—in particular, the arts and entertainment industry—that, due to the nature of their employment, will not benefit. People on temporary visas, crucial to many regional businesses, have no support, and in many cases they've been told to go home. Unfortunately, it's not that simple and, if they leave these businesses, many of these businesses will indeed collapse. In a rural area such as mine, they won't open again.

Thirdly, bushfire affected regions are struggling the most. With the bushfires and now COVID-19, these regions have been hit with a double whammy. The data from my research shows that the Alpine and Indigo shires, the most bushfire affected of the LGAs which were hard hit either directly by the bushfires or as an effect of the bushfires, reported the most severe impacts of COVID-19. Towong shire, the most severely burnt of the bushfire areas, was not far behind. One shop owner told me: 'It's going to take a lot to recover from this year, with fires and now this. It's the ripple effect that's going to impact us for years.' A hotel owner in one small rural community told me: 'We're resilient farming people who are used to tough times. However, on the back of our horrific and devastating bushfire season, our local community is fragile and struggling with this.'

All businesses in Australia have been hit hard, but in bushfire affected regions COVID-19 is not the first hammer blow that they've suffered this year. Just as we need to safeguard our hard-fought gains in tackling the pandemic, we need to do all we can to support small businesses through the difficult time they face. This app, which this legislation implements, is a start. It's a small start and it's part of our fightback.

But reopening the economy—which this app contributes to enabling—by itself is not enough. From my research with small businesses in Indi, there were six key things that people were calling for again and again. First, small businesses need more targeted and flexible support to survive and grow beyond this COVID-19 crisis.

Second, we need to invest in regional infrastructure to support growth post-COVID. This means great internet, reliable phone services, and reliable train services into the cities and bigger centres. Crucial is support of our rural local governments, many of whom are working to deliver more with less from a diminishing ratepayer base and federal assistance grant funding that is 0.55 per cent of what it was in 1996. Restoring the value of Financial Assistance Grant funding to one per cent of Commonwealth taxation revenue would go a long way to getting rural councils and their residents the stability they need to thrive beyond this crisis, and nowhere more so than in the bushfire affected communities.

Third, we must invest in and promote regional tourism. Alpine Shire, in Indi, lost an estimated $90 million in tourism through the bushfires before COVID even happened. We need to invest in the infrastructure of these attractions to bring tourists back once this is over.

Fourth, we need to diversify our local industries, especially by producing and buying local. The fires burned through over 6,000 hectares of softwood plantations in Indi, threatening harvesting, haulage and manufacturing jobs in Benalla, Myrtleford and beyond. We have multiple local manufacturers across Indi, in industries as diverse as food manufacturing, steel fabrication, textiles and defence, to name but some. If these workers are to have jobs into the future, we need an innovative industrial strategy in this country, one that harnesses the potential of regional Australia once COVID-19 is past.

Fifth, we need targeted support for the arts sector. The arts employ around 2,100 people in Indi. These are the people who teach our kids to play the piano and dance; they're the bands that perform in local pubs; they're the artists who perform at the HotHouse Theatre. They're being left behind. In the wake of the bushfires, the town of Bright saw something none of us thought we would see: Katy Perry came to town to perform a special concert. Many people have told me how that concert was such an important moment for the community—a night of relief and coming together after a dark time, which helped create a positive energy that the community so badly needed. This is what the arts can do, and we will need more of that once this crisis is over.

Finally, we need accelerated deployment of bushfire funding. The fires were almost six months ago, and many people are still waiting on support. This is just not good enough. In Indi, 19 people have applied for bushfire related concessional loans, but none of them have been approved. This application number should be higher, but many people have told me that the process to apply is just too cumbersome and confusing, and with COVID on top of this they just don't know that they have the energy to do it. Six months after the fires, 254 small-business support grants have been paid out, but another 84 small businesses are still waiting. These grants are only available to businesses in Alpine and Towong shires. I’ve been lobbying since the grants were announced for them.
to be extended to Indigo, Wangaratta, Wodonga and Mansfield shires, all of which were affected by bushfires, especially Indigo, trapped as it was between the Towong and Alpine blazes. Why these LGAs were not included initially is beyond me, and why we are six months down the track and waiting for the Commonwealth and Victorian governments to sort this out is completely perplexing. All up, $12.5 million of grants have come through, when in fact the damage from the fires is in the hundreds of millions. I welcome the government's latest announcement this week, but I will not rest until the bushfire communities—hit twice, by bushfire and COVID—are back on their feet again.

I've written to the Treasurer and to the Victorian government outlining these six practical actions that they could take to better support our regional economy. As we debate the role of this app in supporting the reopening of our economy, it's important that we recognise that there is, indeed, so much work to do beyond the app.

I would like to make one last comment. It is about trust. With this app, the government is asking Australians to trust it. With this app, our ability to reopen our economy depends on the extent that Australians trust their government to get it right. With this app—one tool in our public health response armoury—our ability to literally save lives depends on the extent to which Australians trust their government. Yet we come off the back of a drastic collapse in trust in government and democracy. The ANU election study last year found that Australians' satisfaction with democracy is at its lowest since the constitutional crisis in the 1970s. Just 59 per cent of Australians are satisfied with how democracy is working, and just 12 per cent of people think that government is run for all Australians. That's hardly surprising, because for years some politicians have given us reason to distrust them. Let's remember that the biggest story before COVID-19 washed it from the headlines was sports rorts. Since I was elected I've been talking about the pressing need to restore integrity to our democratic institutions and to regain trust from the Australian people. That was never just an academic exercise. This was always about ensuring that when Australian governments need to take significant policy reform, or take the extraordinary actions that governments sometimes must, they have the necessary trust from the Australian people to do so.

Legislating a robust federal integrity commission is a step critical to restoring trust, yet the government has missed its own deadline of last December to release the legislation. In this time of crisis, they've realised now how important trust really is. Everyday Australians have played their part throughout this crisis, and I ask the government to play its part now too and release this legislation.

In supporting the legislation for the app, I'm essentially asking Australians to put their faith in a government that has not always shown that it deserves it. In supporting the bill I'm also calling on the government to introduce the legislation for a federal integrity commission to show Australians that they are worthy of this trust. That commission must be robust. In February I outlined the Beechworth principles—five characteristics of any integrity commission worth its name. They call on the federal integrity commission to have broad jurisdiction, to have one set of rules for everybody, to have appropriate powers to do its job, to hold fair hearings and to be accountable to the parliament. If the government's integrity commission is to restore the trust of the Australian people, I believe it must meet these five Beechworth principles. I'm committed to working with all MPs to ensure it does. Today I support this legislation on the app, but I do so with a call that we support the Australian people in restoring trust to our democracy.

**Ms STEGGALL** (Warringah) (17:45): I rise to speak on the Privacy Amendment (Public Health Contact Information) Bill 2020 to facilitate the correct handling of the data collected through the COVIDSafe app. I commend the government on the legislation presented and its willingness to embrace the amendments and the concerns that have been raised, in particular by the Law Council of Australia.

I do have concerns about the messaging that the government has deployed to encourage people to download the app and about people's understanding of what it is and how it works. The app is not like sunscreen. It will not protect you. It's not a warning beacon. It won't keep you away from a person or a risk of contamination. My biggest concern is that having downloaded the app people will get complacent about the most important measures that they need to take, which are to maintain their physical distancing, maintain awareness of their health and maintain good hand hygiene.

The app is simply a tool to work out who you may have come into contact with after someone has been tested. It helps the Department of Health officials with contact tracing. Once someone has tested positive to COVID-19, health officials will request permission to download the data from the app on the user's phone. The health officials will then use that data to contact those people who have been within 1.5 metres of that positive case for more than 15 minutes. If you're a person who keeps a diary and you can keep a very clear and precise account of who you might have been in contact with, or if the contact has been so little that you're not concerned, this is probably not aimed at you. But for those who may resume taking public transport, or resume work at places where there will be numerous people, this will be an important way of being able to contact strangers—people you may not have been aware of but who will have been within 1.5 metres for a period of 15 minutes. But we need to be clear: it's not a
silver bullet. You don't get an alert, you're not warned; it's retrospective. You must maintain your distance and you must maintain good hygiene.

Legal protections have been a big part of the discussion about the app. This bill addresses many of those concerns that were raised through the privacy impacts assessment and by stakeholders, including the Law Council of Australia. The biosecurity determination raised some concerns. The bill clarifies the role of the Privacy Commissioner and confers powers to the commissioner in the interactions with states and territories. It imposes specific obligations on the data administrator regarding deletion of data. It requires the government to delete the data as soon as possible. It prohibits the use and disclosure of data collected by the app and coercion of other persons to use the app. For example, no-one can be forced to download it to resume their employment or attend certain premises. It prohibits the creation and use of derivative data from data collected by the app and reverse engineering or re-identification of data that has been de-identified.

There are some remaining concerns expressed by the Law Council of Australia, and I do share those concerns. These are that the legislation should prescribe minimum design specifications for the app and the data store themselves; that the app must operate on a strictly voluntary basis at all times, with mechanisms for users to opt-out; and that there be 'streamlined arrangements to manage the interaction of investigations by the Privacy Commissioner with law enforcement investigations of offences for breaching the prohibitions on the use of data, under which the commissioner is not obliged to discontinue investigations'.

A lot of people are very confused about the app. The technical aspects are interesting. I've spoken with data security experts, including Fergus Hanson from ASPI, and I'm pleased that the government has implemented various security and privacy arrangements in the technical design. These include that the app works on bluetooth via a digital handshake when you come within 1.5 metres of someone for a period of 15 minutes. It does not require your GPS or any other location sensing data to be turned on. It's like playing your speaker—for example, if you're playing music: the closer you are, that 1.5 metre distance, is about where the signal will be strongest. The app records the time and the unique ID of the other apps around it. This unique ID changes every two hours to help prevent—and this is a concern that's been raised by many constituents—passive tracking by other applications. The unique ID data is saved on the phone and it's an important privacy feature. All the data is stored on your phone, not in a centralised database.

The app works on a consent based model. So if you are confirmed as a COVID positive case you will be asked for permission to access the contact list on your device. If you grant permission the data will then be uploaded to a secure government server managed by Amazon Web Services and located here in Australia. Health officials will use that data to assist contact tracing.

I do remain concerned with the functionality of the app on certain phones: in particular, iPhones and older phones. The security settings built into iPhone operating systems prevent bluetooth from conducting the handshake effectively when the app is running in the background. So for the app to work effectively the iPhone needs to be unlocked and the app needs to be running in the foreground without too many other bluetooth enabled apps running at the same time. This is a common problem that all governments have faced in the development of similar tracing apps. The government has an obligation to be truthful with the public about the functionalities of the app and its limitations. I do support the recent comments by various tech industry professionals that we should understand that the app, and supporting regulation, has been commissioned as a matter of urgency; therefore, it will be imperfect at an early stage of release and it will need to be improved upon. I urge the government to continue modifying and rectifying issues as they arise.

There's no doubt, though, that, as many people have wrestled with whether or not they are comfortable with downloading the app, trust in government has been a big part. It's been a moral quandary for many individuals, sometimes within same households. Since the terrorist attacks on the World Trade Centre on 11 September 2001, data incursion has been pushed by government in the name of national security. As a result, Australians have seen a gradual erosion of their privacy and a rise of scepticism. Similarly, with the advent of social media and smartphones, tech companies are using data in the name of profiteering. Here users are asked to sacrifice their privacy to improve their experience and convenience. These developments have all been against the backdrop of a steady decline in trust in government, caused in part by regular scandals; the rushing through of the metadata retention laws in 2015 and the subsequent expansion of access under those laws; and the controversial My Health Record service. Lack of trust in the government and the lack of transparency of government are major hurdles for all those who have not yet downloaded the app. Government should show goodwill by urgently putting forward legislation in relation to a national integrity commission with real powers. This was promised at the end of 2019. It's still not before the House, yet we've seen a number of pieces of legislation brought here with urgency because the situation demanded it. It shows that, clearly, where there's a will, there's a way. There should be no further
delay in introducing the legislation to ensure a national integrity commission with teeth, so that Australians can have confidence that there is accountability and transparency in government.

Most recently—and, yet again, in the press—the sports rorts scandal has reinforced that lack of trust in government. The recent revelations that there may in fact have been authorisation by the Prime Minister’s office in relation to that sports expenditure raise a really concerning inference that there may have been a misleading of the House in terms of responses. The very fabric of democracy is undermined if we can’t trust what is said in this place. To that end, it is now more important than ever to form a national integrity commission and restore trust in the integrity of governments and transparency in governance. We've seen it in the very response to this crisis. We've seen the government establish the National COVID-19 Coordination Commission. There was certainly no promoting or advertising of its creation or content, the people on it or its agenda. There is no transparency in relation to its principles or its priorities. There is no accountability and no reporting mechanism. It's a clear lack of transparency. I note that, in fact, there will be an appearance before the Senate committee tomorrow by the National COVID-19 Coordination Commission members. I welcome hearing some of those answers. It's that lack of transparency that undermines trust in things like the app because, in a response to a crisis like this, it is so important that party politics be put aside and that everyone in this place come together to find solutions for the many Australians who are suffering through this crisis. Restoring that trust is absolutely vital.

This app is mostly aimed at our younger generation. I think it's fair to say that our older generations are very cautious in their public interactions. If there is a lifting of restrictions, they will be very focused on who they have contact with and maintaining social distancing. But the greater concern, as our younger people head back out into the community and are involved with and in contact with more people, is that they download the app. So the government is asking for trust from our young people. I would argue that they are the very people that have been left last on the list of considerations by the government, so I would urge the government to think about putting in place more supporting measures for our young people, for all those on casual contracts who are not receiving assistance under the current packages. We have a generation that is facing so many challenges. They are deeply concerned about the impacts of climate change and so many issues that are impacting around the world. They are deeply concerned about the debt that is being incurred and the economic crisis that is coming from this health crisis. They are the generation that will have to bear it on their shoulders. They will have to work hard, and they deserve this government's attention to give them hope and to give them a sense that they are very much at the centre of the focus of this government. If the government can give them that faith, trust, courage and the hope that they are a priority, I believe that they will turn around and be all the more supportive of this app, and they will trust the government when it comes to their privacy and download the app and play their part.

So it's important for all those who have been hesitant to download the app to date to make an informed decision. It is a part each and every one of us can play. It's important that you take that responsibility seriously and it is important you all do your bit. But, mostly, remember: it is not a solution; it is just another tool. So please maintain your physical distancing, maintain your hygiene and your social-distancing measures, get tested if you have any health concerns, and stay informed.

Mr HUSIC (Chifley) (17:58): I sometimes feel that, in the discussion around these elements of the nation's response to COVID-19, if at any point we do raise matters that are contrary or critical then in some way we are considered treasonous or not supportive of the national effort in responding to this pandemic. Nothing could be further from the truth. The reality is that, where there is a call for national unity, we do want to be able to act in a way that delivers it. I note that, a number of times, people within the opposition have used the term 'constructive', and we have been constructive, by and large. But being constructive does not require us to be mute. It does require us to look, in a very objective way, at some of the things that are being proposed. And, where we believe recommendations or changes should be made, they should be put forward. I am aware that both the shadow minister for health and the shadow Attorney-General have put forward ideas with respect to elements of the Privacy Amendment (Public Health Contact Information) Bill 2020. Those changes have been made to this legislation. And, within the context of the COVIDSafe app, a number of times we have made the point that we support the app. Apparently this is the threshold requirement for any discussion around this matter—that, in some way, if we are critical of the app we're not supportive of it.

We do want this app. We do recognise that the app has a role to play, as has been expressed by a number of speakers in this debate. I note in particular the contribution by the member for Indi, who said that we want to see this work—and also to pick up on the point made by the member for Gellibrand—because as a community we will be safer. In the case of what the member for Indi spelt out, in her community, like many others, the economic impact can be lessened. I totally get that as well. But I have been frustrated, in the context of the discussion around the app, about the government's preference for headlines over hard yards, where we have wanted them to actually get a few things done right in respect of this.
It is not enough for the government to say, 'Trust us,' and then appeal to the community to just download the app en masse without having done the homework. In a number of cases it took quite a bit of time for this legislation to be released, despite the commitment made that it would be released promptly. We had a biosecurity determination put in place as a mechanism to deliver a certain level of protection, but it took time for that to happen. We were told that the source code, the building blocks— in effect the language that's used by the app to determine what is done and what isn't done— would be released. Then we were told that it would take a couple of weeks for it to be released. And now, from what I'm led to believe, the source code has been released, but it's not open source, so there are some hurdles in being able to obtain that.

There is another thing that has concerned Australians. The five million Australians who have downloaded the app have done that on the basis of trusting the government to get this right. As I described earlier, a target was set in relation to this app, and then they walked away from that target. We don't know whether 30 per cent, 40 per cent or 50 per cent of smartphone users would be required to hold onto this app. It's almost like attaching the target to a chocolate wheel and spinning it and at some point we'll reach what they need. We should have something definite from the government as to what is required in terms of the number of downloads—a target that is required to ensure public safety—and then do the things that will build trust.

One of the things I've been deeply concerned about is the awarding of the contract for the data storage to an overseas multinational, Amazon Web Services. Now, Amazon Web Services is a great company—no doubt. They have supported a lot of innovation, and a lot of effort online has been as a result of their offering. I'm absolutely in support of that. But, having said that, when Microsoft first got access to government data through its cloud services offering I was critical of that in this place. I also forewarned to Amazon and to Google that I would have the same view, because there are capable, competent cloud services providers that are Australian based, that are Australian generated and that have been vetted by government and can do this work. You need only go to the government's own websites that list half a dozen cloud services providers that have been vetted as being able to securely manage data in this country. Of that protected list, two of them are overseas multinationals: Amazon and Microsoft. The four others—NTT Australia, Sliced Tech, Macquarie Telecom and Vault—were overlooked by this government in its rush to provide the contract for COVIDSafe to Amazon Web Services.

Again, Amazon Web Services do work in my electorate and have supported community groups in my electorate, for which I've been enormously grateful. But I will not, as a parliamentarian, turn a blind eye to the requirement that we speak in the national interest where it's appropriate. And a lot of Australians have been concerned that an overseas multinational has been given carriage of this element of the COVIDSafe app, even though the government has said that it will be stored here and have tried to assure the Australian public that the data is safe. Even today in the Financial Review the head of AWS in Australia could not guarantee that foreign nationals would be prevented entirely from being able to access any of the data generated by the COVIDSafe app in the national data storage arrangements. They themselves have admitted that and have contradicted the Attorney-General's Department, which tried to give us an assurance contrary to this.

This could easily have been avoided if one of the accredited, certified cloud services providers was given that element of the contract. There are a lot of Australians who do take their privacy seriously. They should not have parliamentarians look down their noses at them about their desire to have their data protected, very securely, and about also wanting to see Australian firms being able to do this work if they're capable of doing so. My firm view is that the AWS contract should be taken away from AWS and provided to one of the providers that is on that protected list and is Australian based to build stronger confidence in the way that this app is managed and not just have five million Australians downloading this app, but many more. And we should, as a demonstration of good faith for the five million who did download this app, demonstrate that we take their privacy and their concerns seriously and that this data being managed by an Australian company on Australian soil should be taken seriously.

I'm not asking for us to cut corners. I'm not asking for us to create a lower standard for those companies—not by any stretch of the imagination. And I'm not being protectionist in expanding or extending to this parliament the argument that I'm making right now. As I said earlier and as I emphasise: the Australian firms have been asked by government whether or not they are capable of securely holding and managing sensitive government data, and they have met the government's expectations. They have shown that they are capable of doing this.

You cannot have an industry minister, in the middle of this pandemic, when reconsidering the impact on global supply chains, talking about the impact on Australian industry and the need for us to rethink the way we do business in this country to support Australian industry and then have another minister make a decision that is quite contrary to Australian industry, where that industry is capable of doing the job. I speak on behalf of not just the firms but the tech talent in this country that are quite capable of supporting and developing the app and of ensuring that the data is stored absolutely capable and securely and to the needs and expectations of not only the government but the public. I speak on behalf of those workers, the thousands of them across the country, the
thousands that might even live in the member for Warringah's seat as well, as I know they live in my seat and the member for Gorton's seat. In all parts of the country, tech workers, more and more, are supporting these operations, be it within government, business or even the community sector, and would expect that their government would back Australian firms where they are capable of doing the work of managing sensitive data. They were absolutely ignored by this government.

What's interesting is that the public cloud offerings that were extended by Microsoft and Amazon to the Australian government, the US government would not accept. They would expect a higher standard of security and storage of data. So the US government would not accept a US firm offering, but the Australian government has. This is my issue with the way that the cloud services providers in this country have been shabbily treated by a government that reckons it looks after Australian firms but doesn't. This is why we've raised this issue in the substantive amendment that has been moved by the shadow Attorney-General.

The other thing is this—and I've raised this with parliamentarians: I am aware of the fact that the Australian Signals Directorate did an assessment on the security of Australian data on overseas servers. There is a quote going around, and I challenge the Minister for Government Services, the Attorney-General or the Minister for Home Affairs to tell me whether or not this is right—and I'm happy to be proven wrong on this. There is a quote going around about the overseas cloud services providers: 'There is still a risk that foreign nationals may be able to gain limited access to Australian government data.' This is why it's a serious issue. The Australian Signals Directorate has made those assessments about overseas multinationals providing public cloud services for the storage of sensitive Australian government data. The government recognises this as an issue. Even having done that assessment in the last 12 to 18 months, it has still provided a major contract to an overseas multinational to do this work. It's just wrong. This is the point I make: this government could generate massive confidence in this app by addressing the concerns of a sizeable part of the Australian public that do not like the fact that Amazon Web Services got this contract and that did react publicly to that. Their view should be represented in this chamber.

There are even simple things with the way that the app works—or doesn't work, I might add. I would make this observation. There are older phones that are still not capable of running the app. The issue of the iPhone has been well ventilated by the member for Gellibrand. Another issue, too, that people are worried about is the power usage of the app. I think the member for Warringah observed that younger people might be a bit more au fait in using this app than older people. But even if you follow the advice of the app where it says, 'Apply the power saver mode in the app,' if you go into the app itself to try to find that it's not there. If I then, for example, go into the battery option in settings on the iPhone, it's not there. If I then go into the app itself within the general settings of the iPhone and look at the app settings for the COVIDSafe app as to how to apply the power saver mode, it's not there. Now, it could be there—I'm not saying I'm a tech expert, by any stretch of the imagination—but make it easier for the general public who are not necessarily au fait with these things to be able to apply and use the app. It's these simple steps that have been made a lot more difficult and torturous to navigate in part, to use that dramatic phrase, that could easily be sorted out and should be sorted out with a mentality that is collaborative. That's what happens in the tech sector.

The member for Gellibrand rightly pointed out, for example, that acknowledging vulnerabilities in the app is not an admission of failure. I take on board some of the other points that were raised on the app. Yes, there will be problems. Yes, it will be buggy. Yes, it will need to be updated—absolutely. The government should embrace that if there is a problem with the app then they need to be a lot more forthcoming in acknowledging those problems and they need to respond to them more quickly than the time frame that the member for Gellibrand outlined earlier, where it took eight days for some problems to even get recognised when some in the tech community raised them. The quicker we address them, the more solid the app. The more confidence built in it, the greater usage by the Australian public. I then go back to the point that was rightly raised by the member for Indi: the more we get this used and the more we can track these issues, the quicker we can raise the restrictions and the better our local communities and the nation will be as a result.

Ms THWAITES (Jagajaga) (18:13): It is important that we have this debate in this space, because the COVIDSafe app has the potential to be a valuable tool in helping to manage the spread of the coronavirus. It gives public health officials another means to do contact tracing, particularly when people start moving around more. Of course, to do that the app has to be effective in how it operates and Australians have to have confidence in it and they have to believe that the government has made the right decisions when it comes to their privacy. We're starting here from a base where many Australians are sceptical about the government when it comes to trust and particularly when it comes to trusting government with technological solutions. They do have hesitation in sharing information with government. So this legislation, the Privacy Amendment (Public Health Contact Information) Bill 2020, is an important step in building some public confidence in the app and hopefully reassuring more people such that they'll download it.
As we've seen throughout this crisis, Labor has sought to work in good faith with the government to do what is needed to keep people safe. So it is important for me to acknowledge that the government has engaged constructively with Labor on this legislation and that since the draft was released, that the government has accepted a number of suggestions Labor has made to improve this legislation. That's a positive thing, that we have been able to work together to make this legislation and the privacy in this legislation stronger. It is also important that reviewing this app and the privacy concerns will be part of the work that the Senate Select Committee on COVID-19 does because, again, this goes to trust in government and trust in its actions during this crisis. That trust will continue to be an integral part of helping us to navigate this crisis.

It's for that reason that I take this opportunity to call on the government to reconsider its suspension of parliament until August. Trust matters, and oversight and scrutiny are part of what builds trust. All of us here have been elected by our communities to come to this place and to represent them, and in a time of crisis that is more important than ever. So it's important that we have the chance to discuss this legislation today and that we have the chance to discuss legislation in the future. I urge the government to make sure that we come back to be able to do that before August.

Despite the work that this legislation does to support privacy, we know that community members and experts continue to have some privacy concerns. As we heard from the member for Chifley, there are concerns around how the data is being warehoused overseas and what that might mean as well as concerns around the way the government has maybe not taken on board as much outside expertise as it should have when it comes to looking at the source code and possible flaws in it. There do also remain concerns about how the app works and whether it is as effective as it should be. And, as someone representing an electorate with a number of older residents, I am particularly concerned that the app doesn't work on older Android phones. I've had a number of older residents contact my office, feeling very scared because they can't download the app onto their phone.

For those who have managed to download the app but who are perhaps less tech-savvy than some of us, they're really confused about what the app actually does. People have contacted my office very stressed about why they're getting push notifications and whether that's the app trying to tell them that they've actually got COVID-19. Some have been under the misunderstanding that the app will protect them from getting COVID-19 by sending them an alert when they're near someone who's got the virus so they can make a quick exit. This misunderstanding has the potential to affect people's behaviour in public. They may undertake more risky behaviour because they think they're going to get a ping telling them to run. It also has the potential to undermine trust in the app. When people realise this is not how it operates they are going to be less likely to use it. So I really urge the government to consider how they're talking about the app, how they're communicating with the public about the purpose of this—that it's for contact tracing, that it doesn't give them a magical shield that will protect them and that it's not sunscreen but something that will help them find people who they've been around. I think that's really important. Perhaps a public information campaign could also support that.

I know that people in my electorate want to get out and about. They need to get back to work. Too many of them are still falling through the cracks; they're struggling. They need this app to work, so they need to have trust. I commend the government for bringing on this legislation. I ask them to do all they can to make sure the app is as effective as possible.

Mr PERRETT (Moreton) (18:18): I rise to speak on the Privacy Amendment (Public Health Contact Information) Bill 2020. This is legislation that protects the privacy of data that is volunteered by people who voluntarily download the COVIDSafe app. Obviously, these are extraordinary times. Right now in several overseas countries there are fleets of drones monitoring neighbourhoods to check the compliance of citizens with the social-distancing restrictions imposed by their governments. This sounds like something out of a sci-fi movie, but sadly this is the world that we live in in 2020 and the world as it will be for a very long time.

There is no denying the importance of containing the spread of COVID-19. It's a very dangerous disease that has now caused the death of more than 100 Australians and more than 283,000 people worldwide, and these numbers will continue to rise. On International Nurses Day I particularly mention the nurses who've been involved in helping people but also those nurses who've given their lives whilst caring for people around the world.

Restrictions on people's liberties have been applied across the world to contain the spread of the virus—individual rights sacrificed for the safety of the herd. The International Center for Not-for-Profit Law has launched the COVID-19 Civic Freedom Tracker to track what measures are being imposed by countries around the world. As of today, 84 countries have emergency declarations in place; 30 countries have measures which affect expression; and 111 countries have imposed measures that affect assembly. So balancing human rights is always a difficult task. Obviously, there is a legitimate need to contain our movements to stop the virus spreading. It is important to ensure that everyone is given accurate information explaining the why, and measures to keep
people safe should always be seriously considered. However, history has taught us that often when governments gain new powers they are usually reluctant to give them back and never do so quickly. A robust democracy is more important in times of crisis than at any other time.

The opposition should not be condemned for questioning the coalition government about any measures they impose. We can't ask Australians to make sacrifices and then have a government that doesn't bring them into their confidence. It is the job of opposition to hold governments to account. To paraphrase the member for Rankin today in his speech in response to the Treasurer: it might be the Labor Party that the government wants, but it is not the opposition that the nation needs. It is more important than ever that we continue to question, call out inconsistencies and demand explanations about how our economy, our community and our human rights will be protected after this crisis is over because it will be a changed Australia and a changed world.

Labor has consistently supported the concept of a tracing app. We know that a tracing app can be a critical tool in the COVID-19 exit strategy, but equally we know that we have to get the balance right. We've heard many speeches tonight detailing some of the technical and more complicated issues associated with the COVIDSafe app. The government launched the COVIDSafe app just a few weeks ago and said that we would need to get to 40 per cent of Australians, or 10 million Australians, and so far there have been more than five million downloads of the app.

The purpose of the legislation before the House that we're debating right now is to protect data collected by the COVIDSafe app. Before I talk about the privacy protections because that is what I am most concerned about, it is important to understand how the COVIDSafe app collects the data and what data it collects. The app only works on smartphones and the smartphone must have a compatible operating system. As we've heard from previous speakers, many people do not have phones that are compatible, particularly some elderly Australians. They've been most concerned about it, and have been contacting my office. If the app is open and running on a person's smartphone, the app will use the phone's bluetooth capability to seek out the bluetooth signals from other smartphones that have downloaded the app and have it also open and running. Where a smartphone running the app detects another smartphone running the app, each smartphone will create a digital handshake and store this on the individual smartphones as an encrypted file. The smartphone's ability to detect and store this digital handshake will be optimum when the smartphone is unlocked—and that is not necessarily how most people carry their phones.

The only data stored on the phone from the digital handshake is that the user of the downloaded COVIDSafe app was in contact with another user of the COVIDSafe app; the unique ID of the other user of the COVIDSafe app; the strength of the bluetooth signal during the digital handshake; and the date and time of the digital handshake. The smartphone will continue to create a digital handshake with the other user of the COVIDSafe app every minute that it remains within bluetooth proximity. The encrypted digital handshake will be stored on the smartphone for a period of 21 days before it is automatically deleted.

We know that there have been issues with this app since it was released a few weeks ago. My electorate office has had many calls, including today, from people who are willing but unable to download the app. Sometimes it's because their phones are not compatible due to the age of the phone. Many of them have been elderly people. Unfortunately, they're also the people most at risk should they contract COVID-19. These people perhaps are not in a circumstance where they can rush out and buy a new phone. Some people have been unable to download it for reasons that we just couldn't track down in our interactions with them. All of these constituents were distressed that they could not access something that they believed was going to keep them safer from this awful virus. Some of them misunderstood the app but nevertheless were anxious because of it.

We also know that there are other important technical issues yet to be solved in the operation of this app. As stated by other speakers, particularly the member for Chifley, I'm disappointed that the Australian government chose not to work closely with the Australian tech sector in developing aspects of this. I suggest that that would have been good for employment. We've certainly had information presented that they were capable of responding to it, rather than having to go overseas for everything.

With the member for Grey, I'm a co-chair of the Parliamentary Friends of Diabetes—or the enemies of diabetes! Unfortunately, Diabetes Australia, the peak body, has had to warn people with diabetes who have downloaded the COVIDSafe app that it may interfere with their lifesaving continuous glucose-monitoring apps. People with diabetes, people who have that comorbidity, are perhaps more at risk from COVID-19. This is not good enough. I'm speaking up for people with diabetes.

Since the beginning of this health crisis, Labor has sought to work constructively and in good faith with the government to ensure that Australians are kept safe during this health emergency. Our working with the government on this legislation is an example of that cooperative approach. The shadow Attorney-General, in his
speech in response, spoke very highly of working with the Attorney-General, Mr Porter, in terms of working out this legislation. Labor made some suggestions for improving this bill. I’m very pleased that the government took heed of those suggestions and included some in the legislation that we are now debating.

I’ve talked a bit about the app itself. The most important details about this app are not how the app collects information, not where the information is stored and not how long the information will be stored for. The most important characteristic of this app is how much confidence the public has in its use. So far five million people have downloaded the app and, as has been stated on a list, I am not one of those people as yet. That’s not the 40 per cent of the population that the government said we need to make it an effective process. Unless the public have confidence that the app will work consistently and that their data and privacy will be protected, they won’t use it. Unless their smartphone can download the app, they can’t use it. Unless the app does not interfere with other even more important apps on their phone, such as for diabetes, they can’t use it. To state the obvious: if the app is not used, it’s not going to do much to stop the spread of COVID-19.

Assuring Australians that their data and privacy will be protected is crucial in gaining public confidence in the app. This bill protects the collection, use and disclosure of information collected by the app, except in a number of prescribed circumstances. Its intention is for contact tracing. The bill creates offences for other unauthorised use of the data. Importantly, the bill contains an override provision in relation to other laws. A warrant obtained by a law enforcement agency for access to COVIDSafe data cannot override the prohibition on access to that data. I will stress that again for the lawyers out there: a warrant obtained by a law enforcement agency cannot override that prohibition on accessing the data. And data collected by the app will not be admissible in any court proceedings.

This is a stronger piece of legislation now that the opposition has had some input into it. We still need to be vigilant and to keep an eye on how these measures will protect the data and privacy of those using the app. Unfortunately, there are some ministers in the Morrison government that I wouldn’t trust to feed my goldfish. And I only have one goldfish, so I can’t test which ones are competent. I’m not sure if anyone was suggesting they wanted to nominate to feed my goldfish there, but let’s hope that the government gets this COVIDSafe app right and that the public does have confidence in it. I’m reassured enough that I will now download the COVIDSafe app—I do have confidence in that process now.

Obviously, sorting out the power save mode and some of the other concerns that have been raised by speakers in the chamber during the debate will, hopefully, make it a more effective process. I call on the government to improve that public confidence in the app by addressing the many technical concerns that have been raised by members of parliament, and by Australians—especially those in my electorate of Moreton—and I commend this privacy legislation to the House.

Mr BANDT (Melbourne—Leader of the Australian Greens) (18:29): This Privacy Amendment (Public Health Contact Information) Bill 2020, hopefully, represents a culture shift within the government on how they approach the privacy of Australian citizens.

We have come a long way in a very short time. Just last year, this House was presented with some of the most oppressive and threatening laws to privacy through the government's encryption legislation. Not only was the government's encryption bill a tremendous invasion into people's privacy but it also threatened the viability of IT companies and startups operating in Australia. The Greens were the sole party in this place opposed to that legislation. We worked closely with stakeholders and the tech community to push privacy priorities so that they are no longer treated simply as an annoying inconvenience by the government.

Today, in this bill, we see the culmination of this hard work and hard-fought campaigning by the digital and legal community alongside the Greens. The government has listened to most of the privacy concerns that seem to have been adopted in the development of the COVID-tracing app. We continue, though, to have some concerns on this bill and we’ll be moving amendments in the Senate to improve the legislation. But many of our concerns have been addressed. Our amendments—to foreshadow them—could include an explicit sunset clause on app and data use and retention so that they can't be used for any non-COVID-related purpose. We also want to see some reporting obligations, with the reports tabled in parliament, and some enforceable prohibitions on derivative and re-identified data that is derived from the app.

We also remain deeply concerned about the ambiguities of how this intersects with US law, and whether Amazon, as the successful contractor, has duties and obligations to a foreign government that are at odds with the interests of Australian citizens. In this morning's Financial Review, the Australian head of Amazon basically conceded that if the US government wants our data from the COVIDSafe app then they can have it. Now, this is quite different to assurances that were provided to the Greens by the government during briefings that we were relying on in the lead-up to the rollout of the app. The Law Council of Australia has called on the government to
expedite an executive agreement with the United States government, under the US CLOUD Act, to minimise the risk that any data obtained will be able to be accessed by US authorities. The Greens reinforce the Law Council's caution, and we will continue to pursue this point while the app is operating.

In any case, it is incredibly disappointing that the Morrison government has put its citizens in this situation by contracting a US firm to hold the personal data of millions of Australian citizens without having ensured the protection first. I repeat: when the Australian head of Amazon basically says that they may be powerless, and may be required to hand over the data to the US government if the US government wants it, then that is something that should be of concern, and that is something that the government should have sorted out before it contracted them.

With this information out today, the Greens still remain cautious and sceptical about this whole process. But it is important to note that this bill is not about the rollout of the app, which has been done by regulation. It's about putting in place a framework of privacy protections. This bill will improve the operation of the COVIDSafe app, so the Greens are not in the position of opposing this bill—despite having reservations about matters external to the legislation. I will just repeat that: this bill doesn't enable the app; the app is there under separate powers. This bill puts some protections around it and, even though we would say those protections don't go as far as they should, nonetheless those protections are better than no protections and therefore we are not in a position to oppose the bill.

But that brings us to the app itself. It may be a useful tool, to some extent, if deployed and used properly, but it's not going to be a silver bullet to our challenges. There are many more important things that we all need to be doing, such as maintaining social distancing, continuing to invest in the people who do the contact tracing and continuing to prepare our public health system. In the medium term, it's going to be critical that the government ensures that any vaccine that is invented is able to be manufactured here in Australia. I know that CSIRO and CSL have some capacity, but the government needs to be ready to put public resources into ramping up any vaccine manufacturing and to ensure that a vaccine is freely available to all. That's because if we rely on Donald Trump to give us the vaccine we are going to be at the back of the queue.

While this app does have the potential to help our public response, on a personal level I have to date been reticent to download it—given the government's atrocious record on privacy. We have recent examples where ministers of the Crown have leaked personal information relating to private health records or Centrelink income records in order to humiliate someone in the pursuit of a political advantage. Just to underscore this: the concerns that people in the community have had about handing over information to the government, that the government or governments are able to access, are not necessarily misplaced concerns, because when you see government ministers who have abused their positions to get personal information that people have provided to the government in the form of Centrelink or health records, and then those find their way out into the media so that the government can get a political hit, then you understand why people are concerned. Basically, this government has spent all of its term undermining the trust that Australian citizens can have in government.

Now, more than ever, we need trust in our public authorities in order to guide us through this crisis. But this government has done everything it possibly can to undermine that trust. And so the government comes to this from a place of trust deficit, and it has to address that. It cannot criticise people who want to ask questions about the use of this data and about their privacy, because this government has systematically abused that trust over many, many years. It's this abuse of power by the government that the Greens are so vigilant to guard against, and it's why we take our votes on legislation like this so seriously.

Personally, I've come to the view that, as far as I'm concerned, because of the gravity of the health threat and because we've been able to secure some privacy protections, I'll feel comfortable enough to have the COVID-tracing app downloaded on my phone and use it to assist the public health response. But, again, I caution the government that for the people who have a question mark about whether they'll do the same it's not because those people are somehow wrong or that those people have misplaced concerns; it's because this government has done everything it can to undermine trust and to undermine protections around privacy, and so the government is now reaping what it has sown. If the government wants more people to download and use the app then it should have a look at what it has done to undermine trust and it should have a look at what it has done to undermine privacy in the past. As I said at the start of this speech, perhaps this is the beginning of a new government approach to privacy, and perhaps one of the things that could be done now is go back and revisit the metadata laws and encryption laws. If this level of privacy and protection is warranted for this then perhaps it is warranted in other instances as well. It might be a good time to start putting people's privacy first.

The Greens will always stand up for the privacy of all Australians. I'm proud of the role that we played in forcing the government to the table on privacy and ensuring that the protections are there as the app is rolled out. We'll continue to monitor the progress of this app and push for more action to protect privacy. We'll also continue to push for a response that is led by the advice of public health experts. It is with grave concern that we're starting...
to hear now the chimes and calls from the billionaires to say: we all need to snap back to business as usual because we aren't making as much money as before, and wouldn't it be good if some of these restrictions were lifted? Look, no-one likes these restrictions. No-one has said, 'I want these restrictions imposed,' because they enjoy it. It is being done to save lives. We should only start lifting these restrictions when the public health experts tell us that it is okay to do so. While there are people saying there is still a risk of a secondary spike of infections until we get the crisis under control and as long as there is a call from the sound body of public health experts advising governments to say, 'Look, we should not follow the path of other countries who've lifted restrictions too early and have then had to manage a second wave of infections,' then the Greens will support that.

It was clear from the beginning that the government had to be dragged kicking and screaming to follow the advice of public health experts. Let's not forget that whilst some state premiers were taking the right step of beginning to put in place restrictions, we had a Prime Minister telling us he was off to the football and a health minister saying it was okay to shake hands. Then, within 24 or 48 hours, they changed their minds on that. It is clear that the government has had to be dragged to a public health first response. We are glad that they have been dragged there by political and health forces who have said that that is the way to go. We are pleased that's the case. I would urge the government now to not treat this app as a silver bullet that is going to all of a sudden allow them to cave into the demands of big business and start lifting the restrictions earlier than the public health experts say is okay to do. Because we need to listen to the health experts first, and if they tell us that the restrictions need to stay for a bit longer to make sure we're safe then that is what we should do. Again, it's not because anyone likes the restrictions; it's because it is saving lives. The Greens will continue to fight for a proper health response that puts health first and an economic recovery that leaves no-one behind.

Ms MURPHY (Dunkley) (18:40): I rise to speak on this bill today in the midst of what all would agree is a public health crisis like we've never experienced. It is likely to be a defining time in the lives of many, many Australians. It is a time when we have seen governments, individuals, businesses and community groups all pull together to do what we can to slow the spread of COVID-19. I stand today on behalf of the community of Dunkley: we have worked incredibly hard to do what we can to not only protect the health and welfare of vulnerable people in our community to stop the spread and deal with the health crisis but also to make sure that the social and economic needs of people aren't forgotten during this time.

The COVIDSafe app, which is the subject of the Privacy Amendment (Public Health Contact Information) Bill 2020 that we're discussing today, is but one measure in a suite of measures that have been and will continue to be really important to deal with this public health crisis. It is not a magic wand. It is not a silver bullet, but it is a very important addition to what we have done already and what we will continue to do.

I want to put on the record how amazing the community of Dunkley has been in stepping up to the plate and following the new and sometimes incredibly difficult social restrictions that we have had to live through. During the last six weeks or so, I have been inundated, as have my colleagues in this place, with queries and calls for help from constituents, many of whom have never contacted a politician before to ask for help, many of whom have experienced fear and anxiety that they'd never experienced before and many of whom have experienced economic stress that not only had they never experienced; they'd never dreamed they would experience it. No-one should say anything other than abiding by the social restrictions has been hard. It's been really hard. Even people who haven't lost their jobs who have got through this period so far, touch wood, without any health or other consequences, have found the distance from family and friends, and the lack of physical intimate contact with those around them in the community really hard to deal with. But we've done it in our community, as have many communities across Australia, because it was really important and continues to be really important to save lives. I want to thank each and every person in my community of Dunkley who has done the hard yards in order to do what we can to be part of stopping the spread.

The COVIDSafe app is part of, as I said, a suite of measures that will continue to stop the spread. Labor has taken the approach from day one to be constructive and cooperative with the government, saying, 'We will support measures that are good—measures that help us to help the vulnerable, measures that help us to help our communities. And we won't stand in the way of things that need to be done.' But we're also not here to just wave things through or to say that the government has a blank cheque to do whatever it wants. We are here to scrutinise measures. We are here to make constructive, positive suggestions. And that's what we've done with this legislation.

It could've been the case that there could've been a tracing app earlier. We're glad it's happened now. It could have been the case that some of the technical difficulties that are being experienced by people across Australia could have been dealt with before the app was launched. They weren't, but we're here to be constructive about fixing them.
In my opinion, it's not wise to tell Australians that this app is what will protect them from catching coronavirus. We know that there are many vulnerable people in the community who are struggling to use the app properly, whether it be because they are using Android phones, which this app doesn't work on; because they're older and don't understand or aren't capable of manipulating the technology; or because they are good, decent Australians who are sceptical about government because of the actions of this government and others over many years that have eroded their trust. These are the things that the government needs to continue to address to make sure that as many Australians as possible not only download this app and feel confident in using it but also continue to do the other things that need to be done to deal with the public health crisis. It cannot be the case that people hear messages from the Prime Minister and others about this app being what's needed to get the economy back to recovery, or this app being what's needed to stop the spread and that if they have the app on their phone they're immune and they don't need to follow the other rules. That's not the case. We still have a lot of hard work to do socially, in the health area and in the economy, and this app is a part of it.

Like many people in this place, I have downloaded the app, but I understand people who are sceptical and who are anxious about their privacy. I understand people who are concerned about data being stored by international companies. I understand people who are concerned about whether other countries might be able to access their data. I understand people who are concerned about technical problems. I don't put these concerns forward as reasons not to use the app; I put them forward to say that there is more work to be done by this parliament and this government to make sure that Australians genuinely buy into this very important measure. But it is only part of a suite of measures. I'm part of an opposition supporting these public health measures, but we're also making sure that we say, every step along the way: it's not set and forget. It's not the case that we can blithely tell people: this is what you need to do, and you'll be alright. We need to take the Australian public with us, and we need to scrutinise, at all times, how well the rollout of the technology is occurring. I'm one of those Australians that looks at the history of technology that has been rolled out by this government and says that there are reasons to be concerned. We have to make sure that this is not one of those technological disasters. It won't be if we all continue to work constructively, but we also need to do our jobs and identify problems and how to fix them.

I also want to say to my community of Dunkley: we will get through this and we will get through it together. 'Getting through it together' is not just a slogan to us. Politicians can stand up and say those words over and over again, but it means nothing without the community's buy-in and it means nothing without governments putting forward packages to help us get through it together. We will continue to support each other. We will continue to fight whatever crisis comes forward. But we won't do it with blithe slogans. We'll do it with actual plans and actual community connectedness.

Ms TEMPLEMAN (Macquarie) (18:49): It is a real privilege to be back here and able to address this place on a piece of legislation, the Privacy Amendment (Public Health Contact Information) Bill 2020, that will hopefully be a key tool in the steps that we're taking towards a new normal, and hopefully it will lead us to a recovery from what has been an extraordinary health challenge and an extraordinary challenge for our economy. I want to speak for my constituents. Like many people in this place, we've experienced calls by the droves from people who are feeling anxious, desperate, unsure, confused, and baffled by what is going on. Some of them are lonely. We've certainly reached out to those people, too.

When it comes to the app, many of them are really keen to download it, to have it on their phone, because it is something they can do that might help make a difference. They include people like Ken from Blaxland and Jeanette, Ros and Eric from right across my electorate. But, unfortunately, they have older phones. They're retired. They don't necessarily have a lot of money lying around to do the latest upgrade. They're really disappointed that the technology isn't able to be supported on their phones and that there isn't a fix for it. They've basically had to accept that they won't be able to be part of a communal effort to help contain and monitor outbreaks of coronavirus as we go forward. In an electorate like mine, in Macquarie, we have a lot of retired people who are very keen to be active members of the community, so it is a real disappointment for those people who have older Android phones.

It is also one of the reasons we won't, at this stage, be able to meet the 40 per cent target the government set for mobile phone users—which I note has now been revised down to 40 per cent of smart phone users. Currently, only 20 per cent of the population has uploaded it. There are also technical problems for people running iPhones. Hopefully there will be a fix for them. We come to this place trusting that those things will be progressed by the government, even when we leave this place. So, as a responsible opposition, we're being as constructive as we can about these measures. We're not saying, 'You have a total blank cheque to do what you like,' but we appreciate that we need to be able to support the measures and we trust that this government will not betray our trust or the trust of the community.
There are obviously a lot of people who still don't quite understand what they have to do to make sure the app is running when they're out and about. I would urge the government to have a very strong campaign around that—an education campaign not about downloading it but about how we operate it—otherwise all of us who have downloaded the app, like I did, risk it not doing its job. We obviously believe that a contact tracing app can be a really valuable tool for protecting Australians from the spread of coronavirus, but for it to be a valuable tool not only does it have to work but Australians also have to have confidence that there are sufficient safeguards in place so that their privacy is protected. And that's the other group of calls that I've had from people who don't have the highest level of trust in this government to roll out technology.

I'm not going to list the various examples that we have seen that have created a lack of confidence in people, but I want to speak for those people who are concerned about the privacy of their data. I really commend the government on working with us to ensure this legislation includes a number of our suggestions and amendments that ensure greater oversight by the Privacy Commissioner and require regular public updates. It is obviously a stronger piece of legislation thanks to collaboration, and isn't that the way we'd like the parliament to work. Of course, we're conscious it can't just be done once and then ignored; it can't be a set and forget. We will urge there to be constructive ongoing engagement between Labor and the government about this.

I guess there's one thing I am disappointed about—that there wasn't the ability to have more public discourse and to allow Australian companies to vie for the data storage contract, which has obviously gone offshore to Amazon. Now, I appreciate there was a need for speed in that, but we know that Australian companies can provide the sort of security needed, and so that is a disappointment for me.

When I was asked about why I was so fast to download the app, which I did on the evening of the day it was released—and I got my mum to download it to her phone. My dad's phone isn't up to the job. I did that in spite of my really deep reservations prior to this legislation being drafted and refined with our input. What I told people was that it is time to do everything we can as individuals to survive this health crisis. When I look at the double blow of bushfires and coronavirus on my local Blue Mountains and Hawkesbury economies—and, of course, we had floods and landslides as a bonus there—I think as a community we are willing to do extraordinary things to allow a new normal to emerge.

We have empty shops in the picturesque village of Leura. We've got cafes and restaurants in the Blue Mountains and Hawkesbury going all out to diversify their food offerings to make up for the lack of sitting customers, and there are way too many wondering if they will get their jobs back or if they can reopen their business. Our local economy relies heavily on domestic and international travel, and we're not a two-month closed economy; we are into our sixth month of people staying away from local businesses because of smoke, floods and now disease. The workers who rely on these businesses and the owners of these businesses, all of whom are just hanging on, are trying to recover from bushfire while surviving coronavirus, so they will need a range of ongoing support. If this app provides a way for people to move around but still be identified quickly if they come in contact with the virus, then that may prove to be a really important tool for our local economy.

I want to commend the innovation of my local businesses in the Blue Mountains and Hawkesbury, particularly their use of technology to do contactless bookings and deliveries. Many have not been online before and have taken the leap to do that. Whether it's cocktails or gin or cider, platters or frozen home-cooked meals or takeaway dishes, technology, including this app, has a role to play. The people of the Blue Mountains and Hawkesbury are coping with so much. They might be coping with working from home and/or homeschooling or not working and the financial stress that brings. It's been an extraordinary effort, and in this parliament we should match it with extraordinary efforts, which is very much what we have been trying to do on this side of the parliament, working with those opposite.

The last thing I'd like to say is to really urge the government to ensure that people don't think this app is some sort of magic shield and that, just because it's on their phone, they're safe and protected, because we know that they're not. We need to keep reinforcing that handwashing is essential, and coughing into your elbow and not going to work when you're sick and keeping your distance from people is even more important as we start to move around, even when we have the app on our phone.

Mr CONROY (Shortland) (18:58): I rise to speak on the Privacy Amendment (Public Health Contact Information) Bill 2020, which is another important part of Australia's response to the COVID-19 crisis. Before speaking on the bill, I want to pay tribute to the people of Shortland for the way they've been dealing with this difficult time these past few months. We really are living in unprecedented times. Although in some instances we've seen the worst of human nature and behaviour, overwhelmingly I have seen the very best in my constituents, and I thank them for their forbearance and their steady commitment to getting through this crisis.
In speaking on this bill, as a representative of the sixth oldest electorate in Australia, I particularly want to convey to the House issues elderly Australians—senior Australians—have with the COVIDSafe app. I want to begin by recognising that some of my constituents have expressed concerns about downloading the app. I recognise that these concerns, especially the ones around privacy, are entirely legitimate and understandable. The first point I say to those who have reservations is that it is entirely voluntary. It is entirely voluntary, and Labor's support for the app and this bill is on the basis that it is entirely voluntary. If you're uncomfortable downloading the app, you should not download it. It's a matter of public record that I've downloaded the app. Like most people, I did my research, carefully considered what to do and then made the decision that I should download the app.

Many of my constituents have raised concerns about privacy and the storage of data, and I want to assure them that this legislation makes it an offence to collect, use or disclose app data except in limited circumstances. Basically, only state and territory health officials can access the data, and that is for the sole purpose of contact tracing those with the virus. Again, this should never change.

Another concern raised with me directly by my constituents was that the government has awarded the data storage contract to Amazon Web Services, meaning that COVIDSafe app data possibly could be obtained by the American government. This just doesn't seem right to most people I've communicated with about their concerns. Surely this contract could have been awarded to an Australian company?

I would also like to draw to the attention of the House issues my constituents have had in downloading the app. As I mentioned previously, I represent an elderly electorate. Over 20 per cent of my constituents are over the age of 65, people who are the most vulnerable in this crisis. My office has been contacted by dozens of constituents who have older mobile phones and who don't have the capacity to download the app. One of them, from Speers Point, was particularly annoyed because his phone is only four years old and he considers it a relatively new phone, yet he is still unable to download the app. He was particularly put out because some of his mates had a go at him, in a good-natured Aussie way, for having a hopeless phone.

The serious point I'm trying to make is that a lot of my elderly constituents have genuinely wanted to download the app but have been prevented from doing so because of this particular digital divide. In fact, I tried to assist my father in downloading the app. He has an older Android phone and he was particularly put out that he couldn't download it, given that he is in a high-risk category. There is clearly a flaw in the design of the app in that people who are volunteering to participate, as the government has requested, are unable to do so.

Finally, I want to draw to the attention of the House concerns about the app that have been raised by Diabetes Australia. Almost 9,000 of my constituents in Shortland have diabetes, a number which is above the average for a federal electorate, so this concerns me greatly. Diabetes Australia has warned users of certain glucose-monitoring systems that COVIDSafe could potentially cause problems and that the app has interfered with their monitoring. Let me repeat that: the best information we have is that this app cannot work alongside essential glucose-monitoring systems. It is of grave concern, and we're potentially excluding millions of Australians who have diabetes, most of whom are in a high-risk COVID category, from downloading this app. These are the very people we need to download this app, if they agree to do so. For them to be prevented from doing that by a technical issue is of grave concern.

I will end where I began by saying it's good to make a contribution in the House on this very important bill. I commend the sensible amendment put forward by Labor to improve the COVIDSafe app, and I especially want to assure my constituents that I and my Labor colleagues will work constructively with the government in these extraordinary times. I am only supporting this bill on the basis that it is voluntary and that the data can be used only by state health officials for contact tracing. This bill achieves those ends, and that is the precondition for me supporting it. I commend the bill to the House.

**Dr FREELANDER** (Macarthur) (19:03): I rise today to speak in support of the Privacy Amendment (Public Health Contact Information) Bill 2020. I did have quite a long speech prepared, but I will make it brief because I don't think there's any doubt in the House as to where I stand on the COVIDSafe app. I see it as a very important tool in the ongoing management of the coronavirus pandemic. I am of course in support of any measures that are taken to reduce the impact of the SARS-CoV-2 virus. I'm very grateful for the efforts of Chris Bowen, shadow health minister, and Mark Dreyfus, shadow Attorney-General, for the work that they've done with the government to improve the app itself and the privacy provisions of the app. It's very important that I point out that the app itself uses bluetooth technology—it doesn't use geolocation—and that the privacy provisions have been described as the greatest privacy provisions of any legislation brought into this parliament. So I am fully in support of the app.

Whilst I'm now a politician, I'm first and foremost a paediatrician, and I know firsthand how difficult contact tracing can be for conditions such as whooping cough, measles, typhoid fever, meningococcal disease and many
others. Contact tracing is very time consuming. It's often fraught with missing contacts. The COVIDSafe app is a 21st century way of contact tracing that will be very important if we are to loosen our social-distancing restrictions and get to a more open society as people start to move around and start to have more contact. So let there be no doubt that I am fully in support of this legislation and the app itself.

As a physician, I have looked after people with end-stage renal failure and people on ventilators who can't be taken off a ventilator and eventually die. It's no great way to die. Anything we can do to reduce those deaths would be wonderful. The COVIDSafe app will be part of that support of dealing with the coronavirus pandemic.

There are issues that have been discussed—in particular, the difficulty in dealing with people who have glucose-monitoring apps on their phones. These are being dealt with, as are some of the other difficulties in the use of the app, and I have no doubt that the app will be modified over the coming weeks. But it is important that we put it in place. It is important that we all download it, for all our sakes, and I am fully in support of it.

I've practised medicine for over 40 years, and I've been quite strident in expressing my views and my opinions about the coronavirus pandemic that we're all facing. We don't know how it's going to end. We don't know what's going to happen. We don't know whether this virus will persist in the community for many years. We don't know whether it will be a seasonal virus. We don't know whether it will mutate to be a milder illness. But we do know that there are over four million people in the world—probably double that—who are already infected, and over a quarter of a million people are dead. We need to save lives. This COVIDSafe app will be part of that solution, and I fully support it—let there be no doubt. There's nothing more for me to say.

Mr KATTER (Kennedy) (19:08): I come from North Queensland. North Queensland is like Tasmania. There is no town in North Queensland that is within 400 kilometres of the nearest town. Mackay and Sarina are near enough to 400 kilometres from Rockhampton. Charters Towers is 400 kilometres from Emerald. Mount Isa and Cloncurry are 400 kilometres from Hughenden and Longreach. So we're an island. The area below Charters Towers is called the Desert Uplands, and I won't go into the reasons—the geography or anything of that nature. But it's just that we are a very, very isolated region, and we identify very strongly as North Queenslanders. Most people from North Queensland are told, 'You're from Queensland.' They'll say, 'No, I'm from North Queensland!' We are an area like Tasmania. The area should have been cut off immediately.

I'm very experienced in dealing with plant disease outbreaks. I went through the citrus canker, the papaya fruit fly and the black sigatoka. I went through each of those, and also bluetongue outbreaks in cattle and various other similar diseases in livestock. What you immediately do is cordon off the contagion area or cordon off the clean areas. That hasn't been done in Queensland. In fact, almost every single case that we have had in North Queensland has come from Brisbane. Instead of cordonning off the clean area, they locked us into the unclean area. In fact, we were locked into the high-contagion area of Australia—South-East Queensland—against our will. That in itself is bad enough, but when I see the people who are advocating all these draconian conditions in Queensland, when I look at them, I can't help but be reminded of the famous comment by the foreign affairs minister in the 1800s in Russia. When he received word that Russia had taken Tashkent, he said, 'What in hell's name are we interested in taking Tashkent for?' But then he also said, 'I must admit, I had a terrific erotic impulse when I learned the news.' I think a lot of people here are getting very, very excited by the power, prestige and notoriety that they are getting at the expense of my homeland, which has a million people—it's not as if North Queensland is small; a million people live there, which is twice the population of Tasmania and almost the population of South Australia, and it's a rapidly growing area.

The last case we had must go on the public record. There is a person out there advocating the most draconian measures, which are having quite an horrific effect on the First Australian communities of North Queensland. One community is now rioting continuously, another community is holding demonstrations and a third community is about to explode because the police—be it wise, good or bad—picked up three young blokes. The courts fined them $1,300. This is in the paper. Of course, they couldn't pay it, so they went to jail. For those of you who don't know much about the history of Queensland, there was the infamous 'act', the Aboriginal affairs act. It was called 'the act', and there were many books written about it. For almost 100 years you could not go onto a community reserve or leave one without the permission of the superintendent, who was a white fella. Well, now they're saying, 'The act is back again.'

The person imposing these draconian measures will not protect us by isolation. Almost every single doctor in North Queensland has signed a document petitioning for the quarantining and protection of North Queensland—almost every single doctor. I'm excluding the doctors employed by the government; obviously they're not going to sign. They would lose their jobs immediately, of course. And I'm excluding the temporary doctors who have come in from overseas, but, outside of them, I think they're up to 120 or 130 doctors who have signed up. That's almost every single doctor. But does Brisbane take any notice of this? No.
I'm getting to the important point. The draconian measures imposed upon us are costing us lives now with cabin fever. I don't have to explain to the House that there's a downside to this, a very serious downside. Everyone will notice that mental health issues have gone up and up and up. But the person imposing these measures sent an officer of her department, the health department, from Brisbane, a high-contagion area, into the greatest fortress of defence that we have in northern Australia, the Cairns base hospital. It's the biggest hospital in northern Australia, and she sent an employee of the health department into that hospital without checking whether that person was contagion free. Well, that person wasn't, and we had an outbreak of the disease in the very fortress of protection that we need: the biggest hospital in northern Australia—not North Queensland; northern Australia. So when you tell us that we've got to lock down like this, yet you apply none of those principles to yourself, and you light up the most important bastion of protection that we have, then please excuse me for thinking that there's a double standard operating here.

For the 400th time I plead with the federal government. When we have a pandemic covering the nation that has the potential, on the basis of Britain or Italy or Spain, of 4,000 or 5,000 lives being lost, and you say that the federal government has no responsibilities, you don't understand the Australian Constitution. Or you may say that health is the subject of the state governments. It's not when you have a nationwide pandemic. I'm not going into the legal arguments here. I haven't got time. I would like to canvass them, but I can't do that tonight. I would ask the federal government please to carry out your responsibilities and put pressure on the state governments for regional quarantining, as we do for plants and vegetables, as we do for livestock. You cordon off the contagion area or, if it's widespread, you cordon off the clean areas. Obviously, Tasmania and North Queensland should leap to your mind, and arguably south-western Australia and probably the Northern Territory, when you say 'cordon off'. Then you know you've got these areas that are clean.

We had a talk—which is public, so I'm not telling tales out of school—from the health authorities in Townsville. They gave us the figures from the Townsville hospital. They put their normal monthly application in for three items, and they got 100 per cent. In the gloves and masks and gowns, which you desperately need for protection, there was only 30 and 40 per cent of their normal assignment. And in the critical area of antiseptics and wash-downs and sanitisers, there was zero. There's no excuse for this. The Dalby ethanol plant has opened up. Arguably, the best killer of germs on the planet is ethanol. Listerine mouthwash is ethanol, for example. They've reopened the plant, and 60 million litres a year can come out of that plant, so there's no excuse for anywhere in Australia not having access to antiseptics. But our northern facilities have been stripped and the weapons we need to fight this virus have been sucked into the south-east corner, so not only have you given us no protection but you have also taken the protection we normally have away from us. I didn't complain about that for two months because they had the contagion and we didn't. But you've given us the contagion, so I'm squealing long and loud at this stage. You've given us the contagion and you've taken away our weapons to fight the contagion. There's no excuse for it. The Dalby ethanol plant, the second biggest plant in Australia, was producing no litreage at all; it was closed down. You've reopened it. David Szymczak, God bless him, and United Petroleum reopened it, and they're going to full production of 60 million litres a year.

I come to the issue we're discussing here, the app. There are very powerful reasons for voting for this, and I don't criticise anyone for doing so, but I'm not going to vote for it. When I went to school, all of us, to my horror, had to read two books: *Brave New World* and 1984. There's great justification for the draconian powers being exercised, and I pay the governments full credit for moving swiftly and imposing those draconian measures, but now it's a matter of long-term freedoms. I think we're in a different ballpark here. There have been many times in history when we have given away—sacrificed—our freedoms, and there's always a reason for that. Often, at times, there's a very good reason why your freedom should be sacrificed, but those reasons do not look really good in the longer term of human history. I have taken great delight in doing press on this and saying: 'Don't worry, because we have a politician's promise that they're not going to use this tracking of every second of your life that they now have on record for nefarious purposes and there will be a cut-off point somewhere in the future. You've got a politician's promise!' Every time I've said that, I've been greeted with laughter, because it's funny—a politician's promise! But it's the only protection that we have from going into an Orwellian brave new world like in George Orwell's 1984 or in Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World*. I was a very young man when I read them. I was 16 or 17 years of age, and I was petrified with fear. To this very day I am still petrified with fear. For those of you who like movies, you might drop along and see *The Shining* where the bloke goes berserk on account of cabin fever. I doubt whether there are too many members in this place who haven't already heard the stories of cabin fever. We've had one young man hang himself and another person attempt suicide, that I know of. No-one is running around and publicising these things.

I'm the last person on the planet to be an admirer of Donald Trump, although in some areas I do, but his statement is a very valid statement: you must consider what you are sacrificing and what you are getting from
these sacrifices. There is a balance here. Quite frankly, I'm not going to go on the app, and, if you want to throw me in jail, well, throw me in jail. In this place, just remember that history judges you. As a person who wrote a moderately best-selling history book, I can tell you that they can judge you very, very harshly indeed.

In the short time left I want to end on a positive note. We are an area that can be cut off. We are contagion free. You want your giant projects, because you've got to go into public works now. You have a depression, and the only way you can work your way out of a depression is with public works. If you absorb money in public works, you're going to bankrupt your country. You've got to have money-making projects. The Galilee rail line, the transmission line of copper, and Hells Gate Dam—there are three giant projects sitting there waiting to happen, and this is the moment in which they should happen. America did wonderful things during the Great Depression and we did nothing—sorry, we put a rock wall around the gardens in Balmain! That's what we did during the Great Depression. Let us not repeat that in this coronavirus depression. (Time expired)

Mr PORTER (Pearce—Attorney-General, Minister for Industrial Relations and Leader of the House) (19:23):
I thank all of the members for their contributions on the Privacy Amendment (Public Health Contact Information) Bill 2020. I thank the member for Kennedy. I think Aldous Huxley said the technology process has merely provided us with even more efficient means of going backwards, but I think, obviously, Aldous has been proven wrong in recent decades, because we're moving forwards. Member for Kennedy, this is definitely a piece of technology that will help us move forward.

The Privacy Amendment (Public Health Contact Information) Bill 2020 will implement the strongest possible ongoing privacy protections for data collected and generated by the Australian government's COVIDSafe app. By passing this bill we can give the Australian public the greatest confidence that their personal information is secure when they choose to download and use COVIDSafe, helping Australians combat the spread of COVID-19.

The bill was preceded by a biosecurity determination app that outlined interim privacy protections for COVIDSafe app data. The first and most important thing this bill does is enshrine these privacy protections in primary legislation. This will be achieved by inserting a new part into the Privacy Act 1988, and the key provisions from the determination are formalised by the bill. They include the criminal offence for unauthorised collection, disclosure and use of COVIDSafe app data and the criminal offence for requiring another person to download and use COVIDSafe app data. The bill also implements additional privacy protections which were not included in the determination, and the most significant of these additional protections extends the Australian privacy principles, the Notifiable Data Breaches scheme and the oversight of the Australian Information Commissioner to COVIDSafe app data. Under these changes, a breach of the bill will also be a breach of the Privacy Act, including when the bill is breached by state and territory health officials.

Other additional privacy protections which have been added to the bill include provisions guaranteeing that no further data can be collected from former COVIDSafe users and putting in place a clear process for how all data in the national COVIDSafe data store will be deleted when the COVIDSafe app is no longer required.

Finally, the bill contains provisions that clarify parts of the determination and deal with a number of technical matters. New sections have been included to ensure that the bill overrides any other inconsistent laws to articulate the constitutional basis of legislation and put in place a process for automatic repeal of the legislation once COVIDSafe is no longer needed.

In conclusion, I'd like to acknowledge the constructive approach of the opposition, particularly the member for Isaacs, whom I've been dealing with on this bill. I note the bill contains privacy protections which are of an unprecedented level of strength, designed to protect data collected and generated by the COVIDSafe app. There is no more private or secure data that can possibly be volunteered to either a government agency or a private organisation than COVIDSafe app data. By passing this bill I sincerely hope that it gives all Australians the increased confidence they need to choose to download and use COVIDSafe, because a high uptake is very important to helping state and territory contact tracers get on top of outbreaks and to prevent the further spread of COVID-19. I endorse the bill to the House.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER (Dr McVeigh): The original question was that this bill be now read a second time. To this the honourable member for Isaacs has moved as an amendment that all words after 'That' be omitted with a view to substituting other words. The immediate question is that the words proposed to be omitted stand part of the question.

Question agreed to.

Original question agreed to, Mr Katter dissenting.

Bill read a second time.
Third Reading

Mr PORTER (Pearce—Attorney-General, Minister for Industrial Relations and Leader of the House) (19:28): by leave—I move:

That this bill be now read a third time.
Question agreed to.
Bill read a third time.

National Vocational Education and Training Regulator Amendment (Governance and Other Matters) Bill 2020

Second Reading

Consideration resumed of the motion:

That this bill be now read a second time.

Ms KEARNEY (Cooper) (19:29): I rise to speak on the National Vocational Education and Training Regulator Amendment (Governance and Other Matters) Bill 2020. Labor will not oppose this bill. It amends the governance structures of the Australian Skills Quality Authority, the national VET regulator, and enhances information sharing arrangements between ASQA and the National Centre for Vocational Education Research.

Key amendments will revise ASQA's governance structure, replacing the existing chief commissioner, chief executive officer and two commissioners with a single independent statutory office holder, a CEO. It will establish the National Vocational Education and Training Regulator Advisory Council. The advisory council is intended to provide the ASQA with access to expert advice regarding the functions of the regulator.

The changes respond to initial findings from the rapid review of ASQA's governance, culture and processes. Labor supports a fair and considered approach to ASQA reforms. We will support changes that improve ASQA's capacity to ensure responsiveness to students.

Debate interrupted.

ADJOURNMENT

The DEPUTY SPEAKER (Dr McVeigh) (19:30): I propose the question:

That the House do now adjourn.

Immigration Detention

COVID-19

Ms PAYNE (Canberra) (19:30): I will rise tonight to talk about the global coronavirus pandemic, but first I want to talk about a little girl who is turning five today. Kopika, I want to wish you a very happy fifth birthday, and your family. Sadly, although she was born here in Australia, Kopika, her parents, Priya and Nades and her two-year-old sister, Tharunicaa, are marking this day in immigration detention at Christmas Island. It is the third birthday that Kopika has had in detention. Torn away from the community where they had made their home in Biloela in Queensland, tonight this family remains in limbo with no certainty as to their future or whether they will be deported. They have had the last two years stolen from them by this government. These little girls and their parents have suffered to a level that is hard to fathom. There is no reason for this except that the Morrison government is wanting to make a point at the expense of this family. With the stroke of a pen the government could end this and this family could return to Biloela where their community are lobbying tirelessly for their return.

I again add my voice to Labor's calls on the government to please show compassion and justice to this family, to end their agony and to welcome them back into the Australian community. I add my voice to say that no little girl in Australia should celebrate their birthday in detention, because no little girl should be in detention. No family should be treated like this in this country. To Kopika and your family, I want to let you know that so many Australians care about you and so many people in Canberra write to me about your situation all the time. I want to again wish you a special day on their behalf.

I also want to talk about coronavirus tonight. It has taken over our lives but it has brought out the best of our community here in Canberra and across Australia. Canberra has had 107 confirmed cases, 104 recoveries, over 11,800 negative test results and, tragically, three deaths. I want to give my deepest sympathies to the families and friends who have lost a loved one, including my colleague the member for Cooper, Ged Kearney and her partner, Leigh, who lost his father, Mike, a member of our Canberra community.

I want to thank Canberrans for staying home. Your efforts have protected not only your own health but those most vulnerable in our community. I want to thank our doctors; nurses; medical professionals; cleaners, who play...
such a critical role in combatting this virus; supermarket workers; bus and light rail workers, who continue to operate our public transport; public servants, who have been working so hard to deliver services and the policy response; Canberra businesses, who are innovating so well to continue serving our community; our early childhood educators, who have been keeping this essential service running in spite of challenges exacerbated by the government's package; our teachers, who have pivoted quickly to deliver online learning and who are now pivoting back over the coming weeks and months to teach our children in the classroom once again; our community organisations, who are providing support to those left behind by the Morrison government during this pandemic.

I also particularly want to thank the ACT government, in particular our Chief Minister, Andrew Barr, and health minister, Rachel Stephen-Smith. I've taken great comfort and pride in the ACT government's response, leading the way from the start and ensuring that we are so well prepared. They've also been working to support the people left out of the federal government's response, including temporary visa holders, creating the Jobs for Canberra Fund and supporting our local arts sector.

People have been left behind in this response, and one group I want to talk about in particular is students. I'm so pleased that Labor is calling on the government to lift the parental income test on youth allowance during this crisis on a case-by-case basis so that there is something through which our young people can have some support to survive. The ANU Students Association in my electorate delivered 47 emergency grants in the whole of 2019 and in the last 4½ months they have delivered 539 at a value of over $337,000, which really shows the level of need in the community. We must extend support to everyone. People cannot be left behind. We're keen to work with the government constructively on this.

**Racism**

Mr ZIMMERMAN (North Sydney) (19:35): During the course of the current COVID-19 crisis, we have seen our community step up and play its part in suppressing the spread of the virus. There is no better demonstration of this than the actions of the Australian Chinese community, be it in my own electorate or elsewhere across the nation. The Prime Minister has often mentioned the example the Australian Chinese community has set for us all. Just today, for example, he commented in the Great Hall during his public remarks at the start of the coalition party meeting:

One of the groups in our community here in Australia that was so important early on was the Chinese-Australian community … the responsibility, discipline, the support for each other, demonstrated by the Chinese-Australian community … the willing, enthusiastic, patriotic cooperation we had with the Chinese-Australians here was magnificent. And we owe them a great debt as a nation.

As soon as the crisis hit the 20,000-strong Chinese Australian community in my own electorate, they were the first to mobilise in practising heightened social distancing and personal hygiene measures to contain the spread. I attended two forums with leaders from the local Chinese Australian community before the lockdown came into effect, one which I organised in Chatswood and the other convened by the acting minister for immigration. The call to action from everyone who attended those was so impressive.

So it really does disappoint me enormously to have to rise in this chamber to raise and condemn the racism experienced by some in the Australian Chinese community during the course of this pandemic—yet it has been the reality, either through direct experience or through the generation of fear of its potential. This is not about expressing reasonable political or public policy views. In this country we enjoy very open discussions on the key issues of the day. For example, there is a very legitimate discussion being had about what we've learned from this pandemic and the need for a proper independent international inquiry and about the role of wildlife wet markets. We should never be reluctant to criticise foreign governments or political systems which represent the opposite of our own democratic values and understanding of human rights, including the Chinese Communist Party. That's not what this is about.

Instead, I refer today to those who would seek to cause disrespect, hatred and contempt simply because of who a person is, their background or what we once described in that song I learned at school as their 'creed or colour'. So I've been deeply disturbed to hear of cases in which Asian Australians were subjected to slurs, spitting, derogatory graffiti and, in some horrific cases, physical violence based solely on their appearance. The Australian Human Rights Commission has reported that one in four racial discrimination complaints they have received this year has been due to COVID-19 related activities. There are people on the fringes of society who have quite clearly used the cover of this virus and the anxiety we all feel to try to create fear and support for their own reprehensible views.

I want to be abundantly clear: racism has no place, no justification, in this country—not now during this crisis and not ever. At their core, such views offend the very basis of our liberal democracy, which is the equal value of
every person, no matter what their background, and the equal respect we all deserve. It is from this foundation we have created the most successful multicultural nation on earth. Such behaviour from a loud but, I am very confident, tiny minority of society must be rejected. I am pleased that this has occurred across the political spectrum and tonight I add my own voice to those who have done so already. For example, last month the Prime Minister said:

I deplore that sort of behaviour against any Australian, regardless of their ethnicity or their religion or whatever it happens to be.

Last week, our colleague, the member for Chisholm, Gladys Liu, wrote so powerfully of the impact of attacks in *The Age* newspaper. She wrote:

Sadly, in the past couple of months, these Australians have been the victims of extraordinary acts of racism and abuse that simply cannot go unchecked in modern Australia.

As leaders of our community, we have an obligation to condemn racism. I commend the member for Chisholm in particular for her strong advocacy for the community on this issue. No Australian should ever feel as though their loyalty, their part of the Australian journey and their right to fully participate in every aspect of our society will ever be judged or determined by their ethnicity or heritage. Racism only flourishes when people of good faith stay silent, which is why tonight I proudly stand with those of Australian and Chinese heritage who have contributed so much to the advancement of our great nation.

**International Nurses Day**

Ms KEARNEY (Cooper) (19:40): I rise to speak today, which is 12 May, about International Nurses Day. It is 200 years since the birth of Florence Nightingale. It is the International Year of the Nurse and Midwife. I'm sure that when the powers that be at the UN decided that this year would be called 'Nursing the World to Health' they had no idea what that would mean for hundreds of thousands of people affected by COVID-19. They had no idea that nurses, as critical as they normally are in our lives, would become even more critical as the frontline carers for us during this crisis.

Around the world, nurses have triaged patients in EDs; they have nursed and cared for people with the virus; they have gone into communities to educate them about COVID and to test people; and they have been there at the end, when people have died. They have worked around the clock, exhausted and fearless. It's estimated by the Australian Nursing and Midwifery Federation, the ANMF, that worldwide nearly 250 nurses have died as a result of their exposure to COVID-19 through their work—none in Australia, thank goodness. I have just come from a lovely vigil held by the nurses union recognising the sacrifice of those nurses who gave their lives during the crisis, and I thank the union for arranging that moving action.

Nurses are vital in our society. They advocate for their patients every day, and for the health system, for our hospitals and for our communities. And they make changes: changes that save people's lives, that improve the health system and our hospitals, and that hold our communities together. I loved being a nurse—I was a good nurse. I love being an MP, but I guess it remains to be seen if I'm good at it!

**An honourable member:** You are!

Ms KEARNEY: Thanks. The skills I learned in nursing are absolutely invaluable in this role, because the jobs are in many ways similar. In my view, politicians would do very well to learn from nurses, because what better life experience is there than being a nurse? As a nurse, what you see in the job—what you do, who you meet, who you care for, whose lives you change, whose communities are the better for you and who makes it through because of you—makes you an amazing person. Think of the challenges faced and the satisfactions a nurse draws strength from. The sheer intimacy of their interactions with patients, often at their most vulnerable, are interactions that I believe prepare you for anything in a way that nobody else can claim. Nothing, in my view, gives you a better insight into the characters and complexities of life like nursing does and, importantly, the understanding of the difference you can make to others' lives.

One thing I know about nurses is that they don't differentiate with people. If you need care you get it. They are just as prepared to talk to or to interact with the President of the United States as they are with the grade 6s at a local primary school. My lovely landlady here in Canberra, Rose, is a retired midwife. She was telling me the other night that she worked in a large public hospital and that she has delivered babies for the rich and the very famous, and for the people of the poorest communities. Everybody got the same attention and care.

Nurses face awful challenges, but so much satisfaction comes from making a difference. And they do make a difference. My father-in-law died in the Canberra Hospital from the coronavirus, and I thank everybody for their condolences. It's made a big difference to my family and me. His wife and daughter were able to be with him when he breathed his last. This was no mean feat in an isolation unit, with so many barriers for that to happen. But
happen it did, because the nursing staff there were determined for it to be so. We are forever grateful to those nurses who ensured that our Mike did not die alone—that he died with dignity and in peace.

I want to acknowledge nurses and carers in aged care, who are dealing with enormous challenges and issues. We know you're doing the best with what you have, and we hope that the problems faced in aged care reinforce the fact that the aged-care system does need a vast overhaul, with a focus on the need for skilled registered nurses, adequate staffing numbers, better pay for those workers, and transparency and accountability with respect to government funding. Our oldest Australians deserve no less and nor does the workforce. Nurses are the most loved and trusted people on the planet. They are great listeners, empathisers and carers, but they are also skilled clinicians. They're adept at their craft and all the scientific and technological aspects that go with that. They can manage alone or in teams, they can cope with the intimate and the big picture. They keep it real. They are advocates and change agents. Becoming an MP has been a lot like being a nurse, but without the clinical stuff, of course. Ultimately, I see my role here in this place as being an advocate and a change agent. I thank goodness every day for my experience as a nurse; it’s stood me in good stead. I thank goodness every day for our nurses and midwives. Happy International Nurses Day!

**COVID-19**

Mr RICK WILSON (O'Connor) (19:46): Before I go on to speak about the COVID-19 crisis, I also want to acknowledge our nurses and thank them. It's fitting to follow on from the member for Cooper. One nurse that I particularly want to thank, and who is a great inspiration to me, is my mother. Mary began her training at the Wooroloo tuberculosis sanatorium in 1944, 76 years ago. She just turned 94 the other day, and she's still going strong. She's had a lifetime of caring for people, and she's still caring for us today. As I say, she's a great inspiration to me. My sister Jane followed her into the nursing profession, so our family is certainly making its contribution to a wonderful profession. I thank all of those nurses who care for us every day, but particularly during this current health crisis we're experiencing.

Today I particularly wanted to talk about the impact of the COVID-19 crisis on my electorate of O'Connor and thank my constituents for the amazing fortitude, understanding and forbearance that they have shown through this crisis. Since around the middle of March, when the Prime Minister came together with the state premiers and formed the national cabinet, we have seen an unprecedented amount of change in our society and the way we go about our daily lives. The small-business people who've had their businesses closed, effectively, by government decree have shown enormous understanding that this was required to keep our community safe. My heart bleeds for those people whose livelihoods have been severely interrupted and damaged, and also for those people who lost their jobs—who work for those small businesses and who are now out of work and confronting a situation that they would never have thought that they would have to deal with: going down to Centrelink and joining the queue to receive government support at this time. They are hardworking people who never thought they would experience that.

I also want to thank the real heroes—the people who I think have been the real heroes throughout this crisis—the unsung heroes like the supermarket workers who stack the shelves. They were there serving people who were coming in and, yes, some people perhaps overreacted and bought products they perhaps didn't need, but the supermarket workers were there every day to serve everybody who came through the door and to restock the shelves. The truckies who were delivering that product never stopped. The tradies who are out on the building sites every day haven't stopped working. There are the mechanics who are fixing up the vehicles—which trucks that are delivering those products. These are the unsung heroes of this crisis—the people who don't often get mentioned. There are the child carers who never stopped turning up to work and looking after the children of essential workers in our community. These are the people who really deserve our thanks and praise for the way that they have dealt with this crisis.

Across my community there have been some amazing stories of the community stepping up—none better than the Pemberton Happy Helpers. This is a group that was brought together by Sarah-Jane Griffith in the town of Pemberton. It's a small town of probably 800 or 900 people. Fifty volunteers set up a network where every street in the town was serviced by people knocking on doors, just making sure that everybody was okay and that those people who needed support were getting it. That's the sort of community effort that I think is just amazing.

I also want to take this opportunity to congratulate the Prime Minister, the Treasurer and the senior members of the government for the JobKeeper program. Across my electorate of O'Connor, I see the JobKeeper program making a massive difference on a daily basis. A car dealer who employs 61 people, including six apprentices, contacted me the other day to say, 'I would have had to close the door and my business would have been finished without the JobKeeper program.' These are the sorts of people that the program is there to help. It's meant to keep those businesses open and keep those employees attached to those businesses, and I'm seeing that across my
electorate on a daily basis. It's a fantastic program, and I thank the Prime Minister and the Treasurer for their work.

COVID-19: Employment Welfare

Mr ROB MITCHELL (McEwen—Second Deputy Speaker) (19:51): I look forward to the member for O'Connor supporting us the next time we talk about safe roads for truck drivers and fair wages and conditions for shop assistants. Sadly, I'm going to raise two serious issues facing members of our community this week. They are issues that have been caused by the bungling of this government. We on the Labor side have openly supported the government in dealing with the COVID crisis when they have done the right thing, as we should. But we also have an obligation to hold the government to account. Unfortunately, when we do raise these issues, this government does one of two things. It either (a) ignores people or (b) wails that we are being partisan. That is because they hate scrutiny. They believe that they are never to be questioned, never to be doubted. Unfortunately, the sad fact is that, when it comes to a number of recent government policies, there is a huge gap between appearance and reality. The devil really is in the detail.

I want to raise a couple of issues that show the great chasm between marketing and the product. Firstly, let's talk about dnata. The government shut down the airline industry overnight and, in doing so, stopped these people from doing the job they do so well. Hundreds of families go to work every week to earn a meagre living and do their best. They're not wealthy people. They're hard workers doing their best, and they're rightly proud of the work they do. So you'd expect the government that cries that we're all in this together would ensure that workers are treated with dignity and respect. But, no. Last week, in a cruel, underhanded way, by the stroke of the Treasurer's pen behind closed doors, the government changed the regulations on who can receive JobKeeper. Why? If you listen to the government's faux patriotic marketing, it's because the company has sovereign employers. As we know, dnata bought Qantas in 2018. That was approved by this government—the same government that now says to these Australian men and women working for dnata: 'You don't see deserve support.'

To add further insult to these Australian workers who pay their Australian taxes, the Morrison government then backdated the regulation. dnata has said that the Australian Taxation Office had previously confirmed that they qualify for the JobKeeper scheme. dnaata enrolled for the scheme and implemented plans for the retention and payment of Australian employees, but this government deceitfully and retrospectively amended the JobKeeper legislation. As we know, they don't like the airline industry. We've watched them throw Virgin workers on the scrap heap, and they don't care if they cripple dnaata. The Treasurer could fix this, and he bloody well ought to.

Next, imagine this, Mr Speaker—

The SPEAKER: The member for McEwen might watch his language.

Mr ROB MITCHELL: Yes, Mr Speaker. Imagine this, Mr Speaker: you're at home; it's 23 April and your partner has been stood down. You can't go to work. You've got the kids homeschooling and you're trying to keep your tears from your kids. You sit at the kitchen table trying to figure out how you're going to feed your family and pay the bills. You see the postie fill your letterbox. You go out and there are three—not one, but three—letters from Centrelink. Opening them up one by one you find debt letters for $21,000, $15,000 and $21,000 from Centrelink. That is $57,000 of debt that has come out of the blue—$57,000 of debt that does not exist. Imagine the stress and the fear that that puts into you when you're doing it tough and in a hard place. That's exactly what happened to one of our local families. This family is another victim of the continuing scandal that is robo-debt, the failed scheme the Morrison government claimed would be halted. The three Centrelink arrears notices, which arrived together, demanded payment by the family by 22 May. You seriously couldn't make this up.

The government's total debacle that is robo-debt continues to hound and hurt innocent Australian families, despite the empty promise from the hapless minister to back off. On 3 April this year, Minister Robert promised that Services Australia would pause debt raising and recovery activity to help ease the pressure on people's budgets during the COVID-19 pandemic—empty words from this government. Minister Robert's relentless pursuit of families is continuing despite admissions that there is no lawful basis for this scheme. Federal Labor has been pleading with the government to stop this, but they continue. As I said, Labor has been pleading for this to be stopped after raising countless examples of bungles and unfairness which have wrongly harmed thousands of Australians. Every call has fallen on deaf ears. The total lack of competence of the Minister for Government Services, Stuart Robert, continues to hurt innocent, vulnerable families already experiencing severe hardship due to this pandemic. This hapless minister needs to come in here and issue a personal apology to these families and provide assurances that action will be taken to stop these errors from continuing into the future.
COVID-19

Mr TIM WILSON (Goldstein) (19:56): All members of this chamber have been working in our communities to support Australians affected by the COVID-19 pandemic, and we will continue to do so for some time. The health crisis has led to an economic crisis, and, let's face it: the former will be shorter than the latter. Since the COVID-19 outbreak began, more than 4.1 million positive cases have been reported worldwide, and 281,000 people have lost their lives. Few will be left untouched, and some survivors will carry more scars than others. Tragically, nearly 100 Australians have died from COVID-19—all lives unnecessarily cut short—and many have struggled to survive it. Thankfully, we have largely contained COVID-19 for now. But we should be cautious and acknowledge it is only for now. Outbreaks will occur, as the Prime Minister has said, but meanwhile the economic wave is only just picking up. Already hundreds of thousands of people have lost their jobs. People who have never turned to the welfare system have joined a Centrelink queue because they have no alternative. Businesses are struggling and at risk of folding. The JobKeeper lifeline is just that, and many businesses will need to chart a difficult road back as restrictions are relaxed and as they manage the growth of their business and the expectations of their employees. Retirees have watched the value of their savings disappear and their incomes with it. The security of retirement now looks a lot shakier than it did only three months ago. Australians want answers, the people of China want answers, and people in other countries want answers too. While the COVID-19 pandemic continues to affect billions of lives, secrecy is, more than ever, fundamentally dangerous to humanity and poses future risks. That's why we need an independent investigation into the origins of COVID-19 in Wuhan so that we can make sure this does not happen again.

There are three factors that affect the transmission of any infectious disease: the agent, the host and the environment. The agent, in the case of COVID-19, is a terrifyingly virulent virus, which we hope to learn more about through scientific inquiry. As hosts with no pre-existing immunity, we are all at risk. But Australia is at the frontier of vaccine research, harnessing our biomedical expertise while contributing $352 million to the global vaccine fund. We have much to be proud of in our adversity. The remaining factor in the epidemiological triad is our environment, which includes the surroundings that allow pathogens to thrive.

To investigate the environmental factors specific to COVID-19, the world needs an open, transparent inquiry into the origins of the virus. In this pursuit, Australia can proudly say that it has been a global leader, under the leadership of our Prime Minister, Scott Morrison, and our Minister for Foreign Affairs, Senator Marise Payne. It is part of our enduring mission as a free nation that builds international co-operation and connectedness. As the foreign minister rightly said in a recent speech at the ANU, our region expects Australia's contribution to include a steadfast support for free and liberal trading rules; clear and unequivocal advocacy of resilient sovereign states that determine their own futures in their own national interests; the defence of individual human rights and freedoms; and a vision for the Indo-Pacific region. It is precisely these values that guide us to having an independent and transparent review of COVID-19's origins. Many other nations support this effort, including the EU, the US and the United Kingdom. Our hope remains that China will get on board with this important effort, because the focus is clear. In leading calls for a transparent inquiry, we are only seeking evidence and advice. We want to know where it came from, why and how, and to make sure that honest straightforward questions with clear intent are answered. Let's be clear: if the situation were reversed, we would still want the same, because we have nothing to fear from the truth.

The SPEAKER: It being 8 pm, the House stands adjourned until 9.30 am tomorrow, in accordance with the resolution agreed to earlier this sitting day.

House adjourned at 20:00

NOTICES

Mr McCormack: to present a Bill for an Act to amend the law relating to aviation, and for related purposes. (Aviation Legislation Amendment (Liability and Insurance) Bill 2020)

Mr Littleproud: to present a Bill for an Act to amend the law relating to export control, and for related purposes. (Export Control Legislation Amendment (Certification of Narcotic Exports) Bill 2020)

Mr Dutton: to present a Bill for an Act to amend the Australian Security Intelligence Organisation Act 1979, and for related purposes. (Australian Security Intelligence Organisation Amendment Bill 2020)

Mrs K. L. Andrews: to present a Bill for an Act to provide for certain entities to report payment terms and practices, and for related purposes. (Payment Times Reporting Bill 2020)

Mrs K. L. Andrews: to present a Bill for an Act to deal with consequential matters arising from the enactment of the Payment Times Reporting Act 2020, and for related purposes. (Payment Times Reporting (Consequential Amendments) Bill 2020)
Mr Robert: to present a Bill for an Act to amend the law relating to social services, and for related purposes. (Social Services and Other Legislation Amendment (Omnibus) Bill 2020)

Mr Robert: to present a Bill for an Act to amend the law relating to social services, and for related purposes. (Services Australia Governance Amendment Bill 2020)

Mr Wyatt: to present a Bill for an Act to amend the law relating to the town of Jabiru, and for related purposes. (Aboriginal Land Rights (Northern Territory) Amendment (Jabiru) Bill 2020)

Mr D. J. Chester: to present a Bill for an Act to amend the law relating to veterans' entitlements and military rehabilitation and compensation, and for related purposes. (Veterans' Affairs Legislation Amendment (Supporting the Wellbeing of Veterans and Their Families) Bill 2020)

Mr Sukkar: to present a Bill for an Act to amend the Australian Prudential Regulation Authority Act 1998, and for related purposes. (Australian Prudential Regulation Authority Amendment (APRA Industry Funding) Bill 2020)

Mrs Marino: to present a Bill for an Act to amend the law relating to Norfolk Island, and for related purposes. (Norfolk Island Amendment (Supreme Court) Bill 2020)

Mr Hunt: to present a Bill for an Act to amend the law in relation to leave from residential care services, and for related purposes. (Aged Care Legislation Amendment (Emergency Leave) Bill 2020)

Mr Porter: to move:

That the following matter be referred to the Parliamentary Joint Committee on Corporations and Financial Services for inquiry and report by 7 December 2020:

Whether the present level of regulation applying to Australia’s growing class action industry is impacting fair and equitable outcomes for plaintiffs, with particular reference to the following:

(1) what evidence is available regarding the quantum of fees, costs and commissions earned by litigation funders and the treatment of that income;

(2) the impact of litigation funding on the damages and other compensation received by class members in class actions funded by litigation funders;

(3) the potential impact of proposals to allow contingency fees and whether this could lead to less financially viable outcomes for plaintiffs;

(4) the financial and organisational relationship between litigation funders and lawyers acting for plaintiffs in funded litigation and whether these relationships have the capacity to impact on plaintiff lawyers’ duties to their clients;

(5) the Australian financial services regulatory regime and its application to litigation funding;

(6) the regulation and oversight of the litigation funding industry and litigation funding agreements;

(7) the application of common fund orders and similar arrangements in class actions;

(8) factors driving the increasing prevalence of class action proceedings in Australia;

(9) what evidence is becoming available with respect to the present and potential future impact of class actions on the Australian economy;

(10) the effect of unilateral legislative and regulatory changes to class action procedure and litigation funding;

(11) the consequences of allowing Australian lawyers to enter into contingency fee agreements or a court to make a costs order based on the percentage of any judgment or settlement;

(12) the potential impact of Australia’s current class action industry on vulnerable Australian business already suffering the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic;

(13) evidence of any other developments in Australia’s rapidly evolving class action industry since the Australian Law Reform Commission’s inquiry into class action proceedings and third-party litigation funders; and

(14) any matters related to these terms of reference.

Mr Wilkie: to present a Bill for an Act to amend the Interactive Gambling Act 2001, and for related purposes. (Interactive Gambling Amendment (Banning Social Casinos and Other Measures) Bill 2020)

Mr Gorman: to move

That this House:

(1) notes that Australia’s arts sector is an essential part of our economy, our community and our identity;

(2) recognises that the impacts of coronavirus COVID-19 has destroyed the livelihoods of thousands of working artists in a diverse range of arts including, but not limited to performers, writers, designers, illustrators, musicians, fine artists, filmmakers and children's entertainers;

(3) further notes that many of the existing support mechanisms, including JobKeeper and JobSeeker, do not recognise the unique needs or economics of the arts sector;
(4) believes that protecting our arts sector now is vital for Australia to achieve a sustainable economic recovery from COVID-19; and

(5) calls on the national cabinet to work urgently in collaboration with the arts sector to:
   (a) enact a tailored package of support to the Arts sector;
   (b) ensure that working artists are able to access appropriate income support; and
   (c) consider how commonwealth, state, territory and local governments can assist the arts sector for the medium to long term economic impacts of COVID-19.

QUESTIONS IN WRITING

Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment
(Question No. 284)

Mr Conroy asked the Minister for Environment, in writing, on 4 February 2020:

In respect of Contract Notice CN3638828 published on AusTender on 5 November 2019 and the research being carried out for the Department of the Environment and Energy by JWS Research under this contract:
1. Are quantitative research methods such as polling or surveys being used in this research; if so: (a) how many polls or surveys have been conducted; (b) on what dates were each of these polls or surveys conducted; (c) what was the sample size for each of these polls or surveys; (d) what demographic groups in the Australian population were the samples in each poll or survey designed to represent; (e) were the polls or surveys conducted by telephone, online surveys or face to face interviews (if by none of these methods, how were the polls or surveys conducted); and (f) how many polls or surveys are planned to be carried out in the future under this contract.

2. Are qualitative research methods such as focus groups or structured interviews being used in this research; if so: (a) how many focus groups or structured interviews have been conducted; (b) on what dates were each of these focus groups or structured interviews conducted; (c) how many people participated in each of these focus groups or structured interviews; (d) in what cities or towns were these focus groups or structured interviews conducted; (e) what were the demographic characteristics of the participants in these focus groups or structured interviews; and (f) how many focus groups or structured interviews are planned to be carried out in the future under this contract.

Ms Ley: The answer to the honourable member's question is as follows:

Qualitative and quantitative research was conducted between October and November 2019.

Research included 50 group discussions among residents in metropolitan and regional Australia, and an online survey of approximately 5000 Australians. A mix of genders, ages and backgrounds were represented.

All deliverables under this contract have been provided to the Department.

Defence Industry
(Question No. 285)

Mr Keogh asked the Minister for Defence Industry, in writing, on 4 February 2020:

In respect of the Auditor-General Report No. 19, 2019-20, 2018-19 Major Projects Report: Department of Defence:
(1) Has the Australian Industry Capability Promotion Plan referred to in the report been established; if so:
   (a) when was the plan established;
   (b) where is a copy of the plan available;
   (c) for what period will the plan run; and
   (d) what are the key outcomes, deliverables or performance indicators on the success of the plan.
(2) If the Australian Industry Capability Promotion Plan has not yet been established, when will it be and for what period will it run.

Ms Price: The Minister for Defence Industry has provided the following answer to the honourable member's question:

The Minister for Defence Industry announced on 6 February 2020 an Independent Australian Industry Capability (AIC) Audit Program will be established this year. The Independent AIC Audit Program will investigate and report on whether major contractors are meeting their AIC contractual obligations, and increase certainty and visibility of contractual commitments on AIC.

The Independent AIC Audit Program is the next step in the Morrison Government's commitment to maximising Australian industry involvement to deliver a robust, resilient and internationally competitive defence industry to help meet the needs of the Australian Defence Force. The proposed program is currently under development and will form part of the AIC assurance obligations of Defence more broadly. Defence is investigating ways to publicly report the outcomes of the audits.

Parramatta Electorate: Centrelink
(Question No. 286)

Ms Owens asked the Minister for Government Services, in writing, on 4 February 2020:
In respect of the Government’s automated debt recovery program, known as ‘robodebt’:

1. How many residents in the electoral division of Parramatta have received a debt notice since the introduction of the program in July 2016.

2. How many of these residents’ debts are affected by the unlawful ATO averaging component that was suspended from the program on 19 November 2019.

3. How many Parramatta residents affected by the 19 November changes have been informed by Centrelink that their debts are currently under review, and if they have been notified, when was the notification sent.

4. When does the department expect that all affected Parramatta residents will be notified that their debts are under review, and when will the review process be finalised for all in the affected cohort.

5. Where are the reviews of debts affected by the 19 November 2019 changes taking place—are reviews being undertaken at the respective service centres (Merrylands and Parramatta Service Centre), or at a centralised office.

6. Can a breakdown be provided of any additional staff the department has allocated to review the program at Centrelink service centres in the electoral division of Parramatta.

**Mr Robert:** The answer to the honourable member’s question is as follows:

1 to 4. On 5 March 2020, the Minister for Families and Social Services made a public interest immunity claim with respect to disclosure of the details that may be relevant to the class of persons involved in a court case that is currently before the Federal Court of Australia.

5. This work is being undertaken by a national compliance workforce.


### Modified Monash Model

**(Question No. 287)**

**Mrs Elliot** asked the Minister for Health, in writing, on 5 February 2020:

In respect of the Modified Monash Model (MMM), can details be provided of why Murwillumbah, a township of approximately 9,000 people, was classified as MMM1 (metropolitan area) under the MMM.

**Mr Hunt:** The answer to the honourable member’s question is as follows:

The Modified Monash Model (MMM) was updated with the latest available Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) 2016 Census data. Programs began transitioning to the updated MMM 2019 from 1 January 2020.

Murwillumbah was MM 2 under MMM 2015 and is MM 1 under MMM 2019. The change reflects the geographic distance between Murwillumbah and the Gold Coast/Tweed Heads decreasing due to changes in the road network distance between them and the borders changing with urban expansion.

The MMM classification is a data-based geographic classification system based on the Australian Standard Geographical Classification – Remoteness Area (ASGS-RA) as determined by the ABS which determines rurality of a location. Murwillumbah MM 1 classification under MMM 2019 directly corresponds to the ASGS-RA1 as determined by the ABS and does not include a discretionary component.

ASGS-RA remoteness measures are calculated using Accessibility/Remoteness Index of Australia (ARIA+) scores; these scores are based on the distance of geographic locations from the nearest population centre in various size ranges.

Factors that influence classifications may include:

- The population of a town itself;
- The population of towns surrounding it; and
- The population of a town in conjunction with its proximity to a larger town.

Using the ARIA+ scoring methodology, Murwillumbah is correctly classified as ASGS-RA1, directly correlating to the MM 1 classification.

The primary issue of the rural health workforce in Australia is no longer a matter of undersupply, but of equitable distribution. Updating geographic classification systems so that they are based on current census data allows the Department to better target rural programs to areas of greatest need.

### Modified Monash Model

**(Question No. 294)**

**Mrs Elliot** asked the Prime Minister in writing, on 5 February 2020:

In respect of the Modified Monash Model (MMM), can details be provided of all federal government portfolios and programs that use the MMM to assess service delivery and financial incentives and/or financial assistance, including grants.

**Mr Morrison:** The answer to the honourable member’s question is as follows:

The following programs use (or are transitioning to where specified) the Modified Monash Model (MMM).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Portfolio</th>
<th>Program</th>
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Veterans' Affairs
Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Communications
Health
- Department of Veterans' Affairs Rehabilitation Services
- Drought Communities Programme Extension
- General research, Inland Rail program
- Regional Arts Fund

- Aged Care Programs (e.g. Aged Care Home Care – Viability Supplement, Residential Aged Care – Viability Supplement)
- Health Workforce Scholarship Program
- Indigenous Australians' Health Program
- Medicare, through Medicare Benefits Schedule (MBS) items (e.g. telehealth psychology service, rural bulk billing incentives, rural Non-VR doctor MBS items, Better Access telehealth items, Eating Disorder telehealth items, Drought telehealth items and very remote haemodialysis item)
- Multi-Purpose Services Program
- National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Flexible Aged Care Program
- Remote Vocational Training Scheme
- Royal Flying Doctor Service
- Rural Locum Assistance Program
- The Remote and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Aged Care Service Development Assistance Panel
- Workforce Incentive Program – Practice Stream
- Workforce Incentive Program – Doctor Stream

The following programs are in the process of transitioning to the MMM.
- Australian General Practice Training Program
- Bonded Medical Places Scheme
- Closing the Gap Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme Co-payment Measure
- Commonwealth Medical Internship Program
- Five Year Overseas Trained Doctor Scheme
- General Practice Procedural Training Support Program
- John Flynn Placement Program
- McGrath Breast Care Nurse Initiative
- Medical Rural Bonded Scholarship Scheme
- National Shed Development Program
- Premium Support Scheme
- Quality Use of Medicines Maximised for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People
- Rural Health Multidisciplinary Training Program
- Rural Health Outreach Fund
- Rural Junior Doctor Training Innovation Fund
- Rural Procedural Grants Program
- Rural, Regional and Other Special Needs Building Fund
- Scaling for the ten year moratorium requirement under section 19AB of the Health Insurance Act 1973
- Specialist Training Program

Long Term Ecological Research Network
(Question No. 296)

Ms Sharkie asked the Minister for Education, in writing, on 10 February 2020:


2. What was the cost of the LTERN to the Government in each of the financial years:
   (a) 2015-16;
   (b) 2016-17; and
   (c) 2017-18.

3. What was the benefit to environmental monitoring, bushfire management and bushfire recovery from the LTERN.

4. In light of the recent devastation caused to native Australian flora and fauna by the bushfires, will the Government be reinstating its funding for LTERN; if not, why not.

Mr Tehan: The answer to the honourable member's question is as follows:

1. The Australian Government has not cut funding for LTERN.
2. No Australian Government funding has been provided directly to LTERN in the period identified.
3. The Australian Government has not assessed the benefits or otherwise of LTERN,
4. See answers to Questions 1 and 2.

**Pensions and Benefits**  
(Question No. 297)

Mr Zappia asked the Prime Minister in writing, on 10 February 2020:
Has the review by Mr David Tune AO PSM into the totally and permanently incapacitated pension been completed; if so:
(a) when was it completed; and
(b) when will it be released.

Mr Morrison: The answer to the honourable member's question is as follows:
Mr David Tune AO PSM, provided his Review to the Prime Minister, the Hon Scott Morrison MP, on 30 August 2019.
The Review is currently being considered by Government. Any decision to release the Review or provide a response is a matter for Government.

**Elephant Ivory and Rhinoceros Horn**  
(Question No. 298)

Ms Sharkie asked the Minister for the Environment, in writing, on 10 February 2020:
Further to the answer to question in writing No. 1177 from the 45th Parliament (House Hansard, 2 April 2019, page 1584), can an update be provided on the work towards a potential ban on domestic trade in elephant ivory and rhinoceros horn.

Ms Ley: The answer to the honourable member's question is as follows:
The Australian Government has announced it is committed to strengthening domestic restrictions within Australia on the trade of elephant ivory and rhino horn.

While the Commonwealth already controls and restricts international trade of ivory and rhino horn, extending this to a domestic ban cannot be undertaken by the Commonwealth alone.

On 8 November 2019, the Meeting of Environment Ministers met, and discussed Australia's trade in elephant ivory and rhino horn. Ministers agreed all jurisdictions would identify appropriate mechanisms to eliminate domestic trade in elephant ivory and rhino horn, including working with relevant trading houses. All governments are now considering what are the most appropriate measures to take.

The Meeting of Environment Ministers also agreed to make a submission to the independent review of the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999 (EPBC Act) in relation to domestic trade in elephant ivory and rhino horn.

**High Court of Australia**  
(Question No. 299)

Mr Zappia asked the Attorney-General, in writing, on 10 February 2020:
Further to the answer to question in writing No. 213 (House Hansard, 5 December 2019, page 7205):
(1) What is the total floor area of the floor on which the High Court of Australia is located at the Commonwealth Law Courts Building in Adelaide.
(2) Who occupies any remaining floor space of the 225 square metres referred to in the answer to part (2) of the question.

Mr Porter: The answer to the honourable member's question is as follows:
1. The total floor area is 1263.2 square metres.
2. The Federal Court of Australia occupies the remaining floor space.

**Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade**  
(Question No. 301)

Mr Conroy asked the Minister representing the Minister for Foreign Affairs, in writing, on 10 February 2020:
In respect of the contract reported on AusTender under Contract Notice CN3627825:
(1) Is the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) a relevant entity for the purposes of paragraph 7.18 of the Commonwealth Procurement Rules.
(2) Was this contract valued at or above the reporting threshold for the purposes of paragraph 7.18 of the Commonwealth Procurement Rules.
(3) On what date did DFAT: (a) enter into this contract; and (b) report this contract on AusTender.
(4) Was the date on which DFAT reported this contract on AusTender within 42 days of the date on which DFAT entered into this contract; if not, was this a breach of the requirement in paragraph 7.18 of the Commonwealth Procurement Rules that relevant entities must report contracts on AusTender within 42 days of entering into a contract; if not, why not.
Mr Morrison: The Minister for Foreign Affairs has provided the following answer to the honourable member's question:

1) Yes
2) Yes
3) (a) 20 August 2019 (b) This contract was reported in error which has now been rectified on AusTender. All Common Cloud Commitment purchases under the Microsoft VSA arrangement are reported by the Digital Transformation Authority on behalf of participating agencies.
4) The contract was reported on AusTender in error.

Climate Change
(Question No. 302)

Mr Conroy asked the Minister for Energy and Emissions Reduction, in writing, on 10 February 2020:

In respect of Australia's first Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) submitted to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change's interim NDC Registry on 9 November 2016, which provides that the target of a 26 to 28 per cent reduction below 2005 levels by 2030 is for an 'absolute economy-wide emissions reduction by 2030, to be developed into an emissions budget covering the period 2021-2030', what is the Australian Government's emissions budget for the period 2021-2030?

Mr Taylor: The answer to the honourable member's question is as follows:

The current estimate of Australia's emissions budget for the period 2021-2030 is 4,777-4,710 Mt CO$_2$-e to meet the 26-28 per cent target.

Climate Change
(Question No. 303)

Mr Conroy asked the Minister for Energy and Emissions Reduction, in writing, on 10 February 2020:

What does the Department of the Environment and Energy project Australia's total greenhouse gas emissions to be over the period 2021-2030?

Mr Taylor: The answer to the honourable member's question is as follows:

The current estimate of Australia's cumulative emissions over the period 2021-2030 is 5,169 Mt CO$_2$-e. This does not take into account Australia's overachievement against previous targets or abatement from policies and measures under development such as the electric vehicle strategy included in the Climate Solutions Package.

Climate Change
(Question No. 304)

Mr Conroy asked the Minister for Energy and Emissions Reduction, in writing, on 10 February 2020:

In respect of Article 4, paragraph 9 of the Paris Agreement and associated decisions of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change's Conference of the Parties and Meetings of the Parties to the Paris Agreement, is Australia due to communicate a new or updated Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) in 2020; if so, when in 2020 will the Government prepare and communicate a new or updated NDC; if not, by when is Australia due to communicate a new or updated NDC.

Mr Taylor: The answer to the honourable member's question is as follows:

In accordance with the Paris Agreement, the Australian Government intends to recommunicate its current NDC ahead of the next United Nations Conference of the Parties (COP26).

Australia's subsequent NDC, including a target to 2035 or 2040, is due to be communicated in 2025.

Nuclear Energy
(Question No. 305)

Mr Zappia asked the Minister for Resources, Water and Northern Australia, in writing, on 11 February 2020:

In respect of the proposed National Radioactive Waste Management Facility in South Australia:

1. Who will own the proposed nuclear waste facility.
2. Will the facility remain in public ownership.
3. Who will operate the facility.
4. What is the estimated cost of construction of the facility.
5. Has the proposed facility been designed; if so, by whom.
6. What state government approvals, if any, will be required for establishment of the facility.
7. What is the anticipated construction commencement date.
8. How much low level and medium level waste is expected to be stored at the facility each year.
9. At which cities or towns is most of Australia's intermediate level waste currently: (a) generated; and (b) stored.
10. At which cities or towns is most of Australia's low level waste currently: (a) generated; and (b) stored.
11. Will there be any direct income to the South Australian Government from the proposed facility.
12. Has the Government entered into an agreement with the landowner for the purchase of his property for the purpose of constructing a waste facility.
13. Was the Government offered other sites; if so: (a) by whom; (b) where were those sites; (c) when were those offers made; and (d) were those sites geologically suitable.
14. Will the proposed site be used to store waste from overseas.

**Mr Pitt:** The answer to the honourable member's question is as follows:

1. The Commonwealth.
2. Yes. The facility will be a significant piece of national infrastructure.
3. The facility will be an Australian government organisation.
4. General government practice is that detailed cost estimate numbers remain commercial-in-confidence until appropriations are made. In July 2018, Cadence Economics estimated construction at $325 million for the purpose of their economic benefit analysis. This early, indicative figure was based on generic concept design. The full cost of construction will depend on the specific site characteristics and any recommendations of the environmental and radiological regulatory assessments.
5. A concept design has been developed by ANSTO and Jacobs Group (Australia) and information is available online: https://www.industry.gov.au/strategies-for-the-future/managing-radioactive-waste. The next stage will be to develop a site specific design for the facility.
6. The extent of state government approvals required for the establishment of the facility is unknown. Before its establishment, the facility must receive regulatory approvals under the Environmental Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999 and the Australian Radiation Protection and Nuclear Safety Act 1998, which are both pieces of Commonwealth legislation.
7. The facility can commence construction work once relevant regulatory approvals are granted. The design phase may take around 4 years and in parallel, the environmental and radiological regulatory approval process is expected to take up to 4 years.
8. Radioactive waste inventories were published in the Australian Radioactive Waste Management Framework (April 2018). At that time, the Commonwealth inventory contained 4975m$^3$ of legacy LLW and 4843m$^3$ of future LLW. It also contained 1771m$^3$ of legacy ILW and 1963m$^3$ of future ILW. These volumes (both legacy and future) account for the estimate of the volume of waste, including packaging that is required for disposal or long term storage at the facility.
9. The Commonwealth generates and holds the vast majority of Australia's intermediate level radioactive waste. Most of this waste is held by the Australian Nuclear Science and Technology Organisation (ANSTO) in Lucas Heights, Sydney. ANSTO currently has about 1,211 cubic meters of legacy intermediate level waste in storage and an expected volume of 1,849 cubic meters of future intermediate level waste.
10. The Commonwealth generates and holds the vast majority of Australia's low level radioactive waste, and most of this waste is held by ANSTO in Lucas Heights, Sydney. ANSTO currently has about 2,711 cubic meters of legacy low level waste in storage and an expected volume of 4,685 cubic meters of future low level waste.
11. No. The Government is not making direct payments to the South Australian Government.
12. No. Negotiations with the landowners, for compensation for land acquisition, are ongoing and commercial in confidence.
13. A nationwide voluntary nomination process took place in 2015, and resulted in 28 nominations, 25 of which were assessed as compliant with the *National Radioactive Waste Management Act 2012* (the Act).

These 25 sites were assessed against the Act's requirements, and a multi-criteria site assessment. Six were assessed as suitable for further assessment and public consideration. On 29 April 2016, the then Minister for Resources, the Hon Josh Frydenberg MP, announced that the Hawker Site in South Australia was the only site out of the six chosen to progress to the next stage of consideration.

In October 2016 the Working for Kimba's Future group approached the government with three potential new sites for nominations being: Lyndhurst, Napandee and Tola Park. This resulted in two voluntary formal nominations for Kimba (Lyndhurst and Napandee) in February 2017, which were accepted by the former Minister for Resources and Northern Australia, Senator the Hon Matthew Canavan to progress to the next stage of consideration.

The department has received two additional nominations: Leonora, Western Australia in August 2017 and Rose Hill Station, Brewarrina, NSW in September 2018. The applicants have been advised that their nominations will not progress at this time.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of site</th>
<th>Where is it located?</th>
<th>When were they nominated?</th>
<th>Are the sites geologically suitable?</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>South Australia</td>
<td>May 2015</td>
<td>Not progressed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cortlinye</td>
<td>South Australia</td>
<td>May 2015</td>
<td>Not progressed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sallys Flat</td>
<td>Bathurst and Mudgee, New South Whales</td>
<td>May 2015</td>
<td>Not progressed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Oman Ama, Queensland</td>
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<tr>
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<td>May 2015</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hawker, South Australia</td>
<td>Yes, with appropriate mitigations.</td>
<td>May 2015</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kimba, South Australia</td>
<td>Not progressed</td>
<td>May 2015</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kimba, South Australia</td>
<td>Yes, with appropriate mitigations.</td>
<td>May 2015</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kimba, South Australia</td>
<td>Not progressed. Advised on 4 June</td>
<td>January 2017</td>
<td>that would not be progressed till current process not finalised</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Western Australia</td>
<td>Not progressed</td>
<td>August 2017</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brewarrina, New South Wales</td>
<td>Not progressed. Advised on 12 October 2018</td>
<td>September 2018</td>
<td>that would not be progressed till current process not finalised</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

14. No. This facility is designated for Australian waste only. Consistent with the Joint Convention on the Safety of Spent Fuel Management and on the Safety of Radioactive Waste Management, the importation of radioactive material is prohibited unless permission has been granted by the Minister for Health or a delegate. The proposed new definition of 'controlled material' makes this clear that the facility can only receive and manage waste that is of domestic origin, that is, waste that is: used in Australia; generated by activities in Australia or sent to Australia under contractual arrangements relating to the reprocessing of spent nuclear fuel. Irrespective, the importation of radioactive material is regulated by various pieces of legislation, which includes the Customs Act 1901 and the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999.

**Environment**

(Question No. 306)

Ms Sharkie asked the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Infrastructure, Transport and Regional Development, in writing, on 12 February 2020:

1. What is the Government's most recent calendar year estimate of non-deliberate deaths wholly or partially caused by road vehicle pollution.

2. What is the Government's best estimate of the decrease in annual deaths that would result from Australia adopting road vehicle emissions standards equivalent or approximately equivalent to road vehicle emission standards of: (a) the United States; and (b) Europe (Euro 6).

3. Has the Department of Health's most recent advice been for or against improved road vehicle emissions standards, and can a summary of that advice be provided.

Mr McCormack: The answer to the honourable member's question is as follows:

1. The Government does not have such an estimate.

2. The Government does not have an estimate of the number of deaths that would be avoided by adopting United States or European noxious emission standards. Previous estimates of health benefits are expressed in terms of avoided health costs.

3. The Department of Health has not provided advice on improved road vehicle emissions standards, but supports actions that improve air quality leading to a reduction in the health burden associated with air pollution.

**National Climate Change Adaptation Research Facility**

(Question No. 307)

Ms Sharkie asked the Minister for the Environment, in writing, on 12 February 2020:

1. What was the cost to the Government of the National Climate Change Adaptation Research Facility (NCCARF) in the financial years: (a) 2016-17; (b) 2017-18; (c) 2018-19; and (d) 2019-20.

2. Why did the Government defund the NCCARF.

3. Given that in the Prime Minister's address to the National Press Club on 29 January 2020, adaptation was identified as a priority in the Government's approach to practical action on climate change, will the Government now re-establish the NCCARF; if not, why not; if so, can details of the funding be provided for over the forward estimates.

Ms Ley: The answer to the honourable member's question is as follows:

1. The Australian Government has invested over $56 million in the National Climate Change Adaptation Research Facility (NCCARF) since it was established in 2007.

   - The 2014-15 Budget included $9 million over three years for the National Climate Change Adaptation Research Facility. Under this measure, funding for NCCARF in 2016-17 was $2.8 million.

   - The 2017-18 Budget included $0.6 million in 2017-18 for the Adaptation Partnership which included the CSIRO and NCCARF. NCCARF received $0.3 million as part of the partnership.
Since 2017-18, NCCARF has continued to be hosted by Griffith University and attract projects from the public sector. For example, NCCARF has been a part of two projects with the then Department of the Environment and Energy and developed several sectoral adaptation plans for the Queensland Government.

2. NCCARF was funded to deliver specific projects including research and resources for local council, businesses and communities. This work was completed in 2017-2018. The resources produced through this funding are available online and continue to be used.

3. Climate adaptation requires action across all sectors from governments, business and the community. Research into climate resilience and adaptation is embedded within many existing environmental and climate science activities such as the research undertaken by the National Environmental Science Program.

The Government is focused on making sure its continuing significant investment in climate science delivers the most effective results. Recent investments in climate science include:

- $145 million for the National Environmental Science Program including $23.9 million over six years in the Earth Systems and Climate Change Hub.
- $149 million for the next investment in the National Environmental Science Program announced 27 March 2020 which will establish a Climate Systems research hub.
- $37 million to create a decadal climate science capability within the CSIRO Climate Science Centre.
- $30 million for the Australian Research Council Centre of Excellence for Climate Extremes to research climate extremes and the ability predict them.
- $47 million (2013-21) for the Bushfire and Natural Hazards Cooperative Research Centre to undertake research that supports a more disaster-resilient Australia.

Griffith University is responsible for the NCCARF brand and continues to host resources produced by NCCARF such as the CoastAdapt website.

**National Waste Policy**

**(Question No. 308)**

Ms Sharkie asked the Minister for the Environment, in writing, on 12 February 2020:

In respect of the recommendations made in OECD Environmental Performance Reviews: Australia 2019:
1. As per page 30 of the review, has the Government: (a) updated and implemented the National Waste Policy as part of a broader strategy on circular economy, with measurable targets; (b) expanded the scope and improved standardisation of national waste data; and (c) updated the 2010-11 Waste Account, integrating material flow analysis to monitor progress towards a circular economy; if not, why not.
2. As per page 42 of the review, has the Government: (a) updated the 1992 National Strategy for Ecologically Sustainable Development with a plan for implementing the 2030 Agenda supported by time-bound quantitative targets; (b) used environmental-economic accounts in budget documents; and (c) published regular environmental expenditure accounts in Australia; if not, why not.
3. As per page 53 of the review, has the Government: (a) developed legal mechanisms to facilitate and accelerate ratification of current and future amendments to the Stockholm Convention and ratification of the Minamata Convention; and (b) updated the National Pollutant Inventory to be in line with the Recommendation on Implementing Pollutant Release and Transfer Registers adopted by the OECD Council on 10 April 2018; if not, why not.

Ms Ley: The answer to the honourable member's question is as follows:

1.(a). The National Waste Policy was updated in 2018, based on circular economy principles. In 2019, the National Waste Policy Action Plan's seven waste and resource recovery targets were agreed by all Commonwealth, State and Territory Environment Ministers.

1. Ban the export of waste plastic, paper, glass and tyres, commencing in the second half of 2020
2. Reduce the total waste generated in Australia by 10% per person by 2030
3. 80% average resource recovery rate from all waste streams following the waste hierarchy by 2030.
4. Significantly increase the use of recycled content by governments and industry.
5. Phase out problematic and unnecessary plastics by 2025.
6. Halve the amount of organic waste sent to landfill by 2030.
7. Make comprehensive, economy-wide and timely data publicly available to support better consumer, investment and policy decisions.


1.(c). Yes the 2010-11 Waste Account has been updated with the Waste Account, Australia, Experimental Estimates, 2016-17. This does not integrate material flow analysis due to limits on available data on use of materials after they are recycled.

2.(a). The Australian Government's approach to the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) is to integrate them into our policies, strategies and programs. For example, the Department of Agriculture Water and the

CHAMBER
Environment has referenced the SDGs in the National Food Waste Strategy, National Waste Policy, Australia's Marine Park Management Plans, and Partnerships Statement. We have also integrated the SDGs into the previous Department of Environment and Energy Corporate Plans and Annual Reports for the past three years.

Principles of ecologically sustainable development enshrined in the National Strategy for Ecologically Sustainable Development (NSESD) underpin our national legislation, the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999 (EPBC Act). An independent review of the EPBC Act is currently underway which will include consideration of how the EPBC Act has supported delivery of ecologically sustainable development. On completion of the review, the Government will consider its recommendations and determine our response.

2.(b). No. The Government is in the process of developing new national environmental-economic accounts under the Common National Approach to Environmental Economic Accounting: Strategy and Action Plan (the Strategy), with an early focus on waste and land accounts.

2.(c). No, the Government has not published regular environmental expenditure accounts in Australia, The Government’s efforts are focused on developing experimental environmental-economic accounts as this has been prioritised by stakeholders, including the States and Territories.


Chemicals of international concern, such as mercury and chemicals listed on the Stockholm Convention, will be prioritised for scheduling under the National Standard. This will address obligations necessary to enable ratification of the Minamata Convention on Mercury and the Stockholm Convention.

3.(b). The National Pollutant Inventory aligns with the OECD Recommendation on Implementing Pollutant Release and Transfer Registers (PRTR) where appropriate, taking into account national circumstances. The Government is reviewing the National Environment Protection Council Act 1999, with a focus on enabling more efficient changes to Measures under the Act, including the National Pollutant Inventory.

Aged Care
(Question No. 311)

Ms Owens asked the Minister representing the Minister for Aged Care and Senior Australians, in writing, on 12 February 2020:

In respect of the Government’s response to the interim report of the Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety, released on 31 October 2019:

(1) How many of the additional 10,000 Home Care Packages (HCP) announced in November 2019 are allocated to the Western Sydney Aged Care Planning Region (ACPR).
(2) How many of these new HCPs have been allocated to the Western Sydney ACPR to date.
(3) How many people in the Western Sydney ACPR (in general) and in the electoral division of Parramatta (specifically) are still waiting for their appropriate HCP.

Mr Hunt: The Minister for Aged Care and Senior Australians has provided the following answer to the honourable member's question:

1. The National Prioritisation System (NPS) ensures home care packages are assigned in a consistent and equitable way based on people's individual needs and circumstances, regardless of where they live in Australia. Package assignment is based only on a person's approval date and priority for home care.

Packages are assigned on a weekly basis to those people at the top of the NPS and therefore we cannot advise a specific allocation to the Western Sydney Aged Care Planning Region (ACPR).

2. The additional 10,000 packages were added to the existing release schedule and are being released in line with overall funding available for the Home Care Packages Program.

Total releases by ACPR are included in the quarterly Home Care Data Reports.

3. At 30 September 2019, there were 2,446 people who lived in the Western Sydney ACPR who were in the NPS. The following table provides a breakdown by approved level.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level 1</th>
<th>Level 2</th>
<th>Level 3</th>
<th>Level 4</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>131</td>
<td>760</td>
<td>1,074</td>
<td>481</td>
<td>2,446</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Department of Health does not collect this information at electoral division level.

Superannuation
(Question No. 312)

Ms Sharkie asked the Treasurer, in writing, on 13 February 2020:

(1) Why was superannuation excluded from the 2001 revision of the USA-Australia tax treaty.
(2) Is it a fact that the 2001 revision of the treaty was focused on businesses rather than on individuals.
(3) Has the Treasurer received any advice on revising the treaty to address issues with taxation of superannuation; if so, can
the Treasurer provide any such advice (or if not possible, can a summary of each advice be provided to the House).

(4) Is the Treasurer aware of changes in the past decade in US practices in the enforcement of the Foreign Account Tax Compliance Act as it applies to ‘US persons’ that are also residents of Australia for tax purposes, or Australian citizens that reside in Australia and are subject to Australian taxation.

(5) Has the Government been advised of any such changes by the US Government; if so, could the Treasurer provide the advice (or if not possible, can a summary be provided of each of these advice to the House).

(6) Has any such change in US practice increased the costs to Australian citizens and tax residents that are required to comply with US tax rules; and what is the estimated total cost of treaty and extra-territorial US tax compliance for Australian citizens and Australian tax residents over the forward estimates broken down by financial year.

(7) Under the treaty and related instruments: (a) under what circumstances would Australian citizens and tax residents be paying both US and Australian taxes (however arising); (b) can the Treasurer detail each of these circumstances; and (c) has the Treasurer received any advice concerning any of these circumstances, or concerning the potential or reality of double taxation under current treaty arrangements more generally; if so, can these advice be provided (or if not possible, can a summary of these advice be provided to the House).

(8) What is the number of: (a) Australian citizens; and (b) Australian tax residents; that pay US taxes on Australian income (however arising, including salary, superannuation contributions and distributions, home ownership, business ownership, and any other investments).

(9) Broken down by financial year over the forward estimates, what is the: (a) total cost from the treaty to Government revenue; and (b) total capital removed from Australian superannuation accounts and the Australian economy due to extra-territorial taxation by the US Government (including Australian superannuation contributions and distributions).

(10) What review and monitoring mechanisms does the Government have in place to identify issues arising out of the operation of the treaty.

(11) To date: (a) what concrete steps have been agreed to in order to resolve the issues identified in the US-Australia tax treaty; and (b) what are the deadlines for completing each of these steps.

(12) In tabular form, can a list be provided of the notifications (and a brief description of each individual notification) provided by the US and received by Australia pursuant to Article 2, Paragraph 2 of the treaty.

(13) Will the Government commit to a renegotiation of the treaty; if not, why not; if so, in which year does the Government: (a) expect to commence those negotiations; and (b) intend to conclude negotiations.

| Mr Frydenberg: The answer to the honourable member's question is as follows: |
| With respect to the questions 1 – 7, 10, 11 and 13 |
| The Explanatory Memorandum for the implementing legislation describes why the 2001 treaty update was necessary. |

The 2001 treaty update did not change the Pensions Article (Article 18), as the primary focus of the update was elsewhere in the treaty. The Protocol amending the original Convention updated provisions that affect residents of Australia and the United States (US) (including individuals).

In relation to the Foreign Account Tax Compliance Act (FATCA) it was enacted unilaterally by the US Congress to improve US taxpayers' compliance with US tax laws by imposing certain due diligence and reporting obligations on foreign (i.e. non-US) financial institutions. As a result of the Australia-US Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA) on FATCA, the ATO is actively involved in the collection of FATCA information from Australian financial institutions. This avoids the burden on each Australian financial institution having to provide information directly to the United States Government and the imposition of withholding taxes by the United States. There is no additional burden placed on Australian citizens that are also US tax residents living outside the US.

Generally, the Australia-US tax treaty allows both jurisdictions to tax US-sourced income of an Australian tax resident with relief provided in the form of a foreign tax credit (like Australia's Foreign Income Tax Offset). Broadly, the Australia-US tax treaty and the relief mechanisms provided by both countries (where available) alleviates double taxation in most circumstances.

The Australian Government is aware that, as the US tax system attributes the earnings of certain entities to the individual beneficiaries, some income earned in Australia by Australian citizens who are US tax residents – such as earnings in an Australian domiciled superannuation fund – is subject to US taxation. Treasury and the ATO are continuing to work with their US counterparts to assist them in reaching an interpretation that is as favourable to taxpayers as possible.

8. Australian tax returns do not generate data that allows these estimates to be made.

9. Treaties are costing at the time they become measures and are reported in the relevant Budget. Refer to Table 2 in Budget Paper 2: Budget Measures (Revenue) of the 2002 Budget for the cost of the revised Australia-US tax treaty over the forwards. Treasury does not publish individual treaty costing details on a prospective basis. Further, these costs do not take into account the positive impact of the treaty due to the increased volume of investment from treaty partners. As the Australia-US tax treaty is relatively long-standing, this is expected to be significant.

12. See following table:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Summary</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>United</td>
<td>20 August 2018</td>
<td>Public Law 115-97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>The 2017 Act permanently reduces the corporate income tax rate</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse

(Question No. 314)

Ms Sharkie asked the Minister representing the Minister for Families and Social Services, in writing, on 25 February 2020:

In respect of institutions that were named in the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse that have not yet joined the National Redress Scheme:

(1) Please provide, in tabular form, the names of the organisations and descriptions of the department’s understanding of why the organisation has not yet joined the scheme.

(2) Please list all concrete steps the Government has taken to encourage each of these organisations to join the scheme.

(3) What further concrete steps will the Government take to encourage recalcitrant organisations to join the scheme.

Mr Robert: The Minister for Families and Social Services has provided the following answer to the honourable member's question:

Certain provisions within the National Redress Scheme for Institutional Child Sexual Abuse Act 2018 (the Act) prevent the disclosure of information about the Scheme’s engagement with specific institutions. This is referred to under the legislation as Protected Information.

The National Redress Scheme for Institutional Child Sexual Abuse (the Scheme) is taking a national approach to the on-boarding of institutions (NGIs). The Commonwealth and state and territory governments have established an interjurisdictional engagement working group and meet regularly to encourage NGIs to join the Scheme.

The Scheme has prioritised on-boarding NGIs which have applications against them.

As of 26 March 2020, 49 NGIs named in the Royal Commission into Institutional Child Sexual Abuse (Royal Commission) have not joined the Scheme.

Of these:

- 28 NGIs are currently on-boarding and likely to meet the 30 June 2020 deadline;
- 16 NGIs have had a range of outreach conducted, including Ministerial and/or Departmental correspondence, face to face meetings and teleconferences;
- Two NGIs were named broadly but are joining as individual institutions, refer to * in the following table; and
- Three NGIs are defunct.

The following is a breakdown of each of these stages by NGI and their engagement with the Scheme.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Institutions named in the Royal Commission that have not joined the Scheme</th>
<th>Current engagement status</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Australian Indigenous Ministries</td>
<td>Outreach</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Brisbane Boys College</td>
<td>On-boarding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Brisbane Grammar</td>
<td>On-boarding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Catholic - Blessed Sacrament Fathers</td>
<td>On-boarding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Catholic - Daughters of Our Lady of Compassion</td>
<td>On-boarding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Catholic - Dominican Province of the Assumption (Dominican Friars)</td>
<td>On-boarding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>Catholic - Dominican Sisters of Eastern Australia and Solomon Islands</td>
<td>On-boarding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>Catholic - Eparchy of St Peter and Paul of Melbourne</td>
<td>On-boarding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>Catholic - Faithful Companions of Jesus</td>
<td>On-boarding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td>Catholic - Franciscan Sisters of the Heart of Jesus</td>
<td>Outreach</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.</td>
<td>Catholic - Loreto Sisters - Institute of the Blessed Virgin Mary</td>
<td>On-boarding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13.</td>
<td>Catholic - Missionary Sisters of the Sacred Heart</td>
<td>On-boarding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15.</td>
<td>Catholic - Norbertine Canons – Canons Regular of Premontre</td>
<td>On-boarding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16.</td>
<td>Catholic - Patrician Brothers – Congregation of the Brothers of St Patrick</td>
<td>On-boarding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17.</td>
<td>Catholic - Presentation Sisters – Victoria</td>
<td>On-boarding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18.</td>
<td>Catholic - Resurrection Sisters -</td>
<td>Outreach</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20.</td>
<td>Catholic - Scalabrinians – Pious Society of St Charles</td>
<td>On-boarding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21.</td>
<td>Catholic - Secular Institute of the Schoenstatt Sisters of Mary</td>
<td>Outreach</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22.</td>
<td>Catholic - Servite Friars – Order of Servants of Mary</td>
<td>Outreach</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23.</td>
<td>Catholic - Sisters of Mercy – North Sydney</td>
<td>On-boarding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24.</td>
<td>Catholic - Sisters of Nazareth</td>
<td>On-boarding</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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Biosecurity

(Question No. 315)

Ms Sharkie asked the Minister for Agriculture, Drought and Emergency Management, in writing, on 25 February 2020:

1. What: (a) funding is the Government providing; and (b) steps is the Government taking; to strengthen biosecurity arrangements at Australian borders to ensure the agricultural industry remains free from any incursions by a recently detected invasive moth species known as the fall armyworm moth.

2. What: (a) funding is the Government providing; and (b) steps is the Government taking; to support state and territory governments to strengthen biosecurity arrangements to prevent an incursion by the fall armyworm moth.

Mr Littleproud: The Minister for Agriculture, Drought and Emergency Management has provided the following answer to the honourable member's question:

1. What:
   (a) funding is the Government providing;

   • The Government's focus on protecting Australia from pests and disease remains unwavering. The biosecurity system continues to be effectively funded through appropriation and cost recovery, including the $66.6 million African swine fever response package, which is funding more frontline staff, detectors dogs and 3D x-ray machines at Australia's borders enabling us to better manage the risk of ASF and other significant biosecurity threats arriving in Australia.

   (b) steps is the Government taking; to strengthen biosecurity arrangements at Australian borders to ensure the agricultural industry remains free from any incursions by a recently detected invasive moth species known as the fall armyworm moth:

   • While robust measures are in place at the border, natural dispersal by flight has been the pathway of introduction and spread of fall armyworm in Australia, with fall armyworm moths being capable of spreading hundreds of kilometres in a few days.

   • No country in the world with suitable environmental conditions for establishment has successfully prevented the natural ingress and establishment of fall armyworm once it is on their border.

   • The Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment have been actively monitoring the spread of fall armyworm around the globe since early 2019. As a result of detections in near neighbour countries the Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment established a surveillance trapping program in the Torres Strait and Northern Australia that was the reason for the early detection of fall armyworm.

2. What:
Tuesday, 12 May 2020

(93)

(a) funding is the Government providing;

- The Australian Government is a signatory and a cost sharing party to the Emergency Plant Pest Response Deed (The EPPRD). The EPPRD is a formal, legally binding agreement between Plant Health Australia (PHA), the Australian Government, all state and territory governments and plant industry signatories, covering the management and funding of responses to Emergency Plant Pest Incidents.
- The Australian Government provides large amounts of funding each year to Rural Research and Development Corporations (RDCs) to help drive agricultural innovation. The RDCs invest in research and development to improve the profitability, productivity, competitiveness and long-term sustainability of Australia’s primary industries.
- The Australian Government through the Australian Chief Plant Protection Officer is a member of the Plant Biosecurity Research Initiative (PBRI). The PBRI is a partnership between the nation’s plant RDCs, PHA, the Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment, industry, state and federal biosecurity stakeholders. The PBRI create efficiency and impact in plant biosecurity research and development across industries, through coordinated and targeted investment that supports the long-term protection of Australia’s plant sector from biosecurity threats.
- To assist with future management of fall armyworm, the RDCs of host crops including Cotton RDC and Grain RDC, Sugar Research Australia and Horticultural Innovations Australia will be able to direct Australian Government funding to research help support their industries.
- The Government is providing funding supporting a project through Grains Research and Development Corporation (GRDC) to build national prevention and preparedness capability by: increasing awareness and training; developing a contingency plan; and undertaking a research gap analysis.
- Through Plant Health Australia, the Australian Government is supporting a national workshop for industry, governments and researchers to identify: management and control strategies; information gaps; and priority research needs to enable industry to manage this significant pest into the future.

(b) steps is the Government taking; to support state and territory governments to strengthen biosecurity arrangements to prevent an incursion by the fall armyworm moth.

- Assessment under the EPPRD process has determined that fall armyworm is not eradicable in Australia and that it is not able to be prevented from spreading across suitable climatic areas by implementation of biosecurity measures between state and territory borders. The Australian Government is working with all states and territories and effected industries to develop mechanisms to effectively manage the pest to reduce potential spread damage.
- The Australian Government is working with state and territory governments to enhanced surveillance in major agricultural areas across Queensland, Northern Territory and Western Australia to determine the extent of the current outbreak and also to monitor its spread.
- Increasing outreach and communication activities with state and territory governments, peak industry bodies and growers are underway to raise awareness and encourage reporting.
- There is an increased focus to understand the biology, potential impact and distribution of fall armyworm in Australia and develop control and management options.
- Additional attention is given on raising industry and government awareness, and build national capability to respond and manage fall armyworm prior to its detection in other production area.

**Defence Equipment**

(Question No. 317)

**Mr Zappia** asked the Minister representing the Minister for Defence, in writing, on 26 February 2020:

In 2003, did the Government enter into a 25 year agreement with ASC Pty Ltd that Collins class submarine maintenance would be carried out by ASC Pty Ltd in South Australia; if so: (a) is that agreement still valid; and (b) what changes, if any, were made to the agreement since 2003.

Mr Dutton: The Minister for Defence has provided the following answer to the honourable member's question:

On 4 December 2003, Defence entered into a 15 year Through Life Support Agreement (with two five-year extension options) with the Australian Submarine Corporation Pty Ltd (now ASC Pty Ltd) for the provision of platform-related through life support for the Collins class submarine. The preamble to the Agreement states that the Collins class full-cycle dockings would be conducted at Outer Harbor in Adelaide.

a) No.

b) A review of the Agreement that commenced in 2009 determined that it was not able to meet its stated objectives. The parties agreed to terminate the Agreement and set in place a new Collins class In-Service Support Contract on 29 June 2012 to cover the sustainment and enhancement of the Collins class submarine fleet.

The Collins class In-Service Support Contract is performance-based and has been integral to the transformation of Collins class sustainment, lifting submarine operational availability to levels above the international benchmark.

The Collins class In-Service Support Contract is silent on the location of maintenance activities.
**Defence Procurement**  
(Question No. 319)

Mr Zappia asked the Minister representing the Minister for Defence, in writing, on 26 February 2020:

1. Which South Australian businesses have been awarded contracts under the submarine replacement program.
2. What is the total value of those contracts.

Mr Dutton: The Minister for Defence has provided the following answer to the Member's question:

1. As of February 2020, over 50 businesses based in South Australia, or with a presence in South Australia, have directly benefited from the Attack Class Submarine Program. The Government's $50 billion investment in this program has economy-wide benefits throughout South Australia and extend to design, engineering, contracting, language, accommodation, and education services.
2. As of February 2020, the total value of all contracts awarded to these companies is $42.5 million.

**Superannuation**  
(Question No. 321)

Ms Sharkie asked the Treasurer, in writing, on 27 February 2020:

1. What concrete steps will the Government be taking to address the issue of insurance companies that take premiums from superannuation accounts and then do not pay the insurance payout to people entitled to that money.
2. What measures is the Government taking to assist people who are not aware of the existence of insurance policies that are attached to compulsory superannuation accounts of deceased family members.
3. Has the Government considered administrative or legislative measures that, in the event of the death of a superannuation insurance policy holder: (a) death benefits; and (b) insurance payouts; would be paid to the Australian Taxation Office to hold in trust for the family of the deceased; if so, what was the result of those considerations; if not, why not.

Mr Frydenberg: The answer to the honourable member's question is as follows:

1. The design of their insurance benefits is a matter for trustees to determine, providing that the provision of insurance is consistent with a trustee's duty to not provide insurance that inappropriately erodes the retirement benefits of members. The insurance covenant in s52(7) (d) of the Superannuation Industry (Supervision) Act 1993 requires trustees to do everything that is reasonable to pursue an insurance claim for the benefit of a beneficiary, if the claim has a reasonable prospect of success. Complaints around the non-payment of insurance benefits should be directed to the trustee of the fund through their internal dispute resolution process. If they are not satisfied with trustee's response, the complaint can be raised with the Australian Financial Complaints Authority (AFCA), which provides fair and independent financial services complaint resolution that is free to consumers.

   The Government believes Australians should not be defaulted into insurance they did not ask for, may not be able to claim on, or which may be significantly beyond what they need. The Government has passed legislation to ensure that insurance within superannuation is offered on an opt-in basis in relation to accounts which have not received a contribution or rollover for 16 months or longer, members who have a balance below $6,000 and new members under the age of 25 (unless the member is employed in a dangerous occupation or is an emergency services worker). Importantly, members still have the opportunity to opt-in to insurance cover if they decide it is appropriate for their circumstances.

   The Government has also taken action on several Financial Services Royal Commission recommendations relating to insurance in superannuation. It has released draft legislation to extend ASIC’s role and powers in the superannuation industry to better promote consumer protection (Recommendation 6.4). As part of these changes the Government is creating a new Australian financial service under the Corporations Act 2001 for superannuation trustee services. The insurance claims handling activities of registrable superannuation entity licensees will be captured by the Australian financial services licensing regime because they constitute the provision of a superannuation trustee service. All of the Australian financial services licence obligations, such as acting efficiently, honestly and fairly, will apply to trustees' claims handling conduct as part of their provision of a superannuation trustee service.

   The Government has also released draft legislation to allow ASIC to approve industry codes of conduct that are voluntarily submitted to them and designate enforceable code provisions within codes that it approves (Recommendation 4.9).

2. Superannuation trustees generally have the responsibility, in accordance with their trust deed, to determine who receives the benefits of life insurance policies in the case of the death of a covered member.

   In the event that the member has died and the trustee is unable to ensure the amount is paid to a beneficiary, the amount should be transferred to the ATO as unclaimed superannuation under the requirements in section 14 of the Superannuation (Unclaimed Money and Lost Members) Act 1999. These amounts can be claimed by eligible individuals, and will attract benefits should be directed to the trustee of the fund through their internal

3. Treasury does not comment on policy options that form part of advice to Government.

**CuDeco**  
(Question No. 322)

Mr Katter asked the Treasurer, in writing, on 4 March 2020:
Tuesday, 12 May 2020

CHAMBER

1. Is the Minister aware that CuDeco Rocklands in Cloncurry has gone into voluntary administration, leaving local small businesses and employees significantly out of pocket, and that employees were not paid for months before going into administration.

2. Is the Minister aware there were also reports made to the Australian Securities and Investment Commission (ASIC), in the months before going into administration, of questionable business practices—hundreds of staff members are owed wages, small businesses have unpaid invoices, and 6,000 shareholders have lost their investments (many have lost their retirement funds meaning they will now need the aged pension).

3. Will the Government increase the powers of the Fair Work Ombudsman to force companies to pay staff even when in administration.

4. Will the Government increase the powers of ASIC to allow them to investigate illegal activities when reported and act on them to enforce the law.

5. When will the Government put a stop to foreign companies coming to Australia and taking advantage of our people and small businesses.

Mr Frydenberg: The answer to the honourable member's question is as follows:

1. and 2. CuDeco Limited entered voluntary administration in July 2019. The Australian Securities and Investment Commission (ASIC) has confirmed that it received reports of alleged misconduct from the public before CuDeco Limited went into external administration.

3. Answer to be provided by the Attorney-General's Department.

4. The Government is committed to providing ASIC with the resources and powers it needs. In the 2019-20 Budget, the Government provided ASIC with an additional $404.8 million over the forward estimates to bolster ASIC's regulatory capacity. This funding builds on the $70.1 million in additional funding provided in the 2018-19 MYEFO and the $121.3 million provided in the 2016-17 Budget.

The Government has also implemented a range of measures to strengthen ASIC's powers.

In March 2019, the Government enacted legislation to strengthen ASIC's criminal and civil penalties for corporate and financial sector misconduct.

In April 2019, the Government enacted legislation for design and distribution obligations and a product intervention power for ASIC to prevent or respond to significant consumer detriment.

In February 2020, the Government enacted legislation to harmonise ASIC's search warrant powers, improve ASIC's ability to access certain telecommunications information, strengthen ASIC's licencing powers, and extend ASIC's powers to ban individuals from managing financial services businesses.

5. Australia's foreign investment regime is open and welcoming, as it needs to be if Australia is to continue to attract the high inflows of foreign investment that it requires to supplement domestic sources. Foreign investment is important for growth, creation of skilled jobs and innovation, and contributes to the prosperity of businesses, communities and the Australian economy. It has also helped build key sectors of the Australian economy, such as the resources (iron ore, coal and liquefied natural gas), tourism and financial services sectors. Without foreign investment, production, employment and income would all be lower.

At the same time, the Government recognises community concerns about foreign ownership of certain Australian assets. The foreign investment review framework allows the Government to consider these concerns when assessing Australia's national interest while ensuring Australia remains an attractive place to invest. If it is determined that a proposal is contrary to the national interest, it will not be approved or conditions will be applied to safeguard the national interest.

Foreign Investment

Question No. 324

Mr Katter asked the Treasurer, in writing, on 4 March 2020:

1. Is it a fact that, in 2015, the Northern Territory Government awarded a 99-year lease of the Port of Darwin to Shandong Landbridge Group, a privately held company with ties to the Chinese Government and Communist Party of China.

2. Does foreign ownership of the Port of Darwin represent a significant threat to Australia's strategic interests.

3. Will the Minister call on the Government to:
   a. prioritise Australia's sovereignty and strategic interests;
   b. take steps to purchase the Port of Darwin; and
   c. ensure that the Port of Darwin stays in the hands of the Australian Government indefinitely.

Mr Frydenberg: The answer to the honourable member's question is as follows:

1. The Northern Territory Government announced the privatisation of the Port of Darwin under a 99-year lease to Landbridge Group (Landbridge) on 13 October 2015. Landbridge was selected by the Northern Territory Government as the successful bidder following a competitive bid process.

2. The Port of Darwin remains under Northern Territory Government ownership.

3. The Treasurer will continue to prioritise and act in the best interests of Australia and Australians.
Taxation
(Question No. 326)

Ms Sharkie asked the Treasurer, in writing, on 5 March 2020:

Further to the answer to question in writing No. 148 (House Hansard 25 November 2019, page 5751), has the Treasury website now been updated to include information on the handling of deductible gift recipient specific listing applications; if so, at what URL can this information be found; if not: (a) why not; and (b) when and at what URL will this information be provided.

Mr Frydenberg: The answer to the honourable member's question is as follows:

The Treasury website was updated on 24 February 2020 to include information on the handling of deductible gift recipient specific listing applications, at the following URL: https://treasury.gov.au/the-department/accountability-reporting/dgr-specific-listing-applications.

Environment
(Question No. 328)

Ms Sharkie asked the Minister for the Environment, in writing, on 5 March 2020:

1. How much of Australia's land, by area and percentage, is conserved through: (a) protected areas; and (b) Other Effective Area-Based Conservation Measures (OECMs).
2. What types of protection are included in the OECM count in (1) above.
3. How much of Australia's Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ), by area and percentage, is conserved through: (a) marine protected areas; and (b) OECMs.
4. What types of protection are included in the OECM count in (3) above.
5. In respect of Australia's National Network of Marine Parks: (a) how much of Australia's EEZ is now protected in no-take IUCN I and II zoning; (b) what percentage of habitats are protected in Australia's marine parks; and (c) what percentage of key ecological features are protected in Australia's marine parks.
6. How well does Australia's marine parks network meet the objective and Aichi Target 11 of ecological representativeness under the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD).
7. What is Australia doing through the CBD to actively encourage and assist other nations (particularly in our region) to increase their contribution to the world's marine protected area targets.
8. What is the Government doing to assist its own states and territories to complete their coastal waters marine park networks.

Ms Ley: The answer to the honourable member's question is as follows:

1. a) Australia's network of protected areas, the National Reserve System (NRS), covers 19.37 per cent of Australia's landmass. The NRS includes 12,476 protected areas and covers approximately 151 million hectares. b) Australia does not currently record information on OECMs.
2. Australia supports the agreed CBD definition for OECMs and is in the process of developing a consistent approach to their recognition and reporting. Guidelines for recognising and reporting OECMs, recently released by the IUCN World Commission on Protected Areas, are a useful input to this process.
3. a) 3,276,751 km² (36.7 per cent) of Australia's EEZ is conserved in marine protected areas. b) Australia does not currently record information on OECMs.
4. Refer to response to question 2, above.
5. a) 843,095 km² of Australia's EEZ is protected in no-take IUCN I and II zoning. b) 36.7 per cent of Australia's marine habitat is protected in marine parks and 95 per cent of marine provincial bioregions are represented within marine parks. Provincial bioregions are a way of defining areas with different marine habitats and species. There are 41 provincial bioregions in Australian waters, 39 of which are represented in marine parks. c) 95 per cent of Key Ecological Features are represented within marine parks.
6. The National Representative System of Marine Protected Areas (NRSMPA) covers around 36.7 per cent of Australia's waters, far exceeding the 10 per cent target under Aichi Target 11.
7. There is currently a process underway to develop a Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework, which will create new international targets and a ten-year plan for biodiversity. Through these negotiations Australia is actively seeking to ensure the new framework is ambitious and encourages all countries to effectively manage their terrestrial, freshwater and marine ecosystems, including through the use of protected areas and OECMs. Australia is also calling for the management of area-based conservation measures under the CBD to be done in partnership with Indigenous peoples, farmers and land managers, where appropriate, utilising traditional knowledge, innovations and practices.

Under the CBD banner, CSIRO are actively engaged in discussions, negotiations and capacity building associated with Ecologically and Biologically Significant Areas globally.

8. The establishment of marine parks in state and territory waters is a matter for state and territory governments. The Director of National Parks supports and participates in the National Marine Park Managers Forum. This forum is made up of Commonwealth, state and territory marine park managers. This forum allows the sharing of information and learnings that support effective marine park planning and management across Australia.
Banking and Financial Services
(Question No. 329)

Ms Sharkie asked the Minister representing the Minister for Families and Social Services, in writing, on 5 March 2020:

In respect of the further reduction of the cash rate by the Reserve Bank of Australia on 3 March 2020, when will the Government pass on this reduction to the deeming rate.

Mr Robert: The Minister for Families and Social Services has provided the following answer to the honourable member's question:

On 12 March 2020, it was announced the upper and lower deeming rates would be reduced by 50 percentage points, and on 22 March 2020 it was announced the rates would each be reduced by a further 25 percentage points. The announced change to reduce the lower and the upper deeming rates by 75 basis points each, to 0.25 per cent and 2.25 per cent respectively, will take effect from 1 May 2020.

Human Rights
(Question No. 331)

Mr Leeser asked the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Infrastructure, Transport and Regional Development, in writing, on 5 March 2020:

Since 4 January 2012 when the Human Rights Parliamentary Scrutiny Act 2011 commenced:

1) How many officers in your department have worked on human rights compatibility statements.
2) How many human rights compatibility statements have been issued.
3) What is the APS level of staff who have worked on these statements and what is the salary range of each of those levels.
4) Approximately how many hours of staff time has been spent preparing compatibility statements and responding to the Parliamentary Joint Committee on Human Rights.
5) What is the estimated cost to your department of producing compatibility statements, over the period January 2012 to present.
6) What is the estimated annual cost of producing human rights compatibility statements.
7) On how many occasions has the Parliamentary Joint Committee on Human Rights sought a response from your department about the human rights compatibility statements prepared by your department.
8) On how many occasions has this resulted in changes to the legislation presented by your department, and can details be provided of any changes that have been made.

Mr McCormack: The answer to the honourable member's question is as follows:

1) The department does not collect data in a way that would readily enable a response to be provided to this question.
2) The data required to inform the preparation of a precise answer is not available, however the department has established more than 289 human rights compatibility statements have been issued since 4 January 2012.
3) The department does not collect data in a way that would readily enable a response to be provided to this question.
4) The department does not collect data in a way that would readily enable a response to be provided to this question.
5) The department does not collect data in a way that would readily enable a response to be provided to this question.
6) The department does not collect data in a way that would readily enable a response to be provided to this question.
7) The data required to inform the preparation of a precise answer is not available, however the department is aware the Parliamentary Joint Committee on Human Rights sought a response about the human rights compatibility statement on at least 11 occasions.
8) The department is not aware of any occasions when a response to the Parliamentary Joint Committee on Human Rights resulted in changes to the legislation.

Human Rights
(Question No. 334)

Mr Leeser asked the Minister for Agriculture, Drought and Emergency Management, in writing, on 5 March 2020:

1. How many officers in your department have worked on human rights compatibility statements.
2. How many human rights compatibility statements have been issued.
3. What is the APS level of staff who have worked on these statements and what is the salary range of each of those levels.
4. Approximately how many hours of staff time has been spent preparing compatibility statements and responding to the Parliamentary Joint Committee on Human Rights.
5. What is the estimated cost to your department of producing compatibility statements, over the period January 2012 to present.
6. What is the estimated annual cost of producing human rights compatibility statements.
7. On how many occasions has the Parliamentary Joint Committee on Human Rights sought a response from your department about the human rights compatibility statements prepared by your department.
8. On how many occasions has this resulted in changes to the legislation presented by your department, and can details be provided of any changes that have been made.

Mr Littleproud: The answer to the honourable member's question is as follows:
1. Since 2012, the department has completed and issued over 400 human rights compatibility statements. Generally, as part of the normal process of preparing human rights statements, work is undertaken by a number of department officers (most usually two) with specialist policy backgrounds and then further reviewed by legislative specialists (one or two) within the department. On the basis of over 400 statements being completed and issued, it is likely that upwards of 1200 officers have undertaken some work on human rights compatibility statements since January 2012.
2. Over 400 (426 approximately) human rights compatibility statements have been issued for bills and legislative instruments since 2012.
3. In the normal preparation of human rights compatibility statements, the level of officers working on them will vary considerably. A number of factors will determine the level of expertise required to prepare human rights compatibility statements. The majority of work however will generally be undertaken by Non-SES officers.
4. The time taken to prepare a human rights compatibility statement depends on the complexity of the legislation and whether it engages any human rights. Each statement is different and is considered specifically on its own merits. There is no standard amount of time that each statement may take. Providing or undertaking, where possible, estimates on hours spent by officers in preparing over 400 compatibility statements would represent a substantial diversion of the department's resources.
5. Undertaking or preparing an estimate of costs to the department since 2012 would represent a substantial diversion of the department's resources. This is due to the high number of compatibility statements involved, the variability in the officer's seniority in preparing statements and the fluctuations of wage costs over the past eight years.
6. In 2019, 52 human rights statements of compatibility were prepared by the department. Due to the high number of compatibility statements involved, the variability in the officer's seniority in preparing statements and the fluctuations of wage costs over the past eight years any accurate estimation would represent a substantial diversion of the department's resources.
7. The Parliamentary Joint Committee on Human Rights has sought a response from my department about the human rights compatibility statements prepared by the department eight times.
8. No amendments have been made to legislation presented by my department in response to queries from the Parliamentary Joint Committee on Human Rights.

Human Rights

(Question No. 336)

Mr Leeser asked the Attorney-General, in writing, on 5 March 2020:
To ask the Ministers listed below (question Nos. 330 to 346)—Since 4 January 2012 when the Human Rights Parliamentary Scrutiny Act 2011 commenced:
(1) How many officers in your department have worked on human rights compatibility statements.
(2) How many human rights compatibility statements have been issued.
(3) What is the APS level of staff who have worked on these statements and what is the salary range of each of those levels.
(4) Approximately how many hours of staff time has been spent preparing compatibility statements and responding to the Parliamentary Joint Committee on Human Rights.
(5) What is the estimated cost to your department of producing compatibility statements, over the period January 2012 to present.
(6) What is the estimated annual cost of producing human rights compatibility statements.
(7) On how many occasions has the Parliamentary Joint Committee on Human Rights sought a response from your department about the human rights compatibility statements prepared by your department.
(8) On how many occasions has this resulted in changes to the legislation presented by your department, and can details be provided of any changes that have been made.

Mr Porter: The answer to the honourable member's question is as follows:
(1) As the department responsible for the administration of the Human Rights (Parliamentary Scrutiny) Act 2011 (the Act), the Attorney-General's Department (AGD) prepares statements of compatibility with human rights (SoCs) for its own legislation and legislative instruments from time to time, but also has a role in reviewing SoCs prepared by other departments.
A number of officers have been involved in undertaking this work since the Act came into force in 2012, and their involvement may be direct or indirect. For example, since 2012, AGD officers have been involved in the drafting, reviewing
and clearing of SoCs for legislation and instruments within the Attorney-General's portfolio. However, given AGD's role in the administration of the Act and its other responsibilities for human rights and international law more generally, AGD officers may also be involved indirectly in work that goes to the preparation of SoCs — either because they have reviewed or provided advice to other agencies directly on a particular SoC, or because they have provided advice on human rights issues for the purpose of allowing those other Departments to prepare their own SoCs.

In addition, since 2012, AGD has undergone multiple machinery of Government changes and internal restructures that have resulted in functions and teams moving into and out of the Department.

Given the number of SoCs that have been drafted since commencement of the Act, the number of machinery of Government changes that have affected the composition of the AGD since that time, and the range of tasks that contribute to the development of SoCs, it would be an unreasonable diversion of resources to calculate how many individual officers have worked on them since January 2012.

(2) Since the commencement of the Act, AGD has prepared SoCs as required for all AGD led Bills and disallowable instruments. At present, given AGD's focus on responding to COVID-19, it would be an unreasonable diversion of resources to calculate the total number of SoCs that have been prepared either within the AGD portfolio (particularly given the machinery of Government changes and restructures since January 2012 referred to above) or across the public service more generally.

(3) SoCs prepared by AGD are most often developed by an officer at the APS or Executive level and reviewed by an SES officer. The AGD Enterprise Agreement (EA) 2019 provides the current salary ranges for APS and Executive Level staff. For example, on commencement of the current EA, salaries ranged from $60,125 for an APS 3.1 officer to $142,728 for an Executive Level 2 officer at the top salary point for that level, Executive 2.4. The salary of an SES officer involved in the preparation of a SoC would depend on that officer's individual agreement.

(4) There is considerable variation in the hours of staff time required to prepare a SoC, contingent on the number and complexity of measures in each piece of legislation. SoCs vary considerably in length depending on the complexity of the human rights analysis required. For example, a SoC for an omnibus Bill containing amendments to many different Acts, or where the content clearly engages with a number of different human rights (such as a Bill amending national security law), might take more time and resources than a SoC for a statute update Bill (that is, one that makes either no or minor changes to the substance of existing laws). Likewise, the staff hours required to respond to Scrutiny Reports will vary depending on the questions asked by the Committee.

(5) Given the considerable variation in resources required to produce SoCs for each legislative project and the factors outlined in the answer to question 1, above, it is not possible to provide a reasonable estimate of costs over the period from 4 January 2012 to the present.

(6) Given the considerable variation in resources required to produce SoCs for each legislative project it is not possible to provide an accurate annual costing for producing SoCs.

(7) Providing a comprehensive list of all the occasions that the Parliamentary Joint Committee on Human Rights has sought a response from the Attorney-General in relation to the SoCs the department has prepared would require an unreasonable diversion of resources at this time. To date in 2020 the Committee has sought a response from the Attorney-General in relation to the following legislation:

- Fair Work (Registered Organisations) Amendment (Ensuring Integrity No. 2) Bill 2019
- Native Title Legislation Amendment Bill 2019

(8) In line with the response to question (7), providing details of all changes made to the department's legislation in response to a Scrutiny Report would require an unreasonable diversion of resources at this time. No amendments to legislation have been made to date in response to a Scrutiny Report tabled in 2020.

Human Rights

(Question No. 337)

Mr Leeser asked the Minister for Health, in writing, on 5 March 2020:

Since 4 January 2012 when the Human Rights Parliamentary Scrutiny Act 2011 commenced:

1. How many officers in your department have worked on human rights compatibility statements.
2. How many human rights compatibility statements have been issued.
3. What is the APS level of staff who have worked on these statements and what is the salary range of each of those levels.
4. Approximately how many hours of staff time has been spent preparing compatibility statements and responding to the Parliamentary Joint Committee on Human Rights.
5. What is the estimated cost to your department of producing compatibility statements, over the period January 2012 to present.
6. What is the estimated annual cost of producing human rights compatibility statements.
7. On how many occasions has the Parliamentary Joint Committee on Human Rights sought a response from your department about the human rights compatibility statements prepared by your department.
(8) On how many occasions has this resulted in changes to the legislation presented by your department, and can details be provided of any changes that have been made.

Mr Hunt: The answer to the honourable member's question is as follows:

Question (1): Officers across APS, EL and SES levels in a range of areas of the department are responsible for developing statements of compatibility. Identifying the number of departmental officers – current and former – who have worked on statements of compatibility since 4 January 2012 would require an excessive diversion of departmental resources.

Question (2): The department has developed more than 2,000 statements of compatibility for bills and legislative instruments in accordance with the requirements of Part 3 of the Human Rights (Parliamentary Scrutiny) Act 2011 since 4 January 2012. Those statements are publicly available on the Federal Register of Legislation at https://www.legislation.gov.au/.

Question (3): The department does not maintain records of the APS levels of staff who work on statements of compatibility. Given the large number of statements prepared by officers across the department since 4 January 2012, it is not possible to accurately identify the APS levels or salary ranges of those departmental officers. The salary range for APS and Executive Level departmental officers is published in the Enterprise Agreement, which is publicly available on the department's internet site at https://www.health.gov.au/resources/publications/enterprise-agreement.

Question (4): The department does not maintain records of the number of hours officers dedicate to developing statements of compatibility or responding to the Parliamentary Joint Committee on Human Rights.

Questions (5) and (6): The department does not maintain records of the cost of staff or other resources utilised in the development and publication of statements of compatibility. The amount of time it takes to prepare a statement varies according to the size and complexity of the bill or legislative instrument and the human rights engaged by the measures in the bill or legislative instrument. Given the large number of statements prepared by officers across the department since 4 January 2012, it is not possible to determine the total or annual cost of producing these statements.

Question (7): The department's responses to the Parliamentary Joint Committee on Human Rights (the Committee) are publicly available on the Committee's website at (https://www.aph.gov.au/Parliamentary_Business/Committees/Joint/Human_Rights/Scrutiny_reports ). Given the large number of statements prepared by the department since 4 January 2012, identifying all occasions the department has responded to queries from the Committee about statements prepared by the department would require an excessive diversion of departmental resources.

Question (8): The department carefully considers all recommendations and requests for amendment by the Parliamentary Joint Committee on Human Rights (the Committee) and makes changes to legislation as appropriate. Changes to legislation between introduction and enactment are publicly available on the Federal Register of Legislation at https://www.legislation.gov.au/ by comparing Bills as introduced and Acts as enacted. Given the large number of statements prepared by the department since 4 January 2012, identifying and extracting all legislative changes made because of a query or recommendation from the Committee would require an excessive diversion of departmental resources.

Human Rights
(Question No. 340)

Mr Leeson asked the Minister for Education, in writing, on 5 March 2020:

Since 4 January 2012 when the Human Rights Parliamentary Scrutiny Act 2011 commenced:
(1) How many officers in your department have worked on human rights compatibility statements.
(2) How many human rights compatibility statements have been issued.
(3) What is the APS level of staff who have worked on these statements and what is the salary range of each of those levels.
(4) Approximately how many hours of staff time has been spent preparing compatibility statements and responding to the Parliamentary Joint Committee on Human Rights.
(5) What is the estimated cost to your department of producing compatibility statements, over the period January 2012 to present.
(6) What is the estimated annual cost of producing human rights compatibility statements.
(7) On how many occasions has the Parliamentary Joint Committee on Human Rights sought a response from your department about the human rights compatibility statements prepared by your department.
(8) On how many occasions has this resulted in changes to the legislation presented by your department, and can details be provided of any changes that have been made.

Mr Tehan: The answer to the honourable member's question is as follows:

With respect to Education-related bills and legislative instruments for the period from 4 January 2012 (when the Human Rights Parliamentary Scrutiny Act 2011 (Act) commenced) to 5 March 2020:

The Department of Education, Skills and Employment and its predecessor departments responsible for the Education portfolio have, since 4 January 2012, prepared human rights compatibility statements (statements) for all bills and legislative instruments as required by the Act.

The preparation of such statements is undertaken as part of the ordinary business of preparing and making bills and legislative instruments, and responses to inquiries from the Parliamentary Joint Committee on Human Rights are undertaken...
as part of the ordinary business of responding to questions and issues raised in Parliament more broadly regarding bills and legislative instruments. The department has not specifically recorded time spent preparing statements and responding to inquiries relating to statements, nor does it specifically record the staff undertaking that work. Accordingly:

1. Unable to answer.

2. Based on information derived from the Federal Register of Legislation, the following numbers of statements have been prepared by the department:
   - for bills: 46 statements
   - for legislative instruments: 866 statements

3. Unable to answer.

4. Unable to answer.

5. Unable to answer.

6. Unable to answer.

7. Based on information derived from the Scrutiny reports published by the Parliamentary Joint Committee on Human Rights on the Parliament House website (www.aph.gov.au), the Committee has sought responses from the relevant Minister responsible for Education-related bills and legislative instruments (Education Minister) on the following number of occasions:
   - for bills: 11 times
   - for legislative instruments: 4 times

8. Based on information derived from the Scrutiny reports published by the Parliamentary Joint Committee on Human Rights on the Parliament House website (www.aph.gov.au), the Education Minister has agreed to make changes to Education-related bills and legislative instruments on the following occasions:
   - for bills: zero times
   - for legislative instruments: zero times

**Human Rights**

(Question No. 341)

Mr Leeser asked the Minister representing the Minister for Employment, Skills, Small and Family Business, in writing, on 5 March 2020:

Since 4 January 2012 when the Human Rights Parliamentary Scrutiny Act 2011 commenced:

1. How many officers in your department have worked on human rights compatibility statements.
2. How many human rights compatibility statements have been issued.
3. What is the APS level of staff who have worked on these statements and what is the salary range of each of those levels.
4. Approximately how many hours of staff time has been spent preparing compatibility statements and responding to the Parliamentary Joint Committee on Human Rights.
5. What is the estimated cost to your department of producing compatibility statements, over the period January 2012 to present.
6. What is the estimated annual cost of producing human rights compatibility statements.
7. On how many occasions has the Parliamentary Joint Committee on Human Rights sought a response from your department about the human rights compatibility statements prepared by your department.
8. On how many occasions has this resulted in changes to the legislation presented by your department, and can details be provided of any changes that have been made.

Mrs Andrews: The Minister for Employment, Skills, Small and Family Business, has provided the following answer to the honourable member's question:

With respect to Employment and Skills related bills and legislative instruments for the period from 4 January 2012, when the Human Rights Parliamentary Scrutiny Act 2011 (Act) commenced, to 5 March 2020, the Department of Education, Skills and Employment (department), and its predecessor departments responsible for the Employment and Skills portfolio, prepared human rights compatibility statements (statements) for all bills and legislative instruments as required by the Act.

The preparation of such statements is undertaken as part of the ordinary business of preparing and making bills and legislative instruments. Responses to inquiries from the Parliamentary Joint Committee on Human Rights (the Committee) are also undertaken as part of the ordinary business of responding to questions and issues raised in Parliament more broadly regarding bills and legislative instruments.

The department has not specifically recorded time spent preparing statements, or responding to inquiries relating to statements, nor has the department specifically recorded the details of staff undertaking that work. Accordingly:

1. The department does not keep records of work undertaken specifically in relation to statements. Typically, preparation of statements is carried out jointly by officers from both the relevant policy and legal areas of the department, and may from time to time involve consultation with persons outside the department, including other APS officers (for example, in the Attorney-General's Department).
(2) Based on information derived from the Federal Register of Legislation, the following numbers of Employment and Skills related statements have been prepared by the department:

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<tr>
<td>Bills</td>
<td>26 statements</td>
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<tr>
<td>Legislative instruments</td>
<td>99 statements</td>
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(3) The department is not able provide specific details on staff allocated to the preparation of statements. As aforementioned, depending on the complexity and substance of the human rights issues that may be involved with a particular piece of legislation, the number, level and kind of officers involved in the preparation of a statement will vary, as will the time taken in its preparation.

(4) The preparation of such statements is undertaken as part of the ordinary business of preparing and making bills and legislative instruments. As such, the department is not able to breakdown the exact number of hours of staff time that have been spent on responding to statements.

(5) As compatibility statements are responded as part of the ordinary business of preparing and making bills and legislative instruments, the department is unable to provide an estimated cost.

(6) See answer to question (5).

(7) Based on information derived from the Scrutiny reports published by the Committee, the Committee has sought responses from the relevant Minister responsible for Employment and Skills related bills and legislative instruments on the following number of occasions:

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<table>
<thead>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bills</td>
<td>11 occasions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Legislative instruments</td>
<td>4 occasions</td>
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</tbody>
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(8) Based on information derived from the Scrutiny reports published by the Committee, there have been no changes to Employment and Skills related bills and instruments following Committee inquiries.

**Human Rights**

(Question No. 344)

**Mr Leeser** asked the Minister representing the Minister for Defence, in writing, on 5 March:

Since 4 January 2012 when the Human Rights Parliamentary Scrutiny Act 2011 commenced:

(1) How many officers in your department have worked on human rights compatibility statements.

(2) How many human rights compatibility statements have been issued.

(3) What is the APS level of staff who have worked on these statements and what is the salary range of each of those levels.

(4) Approximately how many hours of staff time has been spent preparing compatibility statements and responding to the Parliamentary Joint Committee on Human Rights.

(5) What is the estimated cost to your department of producing compatibility statements, over the period January 2012 to present.

(6) What is the estimated annual cost of producing human rights compatibility statements.

(7) On how many occasions has the Parliamentary Joint Committee on Human Rights sought a response from your department about the human rights compatibility statements prepared by your department.

(8) On how many occasions has this resulted in changes to the legislation presented by your department, and can details be provided of any changes that have been made.

**Mr Dutton:** The Minister for Defence has provided the following answer to the honourable member's questions:

(1) The Department of Defence does not record data on the number of officers who have worked on human rights capability statements.

(2) Based on the number of Defence Bills and legislative instruments on the Federal Register, 236 human rights compatibility statements have been issued.

(3) Staff at the APS6 and EL1 levels are usually involved in the preparation of explanatory material including human rights compatibility statements. The salary range for those at the APS6 level varies from $80,000 - $92,000. The salary range for those at the EL1 level varies from $100,000 - $115,000.

(4) For relatively simple Bills and instruments, it takes approximately 30 minutes to prepare the relevant human rights statements. For more complex Bills and instruments, it takes approximately 2-3 hours.

(5) The department does not monitor the actual cost of producing human rights compatibility statements as they are prepared by departmental staff as part of their ordinary duties. We are accordingly not able to provide a meaningful cost of producing statements, but in terms of department overall costs it is negligible.

(6) See answer 5.

(7) Defence has identified 12 occasions where the Parliamentary Joint Committee on Human Rights has sought a response from Defence about human rights compatibility statements.

(8) Questions from the Parliamentary Joint Committee on Human Rights have not resulted in any change to Defence legislation.
Mr Leeser asked the Minister for Veterans' Affairs, in writing, on 5 March 2020:
Since 4 January 2012 when the Human Rights Parliamentary Scrutiny Act 2011 commenced:
(1) How many officers in your department have worked on human rights compatibility statements.
(2) How many human rights compatibility statements have been issued.
(3) What is the APS level of staff who have worked on these statements and what is the salary range of each of those levels.
(4) Approximately how many hours of staff time has been spent preparing compatibility statements and responding to the Parliamentary Joint Committee on Human Rights.
(5) What is the estimated cost to your department of producing compatibility statements, over the period January 2012 to present.
(6) What is the estimated annual cost of producing human rights compatibility statements.
(7) On how many occasions has the Parliamentary Joint Committee on Human Rights sought a response from your department about the human rights compatibility statements prepared by your department.
(8) On how many occasions has this resulted in changes to the legislation presented by your department, and can details be provided of any changes that have been made.

Mr Chester: The answer to the honourable member's question is as follows:

All new Bills and disallowable instruments must be accompanied by a Human Rights Statement of Compatibility assessing the compatibility of the legislation with the rights and freedoms recognised in the seven core international human rights treaties to which Australia is a State party.

A search on the Federal Legislation Register on 11 March 2020 identified that 26 Bills have been introduced in Parliament and 1,483 legislative instruments had been registered by the Veterans’ Affairs portfolio between 4 January 2012 and 11 March 2020. The majority of these legislative instruments are disallowable. Each Bill and disallowable instrument would have been required to be accompanied by a Statement of Compatibility with Human Rights.

(1) The Department of Veterans' Affairs (DVA) does not have an area which is dedicated to the consideration of human rights. Rather, consideration of human rights forms part of the policy development of a measure and is integrated into the development of each Bill and disallowable instrument. While departmental legal officers from the Legislation team within the Legal Services & Audit Branch (four legal officers) are primarily involved in the implementation of the measures in legislation, including the drafting of Explanatory Memorandum, Explanatory Statements and the associated Human Rights Compatibility Statements, policy officers from the relevant areas also support the development of each measure into legislation and the formulation of the information required for Statements of Compatibility.

DVA's senior executive (the Secretary and two Deputy Secretaries) clear any Human Rights Compatibility Statements (together with the accompanying legislation, briefings and explanatory documents) and this is facilitated through different areas of DVA, depending on whether the legislation is a Bill or being made as a the disallowable instrument. Where a disallowable instrument is made by either the Repatriation Commission or the Military Rehabilitation and Compensation Commission, officers forming the Secretariat to those bodies, as well as those statutory bodies also have input and clear any Human Rights Compatibility Statements.

Similarly, departmental responses to questions by the Parliamentary Joint Committee on Human Rights involve relevant policy areas and legal officers and other areas necessary to facilitate a response to the Committee.

(2) There were a total of 23 Human Rights Compatibility Statements issued in relation to Bills introduced in Parliament. Note that three Bills were re-introduced. For re-introduced Bills, the Human Rights Compatibility Statement issued for the original Bill was reused.

(3) See answer to question 1.
(4) See answer to question 1.
(5) It is not possible to answer this question as it forms part of the normal business of DVA. In addition, as stated in our response to question 1, it is difficult to provide the number of officers and the time they spent during the period in preparing the human rights compatibility statements.
(6) See answer to question 5.
(7) In relation to the 26 Bills that were registered by the Veterans' Affairs portfolio, on three occasions a response has been sought by the Committee. On two occasions, a follow-up request was made. In relation to disallowable instruments, there were seven occasions on which a response was sought by the Committee. A satisfactory response was supplied for five of those occasions while no response was supplied on the two occasions where the legislative instrument was disallowed.
(8) Records as reflected in Ministerial responses indicate that no occasions have resulted in changes to legislation.
Food Labelling
(Question No. 347)

Mr Zappia asked the Minister for Health, in writing, on 23 March 2020:

(1) How many recalls have there been of cashew products being contaminated with peanut in the past 12 months.
(2) What testing for contamination with peanut, if any, is done on cashew pieces, cashew meal and products containing cashews.
(3) Are imported cashew foods, including cashews as ingredients for other foods tested at the border for peanut contamination; if so, by whom.
(4) Are importers required to test products containing cashews to ensure they are safe for consumers with peanut allergy; if not, why not.
(5) Are retailers or manufacturers required to label cashews or foods containing cashews that peanut contamination may also be present; if so is the Government aware of any breaches.
(6) Who is responsible for communicating food recalls and how is that information conveyed to all food service establishments.
(7) Are retailers and manufacturers either: (a) required to; or (b) being encouraged to; test products containing cashew for peanut contamination.

Mr Hunt: The Minister for Youth and Sport has provided the following answer to the honourable member's question:

(1) There have been eight recalls [to date]
(2) Government, industry and testing laboratories have been working together to ensure appropriate testing methods are used and applied to test cashews and cashew products for the presence of peanut. The food recalls that have been conducted to date reflect the extent of this ongoing testing and investigation.
(3) and (4) It is the responsibility of food importers to source and import safe and compliant food. Noting that allergen contamination of foods can occur at any point in the supply chain, importers should understand the supply chain for foods they import to identify the potential for food allergens to be present and apply appropriate allergen labelling (see question 5). In relation to testing, see response under question 2.
(5) The Food Standards Code requires all allergens including tree nuts (cashew) and peanut to be declared on labels whenever they are present as ingredients or as components of food additives or processing aids.

Allergen contamination can occur when an allergenic food, or ingredient, is unintentionally incorporated into another food that is not intended to contain it. Where there is a likelihood that this may have occurred, precautionary allergen labelling may be used by food manufacturers such as 'may contain' or 'may be present' (e.g. 'may contain peanut').
(6) Food businesses have a legal requirement to have a written food recall plan in place and follow this plan in the event of a recall. The sponsor (food business or other entity that has primary responsibility for undertaking the recall) is responsible for notifying trade customers (including any overseas customers) and the public (if a consumer level recall) about the recall.

Distribution networks and trade customers need to be notified to stop distribution of the food product. The sponsor is responsible for advising all direct customers that the food is being recalled. This may include notifying distributors, wholesalers, overseas importers and retailers. It is important that distributors and sub-distributors also provide the recall notification to their direct customers so that each business in the supply chain that has received the recalled food is notified.

FSANZ also notifies the government, industry and public of recalls through our routine emails. We also publish recalls on the FSANZ website and social media pages (Facebook, Twitter and Instagram).
(7) Food businesses are legally required to ensure food labels on their products comply with the Food Standards Code as specified in question 5. Testing is used to support the labelling requirements and provide evidence that the product contains what is stated on the label. In relation to testing, see question 2.

Environmental Conservation
(Question No. 350)

Ms Sharkie asked the Minister for the Environment, in writing, on 23 March 2020:

1. Can an update be provided on the Government's commitment to funding oyster reef restoration in Southern Australia beyond the recently completed Windara Reef.
2. Broken down by site and financial year, what funding over the forward estimates (if any) has the Government allocated.
3. What benefits has the Government assessed that oyster reefs broadly have for: (a) local communities and the economy; and (b) the environment.
4. Has the Government considered funding or contributing to the funding of the construction or restoration of oyster reefs in the coastal waters of: (a) Kangaroo Island; (b) the electoral division of Mayo; and (c) South Australia; if so, please detail those plans; if not, why not.
5. What is the Government's assessment of the statement by The Nature Conservancy that every million dollars invested in oyster reef restoration creates 8.5 full-time equivalent jobs.
Ms Ley: The answer to the honourable member's question is as follows:

Questions 1 and 2

- The National Environmental Science Program, Marine Biodiversity Hub, is investing over $740,000 in research to advance restoration techniques to increase the success and efficiency of shellfish reef repair.

- Fisheries Research and Development Corporation is also investing in a risk analysis to identify and minimise biosecurity risks arising from recycling mollusc shell waste during shellfish reef restoration projects. The Nature Conservancy is a project partner.

- These projects are not site specific.

Question 3

- The benefits of the Windara Reef project reported by The Nature Conservancy included job creation; new volunteer opportunities; increase in marine biodiversity; creating a new recreational fishing spot; increase in recognition of the Narungga language; and new educational opportunities to build appreciation of our natural environment.

Question 4

- There are no government programs currently open, through which oyster reef restoration projects are being considered.

Question 5

- The Windara Reef project demonstrated that, like other environmental projects, shellfish reef restoration can create direct and indirect jobs. The Government has not assessed in detail the specific statement by The Nature Conservancy about jobs per million dollars invested, and understands that actual jobs will vary from project to project.