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the Senate and committee hearings are available at

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SITTING DAYS—2008

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<td>December</td>
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RADIO BROADCASTS
Broadcasts of proceedings of the Parliament can be heard on the following Parliamentary and News Network radio stations, in the areas identified.

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FORTY-SECOND PARLIAMENT
FIRST SESSION—FIRST PERIOD

Governor-General
His Excellency Major General Michael Jeffery, Companion in the Order of Australia, Commander of the Royal Victorian Order, Military Cross

Senate Officeholders

President—Senator Hon. Alan Baird Ferguson

Leader of the Government in the Senate—Senator Hon. Christopher Vaughan Evans
Deputy Leader of the Government in the Senate—Senator Hon. Stephen Michael Conroy
Leader of the Opposition in the Senate—Senator Hon. Nicholas Hugh Minchin
Deputy Leader of the Opposition in the Senate—Senator Hon. Eric Abetz
Manager of Government Business in the Senate—Senator Hon. Joseph William Ludwig
Manager of Opposition Business in the Senate—Senator Hon. Christopher Martin Ellison

Senate Party Leaders and Whips

Leader of the Australian Labor Party—Senator Hon. Christopher Vaughan Evans
Deputy Leader of the Australian Labor Party—Senator Hon. Stephen Michael Conroy
Leader of the Liberal Party of Australia—Senator Hon. Nicholas Hugh Minchin
Deputy Leader of the Liberal Party of Australia—Senator Hon. Eric Abetz
Leader of the Nationals—Senator Hon. Nigel Gregory Scullion
Deputy Leader of the Nationals—Senator Hon. Ronald Leslie Doyle Boswell
Leader of the Australian Democrats—Senator Lynette Fay Allison
Leader of the Australian Greens—Senator Robert James Brown
Leader of the Family First Party—Senator Steve Fielding

Government Whips—Senators Kerry O’Brien, Ruth Stephanie Webber and Dana Wortley
Liberal Party of Australia Whips—Senators Stephen Parry and Judith Adams
The Nationals Whip—Senator Fiona Joy Nash
Australian Democrats Whip—Senator Andrew John Julian Bartlett
Australian Greens Whip—Senator Rachel Siewert
Family First Party Whip—Senator Steve Fielding

Printed by authority of the Senate
### Members of the Senate

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<th>Party</th>
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(1) Chosen by the Parliament of Queensland to fill a casual vacancy vice Hon. Santo Santoro, resigned.
(2) Chosen by the Parliament of Victoria to fill a casual vacancy vice Hon. Richard Kenneth Robert Alston, resigned.
(3) Term expires at close of day next preceding the polling day for the general election of members of the House of Representatives.
(4) Chosen by the Parliament of Tasmania to fill a casual vacancy vice Susan Mary Mackay, resigned.
(5) Chosen by the Parliament of South Australia to fill a casual vacancy vice Hon. Robert Murray Hill, resigned.
(6) Chosen by the Parliament of South Australia to fill a casual vacancy vice Jeannie Margaret Ferris, died in office.
(7) Chosen by the Parliament of South Australia to fill a casual vacancy vice Hon. Amanda Eloise Vanstone, resigned.
(8) Chosen by the Parliament of Western Australia to fill a casual vacancy vice Hon. Ian Gordon Campbell, resigned.
(9) Chosen by the Parliament of Tasmania to fill a casual vacancy vice Hon. Paul Henry Calvert, resigned.

**PARTY ABBREVIATIONS**
AD—Australian Democrats; AG—Australian Greens; ALP—Australian Labor Party; CLP—Country Liberal Party; FF—Family First Party; LP—Liberal Party of Australia; NATS—The Nationals

**Heads of Parliamentary Departments**
Clerk of the Senate—H Evans
Clerk of the House of Representatives—I C Harris
Secretary, Department of Parliamentary Services—D Kenny (Acting)
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<tr>
<td>Minister for Education,</td>
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<tr>
<td>Minister for Employment and Workplace Relations and</td>
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<tr>
<td>Minister for Social Inclusion</td>
<td>Hon. Julia Gillard MP</td>
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<tr>
<td>Treasurer</td>
<td>Hon. Wayne Swan MP</td>
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<tr>
<td>Minister for Immigration and Citizenship and</td>
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<td>Senator Hon. Chris Evans</td>
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<td>Vice President of the Executive Council</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Minister for Foreign Affairs</td>
<td>Hon. Stephen Smith MP</td>
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<td>Minister for Defence</td>
<td>Hon. Joel Fitzgibbon MP</td>
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<tr>
<td>Minister for Health and Ageing</td>
<td>Hon. Nicola Roxon MP</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Indigenous Affairs</td>
<td>Hon. Jenny Macklin MP</td>
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<tr>
<td>Minister for Finance and Deregulation</td>
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<td>Hon. Tony Burke MP</td>
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Rudd Ministry—continued

Minister for Home Affairs                       Hon. Bob Debus MP
Assistant Treasurer and                        
Minister for Competition Policy and Consumer Affairs  Hon. Chris Bowen MP
Ministers for Veterans’ Affairs                  Hon. Alan Griffin MP
Minister for Housing and                       
Minister for the Status of Women                 Hon. Tanya Plibersek MP
Minister for Employment Participation           Hon. Brendan O’Connor MP
Minister for Defence Science and Personnel      Hon. Warren Snowdon MP
Minister for Small Business, Independent Contractors and
the Service Economy and                        
Minister Assisting the Finance Minister on Deregulation Hon. Craig Emerson MP
Minister for Superannuation and Corporate Law   Senator Hon. Nick Sherry
Minister for Ageing                            Hon. Justine Elliot MP
Minister for Youth and                         Hon. Kate Ellis MP
Minister for Sport                             
Parliamentary Secretary for Early Childhood Education and
Childcare                                       Hon. Maxine McKew MP
Parliamentary Secretary for Defence Procurement Hon. Greg Combet MP
Parliamentary Secretary for Defence Support     Hon. Mike Kelly MP
Parliamentary Secretary for Regional Development and
Northern Australia                              Hon. Gary Gray MP
Parliamentary Secretary for Disabilities and
Children’s Services                             Hon. Bill Shorten MP
Parliamentary Secretary for International Development
Assistance                                     Hon. Bob McMullan MP
Parliamentary Secretary for Pacific Island Affairs Hon. Duncan Kerr MP
Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister   Hon. Anthony Byrne MP
Parliamentary Secretary for Social Inclusion and
the Voluntary Sector and                        
Parliamentary Secretary Assisting the Prime Minister
for Social Inclusion                           Senator Hon. Ursula Stephens
Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Trade Hon. John Murphy MP
Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Health and
Ageing                                         Senator Hon. Jan McLucas
Parliamentary Secretary for Multicultural Affairs and
Settlement Services                             Hon. Laurie Ferguson MP
SHADOW MINISTRY

Leader of the Opposition
Deputy Leader of the Opposition and
Shadow Minister for Employment, Business and
  Workplace Relations
Leader of the Nationals and
Shadow Minister for Infrastructure and Transport and
  Local Government
Leader of the Opposition in the Senate and
Shadow Minister for Defence
Deputy Leader of the Opposition in the Senate and
Shadow Minister for Innovation, Industry, Science and
  Research
Shadow Treasurer
Shadow Minister for Health and Ageing and
  Leader of Opposition Business in the House
Shadow Minister for Foreign Affairs
Shadow Minister for Trade
Shadow Minister for Families, Community Services,
  Indigenous Affairs and the Voluntary Sector
Shadow Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry
Shadow Minister for Human Services
Shadow Minister for Education, Apprenticeships and
  Training
Shadow Minister for Climate Change, Environment and
  Urban Water
Shadow Minister for Finance, Competition Policy and
  Deregulation
Shadow Minister for Immigration and Citizenship and
  Manager of Opposition Business in the Senate
Shadow Minister for Broadband, Communications and
  the Digital Economy
Shadow Attorney-General
Shadow Minister for Resources and Energy and
Shadow Minister for Tourism
Shadow Minister for Regional Development and
Shadow Minister for Water Security
Shadow Minister for Justice
Shadow Minister for Border Protection and
Assisting Shadow Minister for Immigration andCitizenship
Shadow Special Minister of State
Shadow Minister for Small Business, the Service Economy
  and Tourism
Shadow Minister for Environment, Heritage, the Arts and
  Indigenous Affairs
Shadow Assistant Treasurer and
Shadow Minister for Superannuation and Corporate
  Governance
Shadow Minister for Ageing

Hon. Brendan Nelson MP
Hon. Julie Bishop MP
Hon. Warren Truss MP
Senator Hon. Nick Minchin
Senator Hon. Eric Abetz
Hon. Malcolm Turnbull MP
Hon. Joe Hockey MP
Hon. Andrew Robb MP
Hon. Ian MacFarlane MP
Hon. Tony Abbott MP
Senator Hon. Nigel Scullion
Senator Hon. Helen Coonan
Hon. Tony Smith MP
Hon. Greg Hunt MP
Hon. Peter Dutton MP
Senator Hon. Chris Ellison
Hon. Bruce Billson MP
Senator Hon. George Brandis
Senator Hon. David Johnston
Hon. John Cobb MP
Hon. Chris Pyne MP
Senator Hon. Michael Ronaldson
Steven Ciobo MP
Hon. Sharman Stone MP
Michael Keenan MP
Margaret May MP
Shadow Minister for Defence Science and Personnel and
Assisting Shadow Minister for Defence
Hon. Bob Baldwin MP
Shadow Minister for Business Development, Independent
Contractors and Consumer Affairs and
Deputy Leader of Opposition Business in the House
Luke Hartsuyker MP
Shadow Minister for Veterans’ Affairs
Hon. Bronwyn Bishop MP
Shadow Minister for Employment Participation and
Apprenticeships and Training
Andrew Southcott MP
Shadow Minister for Housing and
Shadow Minister for the Status of Women
Hon. Sussan Ley MP
Shadow Minister for Youth and
Shadow Minister for Sport
Hon. Pat Farmer MP
Shadow Parliamentary Secretary Assisting the Leader of
the Opposition and
Shadow Cabinet Secretary
Don Randall MP
Shadow Parliamentary Secretary Assisting the Leader of
the Opposition and
Parliamentary Secretary for Northern Australia
Senator Hon. Ian Macdonald
Shadow Parliamentary Secretary for Health
Senator Hon. Richard Colbeck
Shadow Parliamentary Secretary for Education
Senator Hon. Brett Mason
Hon. Peter Lindsay MP
Shadow Parliamentary Secretary for Defence
Shadow Parliamentary Secretary for Infrastructure, Roads
and Transport
Barry Haase MP
Shadow Parliamentary Secretary for Trade
John Forrest MP
Shadow Parliamentary Secretary for Immigration and
Citizenship
Louise Markus MP
Shadow Parliamentary Secretary for Local Government
Sophie Mirabella MP
Shadow Parliamentary Secretary for Tourism
Jo Gash MP
Shadow Parliamentary Secretary for Ageing and the
Voluntary Sector
Mark Coulton MP
Shadow Parliamentary Secretary for Foreign Affairs
Senator Marise Payne
Shadow Parliamentary Secretary for Families and
Community Services
Senator Cory Bernardi
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COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA
PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES

SENATE

Hansard

2008

FIRST SESSION OF THE FORTY-SECOND PARLIAMENT

(FIRST PERIOD)

The Senate, on 20 September 2007, adjourned until Tuesday, 12 February 2008 at 12.30 pm. The Forty-second Parliament was convened for the dispatch of business on 12 February 2008 at 12.30 pm, and the First Session commenced that day.

Tuesday, 12 February 2008

OPENING OF THE PARLIAMENT

The Senate met at 10.30 am, pursuant to the proclamation of His Excellency the Governor-General.

The PRESIDENT (Senator the Hon. Alan FERGUSON) took the chair.

The Clerk read the proclamation.

The Deputy appointed by His Excellency the Governor-General for the opening of the Parliament, the Hon. Anthony Murray Gleeson AC, Chief Justice of the High Court of Australia, having been announced by the Usher of the Black Rod, entered the chamber and took the chair.

The Deputy directed the Usher to desire the attendance of the members of the House of Representatives:

Members of the House of Representatives having attended accordingly—

The Deputy said:

Members of the Senate and Members of the House of Representatives: His Excellency the Governor-General has appointed me as his Deputy to declare open the Parliament of the Commonwealth. The Clerk of the Senate will now read the instrument of appointment.

The instrument having been read by the Clerk—

The Deputy said:

Members of the Senate and Members of the House of Representatives, pursuant to the instrument which the Clerk has now read, I declare open the 42nd Parliament of the Commonwealth.

His Excellency the Governor-General has commanded me to let you know that, after certain Members of the Senate and Members of the House of Representatives have been sworn, the Governor-General will declare in person at this place the causes of his calling the Parliament together.
First it is necessary that a Speaker of the House of Representatives be chosen and, therefore, you, Members of the House of Representatives, will now return to the House of Representatives and choose a person to be your Speaker. Later today, you will present the person you have chosen to the Governor-General at a time and place appointed by him.

I will now attend in the House of Representatives for the purpose of administering the oath or affirmation of allegiance to honourable members of that House.

The Deputy and members of the House of Representatives having retired, the President again took the chair—

REPRESENTATION OF AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY AND NORTHERN TERRITORY

The President—The certificates of election of senators elected to represent the Australian Capital Territory and the Northern Territory are tabled:

Australian Capital Territory—
Gary John Joseph Humphries
Kate Alexandra Lundy

Northern Territory—
Patricia Margaret Crossin
Nigel Gregory Scullion

SENATORS SWORN

The following senators made and subscribed the oath or affirmation of allegiance:
Patricia Margaret Crossin
Gary John Joseph Humphries
Kate Alexandra Lundy
Nigel Gregory Scullion

Sitting suspended from 10.46 am to 3.00 pm

GOVERNOR-GENERAL’S SPEECH

His Excellency the Governor-General entered the chamber and, being seated, with the President on his right hand, commanded that a message be sent to the House of Representatives intimating that His Excellency desired the attendance of honourable members in the Senate chamber.

Honourable members having come with their Speaker, His Excellency was pleased to deliver the following speech:

Honourable senators and members of the Parliament of Australia:

I acknowledge the traditional owners of the land on which we meet today. I also acknowledge their traditional wisdom and enduring history and culture.

Introduction

On 24 November 2007, Australians voted to elect a new government.

As one of the world’s oldest democracies, it is easy for us to take elections for granted and to fail to appreciate how fortunate we are to live in a nation where governments change hands peacefully as a result of the free expression of the will of the people.

We have just witnessed a change of government, an event that has happened on just six occasions in the past 60 years.

Regardless of any partisan affiliation, all Australians can celebrate the success of our democracy when such changes can occur so seamlessly and with such goodwill.

The new Australian government that was sworn into office on 3 December 2007 is committed to a plan to build a modern Australia equipped to face the challenges of the 21st century.

This plan includes the following priorities:

• strengthening the nation’s long-term economic prospects by prosecuting a new productivity agenda, together with a comprehensive strategy to combat inflation, built on a strong budget surplus and a plan of action on skills and infrastructure; a plan for a ranging program of re-
form to build over time a world-class education system through early childhood education, computers in schools for all year 9 to 12 students, investing in trades training centres in schools and rebuilding our universities;

• national leadership in infrastructure development coordinated through Infrastructure Australia;

• a comprehensive plan to respond to the threat of dangerous climate change that includes ratifying the Kyoto protocol, establishing for the first time a national emissions trading scheme and an ambitious national renewable energy target; long-term measures to begin dealing with urban and rural and regional water supply;

• reforming our national industrial relations laws to reflect an appropriate balance between fairness and flexibility;

• a plan to reform the health and hospitals system;

• increasing the availability of child care as well as increasing the childcare tax rebate;

• a plan of reforming the Federation by forming partnerships with the states and territories to tackle the legitimate demands of working families for the delivery of better services from all levels of government;

• strengthening Australia’s national and international efforts to act on emerging and continuing threats to our security, as well as articulating an independent voice in the councils of the world;

• tackling the growing problem of housing affordability and homelessness; and

• acting on reconciliation with our Indigenous peoples through an apology to the stolen generations and developing a plan of action to help close the gap between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australia.

Economic management

In recent months the world economy has entered a period of greater uncertainty.

Although Australia has in recent years benefited from favourable global economic conditions, in particular the rise of China and the global resources boom, the future is uncertain, with downward revisions in global economic growth arising in part from recent developments in the US financial market.

At the same time, on the home front, inflationary pressures have been building over the past several years, creating a further threat to our long-term economic growth.

The government has been mindful of these conflicting economic currents in developing its five-point plan on inflation.

The plan is focused first on fiscal restraint, with the government aiming to deliver a budget surplus of 1.5 per cent of GDP in 2008-09.

Second, the government is examining options to improve private savings.

Third, it will tackle the chronic skills shortages that have been driving inflationary pressure in many areas of the economy for some years.

Fourth is a plan of action on infrastructure bottlenecks.

And, fifth, the government aims to act on the workforce participation rate by providing practical ways of helping people re-enter the workforce.

The government is committed to maintaining a strong budgetary position by adhering to a medium-term fiscal strategy that keeps the budget in surplus, on average, over the economic cycle; by reprioritising existing
expenditure; and by maximising public sector efficiency.

**Economic reform**

The government is also committed to improving the quality of government by focusing on outlays that boost the long-term productive capacity of the economy—rather than consumption.

Building long-term productivity growth following many years of declining productivity growth is a core priority of the nation if we are to have improved living standards for working families into the future.

The government’s productivity agenda includes reforms to education, infrastructure, innovation, workplace relations and reforming the Federation.

Central to the government’s productivity agenda is its commitment to building a world-class education system. The government’s long-term ambition is to produce the best-educated workforce in the world. The rest of the world is not standing still, as they invest billions into human capital.

The government is committed to a plan of action to prevent Australia falling further behind against critical global benchmarks. That is why the government is committed to an education revolution.

Advanced infrastructure is critically important to raising Australia’s productivity in the long term.

The government, in cooperation with the states and territories, will focus on better coordination of infrastructure planning and investment—both public and private.

Nationally consistent public-private partnerships will be critical in this regard.

Infrastructure Australia will be established to improve planning and coordination of Australia’s transport, water and energy infrastructure.

The government will also work with the private sector to build a high-speed national broadband network—the critical infrastructure platform of the 21st century, with the capacity to fundamentally transform business, to overcome much of the tyranny of distance and to boost productivity growth.

Innovation is another key driver of productivity and economic growth. The government aims to foster a culture of innovation by strengthening investment in creativity and knowledge generation.

It will establish the Enterprise Connect Network to link business with new ideas and technology. Incentives for business research and development will be focused on lifting investment and competitiveness.

The office of Chief Scientist will once again become a full-time position.

The Commonwealth is establishing a new framework for cooperative Commonwealth-state relations in order to take practical steps to rationalise intergovernmental responsibilities and achieve better outcomes in areas of national priority.

The Council of Australian Governments, COAG, recognised at its meeting in December 2007 that there is a need for greater cooperation between Commonwealth and state governments and this should be an immediate priority.

Commonwealth-state funding arrangements will focus more on outputs and outcomes, underpinned by a commitment from the Commonwealth government to provide incentive payments to drive reforms.

At the December COAG meeting, Australian heads of government identified the regulatory burden on business as an impediment to efficiency that needs to be lifted.

Priority areas for action that have been identified include occupational health and safety regulation, payroll tax administration,
building codes, trade and professional recognition, simplified accounting methods for the hospitality sector and simplification of the business activity statement.

The government is therefore committed to a significant agenda of economic reform across the spectrum of human capital, physical capital and regulatory reform—with the overriding agenda of building long-term productivity growth.

**Work and family**

Workplace arrangements should deliver flexibility for employers and employees, fair wages and conditions, productive work practices and a balance between work and family responsibilities.

To meet these objectives, the government will be introducing a new workplace relations system.

In its first legislative act, the government will abolish the capacity to make Australian workplace agreements.

The new workplace relations system will provide a strong safety net of minimum conditions, the right to bargain collectively for wages and conditions and fairness for both employers and employees if an employee is dismissed.

These elements will ensure that employees can fully participate in the benefits of a growing economy, while fostering productivity growth and low inflation.

The government is committed to further measures that will relieve the pressures on working parents and help them to get the balance right as they juggle their work and family responsibilities.

The government’s initiatives in this area include:

- more flexible parental leave;
- an increased focus on high-quality early childhood education and child care; and
- assistance to small businesses wanting to develop family-friendly practices.

Ensuring that parents have access to affordable, high-quality child care that helps them to balance their work and family responsibilities is a high priority for the government.

To further assist parents with the cost of child care, the government will increase the childcare tax rebate from 30 per cent to 50 per cent of out-of-pocket childcare costs.

The government will also improve access to quality child care through the establishment of up to 260 new childcare centres on school, TAFE, university and community sites, and through the introduction of a five-star quality rating system.

Families will also benefit from the introduction of universal access to early childhood education for all four-year-olds for 15 hours per week and 40 weeks per year, and the national rollout of the Australian Early Development Index, which will help communities throughout Australia understand how children are developing by the time they reach school age.

**Education**

The government was elected on a platform of implementing major changes to Australia’s education system, with the aim of achieving higher standards and better results at every level of education from early childhood to mature age.

The government believes that lifting the quantity of investment in education and the quality of educational outcomes is highly important to Australia’s long-term productivity growth and economic prosperity.

The government will provide universal access to high-quality early childhood education for Australian children so they can build foundations for lifelong learning.
In schools, there will be a major focus on reforms to improve literacy and numeracy outcomes and lift year 12 retention rates.

The development of a national curriculum in the key areas of mathematics, science, English, history and Asian languages aims to ensure high, nationally consistent standards for all students across Australia.

In partnership with the states and territories, the government will work to enhance schools’ educational infrastructure.

Funding of $2.5 billion will be provided for secondary schools to build or upgrade trade training centres over the next 10 years.

The government will invest $1 billion in the provision of computers for year 9 to 12 students and faster broadband connections to schools.

The government will also create an additional 450,000 training places over four years, including 65,000 extra apprenticeships, with the first 20,000 places to be available from April 2008.

These initiatives will enhance employment prospects for young Australians and address critical skills shortages.

In higher education, the demand for graduates in maths, science and early childhood education will be addressed through incentives for graduates in relevant occupations, including the teaching profession.

To help attract and retain the best talent, the government will improve and expand the Commonwealth Scholarships Program for both undergraduates and postgraduates and offer new four-year fellowships valued at $140,000 a year to 1,000 leading researchers.

Domestic undergraduate full-fee-paying places at public universities will be phased out.

**Health**

The government is committed to ending the blame game between Canberra and the states and territories on health and hospitals.

The government believes the Australian people deserve better than a culture of buck-passing between levels of government.

That is why health and hospitals form such a vital part of the COAG reform agenda for 2008.

The government understands that this reform task will not be easy and success is far from guaranteed.

Working closely with the states and territories, reform will focus on funding for improving performance and health outcomes in key areas across the health system, including:

- pressures on emergency departments;
- elective surgery waiting lists beyond clinically acceptable time frames;
- the intersection between aged care and the hospital system; and
- better integration of preventative health care to tackle challenges such as obesity and chronic disease.

This includes funding to the states and territories to act on elective surgery waiting lists, funding for GP superclinics, increasing the number of operational aged-care places and providing additional nurses for our healthcare system.

Importantly, more support will be provided to health services in rural communities.

Beyond these programs, the government will re-establish the Commonwealth Dental Care Program.

Hundreds of thousands of Australians have been waiting years to have the most basic dental work done.
That is why the government will commit $290 million to fund up to one million extra dental consultations over three years.

Failure to act on dental health is bad for general health, bad for self-esteem and bad for those seeking to break the unemployment cycle.

**Climate change and water**

The government considers that climate change represents one of Australia’s greatest long-term economic and environmental challenges.

Scientific evidence continues to underscore the seriousness of the threat of climate change and the urgency of action that is needed at a global, national and local level.

In one of its first actions, the Australian government ratified the Kyoto protocol and so joined the community of nations in the truly global challenge facing our common humanity.

The government intends to play an active and significant role in the post-Bali negotiations to develop a comprehensive new agreement on climate change.

The government has committed to reducing Australia’s greenhouse gas emissions by 60 per cent on 2000 levels by 2050.

A major study to help Australia set robust shorter-term emission reduction targets will report in mid-2008.

To help Australia meet its emissions reductions goals, a national emissions trading scheme will be established by the end of 2010.

The government will also set a 20 per cent target for renewable energy by 2020 to expand the use of renewable energy sources such as solar and wind power.

The Commonwealth will work cooperatively with the states and territories to tackle the water crisis and respond to the impacts of climate change, including in the Murray-Darling Basin that supports over 40 per cent of Australia’s food production.

The government will invest in modernising irrigation infrastructure and purchasing water entitlements from willing sellers to put our river systems on a sustainable footing.

A $1 billion fund will be established to invest in new and reliable water supplies for urban Australia—including desalination and recycling—and rebates will be available for families to invest in water conservation at home.

The prolonged and severe dry conditions in parts of Australia have had a serious impact on the livelihood of rural Australia.

While recent weeks have seen rains in many parts of Australia, long-term water shortages remain an acute concern.

The government will implement climate change adaptation programs to help support farmers in adapting farming practices as they face the changing climate.

The government’s drought policy will ensure that farmers receiving government assistance are better prepared to deal with the increasing frequency of dry conditions predicted for the future.

**Housing**

The government plans several measures to address challenges relating to housing affordability and homelessness.

Homeownership is out of reach for many Australian families, and many Australian cities are experiencing large increases in rental costs and a shortage of rental stock.

This is of particular concern because the current shortage of housing supply affects the most disadvantaged people in the Australian community.

The government will establish first home saver accounts—accounts that reward disci-
plined savings with government contributions.

These will help people save a larger home deposit and will improve affordability.

The government will also increase housing supply and make houses less expensive—by releasing Commonwealth land for housing, by investing $500 million in housing-linked infrastructure and by providing financial incentives to encourage private sector investment in affordable rental properties.

The government understands there is no single solution to the crisis in housing affordability.

Any attempt at improving affordability needs to involve the three levels of government working together with the community and private sectors.

A national housing strategy will be implemented. Working with the states, territories and local government, a National Housing Affordability Agreement will be developed which incorporates measures to improve housing affordability for home buyers, renters and public housing tenants.

Social inclusion
The government will implement a new policy agenda focused on social inclusion. The focus on social inclusion aims to improve the opportunities for all Australians to participate fully in Australian economic and social life.

In working to advance social inclusion, the government will work in close partnership with state, territory and local governments, business and the not-for-profit sector.

Policies that aim to improve social inclusion and address disadvantage include the government’s commitment to halve the number of homeless people turned away from homeless services each year, for the next five years; universal access to preschool for four-year-old children; a national action plan on literacy and numeracy; establishing a dental health program; halving the gap in mortality rates of Indigenous and non-Indigenous children under the age of five within a decade; achieving a 90 per cent year 12 retention rate by 2020; and developing a national employment strategy for those with a disability or mental illness.

Indigenous policy
The government is committed to advancing reconciliation between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australia, beginning with a formal apology to the stolen generations and extending to a range of initiatives aimed at closing the gap between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians in health outcomes and educational achievement.

Across the Australian community, there is a strong sense that we have more work to do to bring about reconciliation between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians.

One of the great privileges of serving in the office of Governor-General is the opportunity to see and experience so much of our nation’s rich Indigenous cultures.

Serving in this role also makes one more acutely aware that, while we have made progress, we still have a distance to travel.

The richness of Indigenous culture is often under-recognised, and as a nation we have much to learn about the history of Indigenous Australians—a history that stretches over 60,000 years.

The government’s intention to develop a national curriculum in history offers the prospect that more of this history could be incorporated into our education programs.

The apology to the stolen generations that will go before the parliament tomorrow represents an important further step towards reconciliation, and I commend the intention to you, honourable members and senators,
and indeed all Australians, as worthy of your support.

The government acknowledges Indigenous affairs as a key priority.

The government will seek to rebuild the relationship with Indigenous people and communities based on respect, and involve Indigenous leaders and communities in important decisions.

Working with COAG partners, the government intends to focus on closing the gap on Indigenous disadvantage, focusing on three specific areas:

- closing the 17-year life expectancy gap within a generation;
- halving the gap in mortality rates for Indigenous children under five within a decade; and
- halving the gap in reading, writing and numeracy achievements within a decade.

National security and international relations

The government intends to strengthen Australia’s relationship with both traditional allies and regional partners, while also re-engaging with Australia’s tradition of active middle-power diplomacy to address the range of transnational challenges that will define our future, including the threat of terrorism, nuclear proliferation, new threats to border security, human security, as well as the impact of climate change.

Australia’s alliance with the United States will remain central to Australia’s strategic interests.

A stronger working relationship between Australia and the United Nations is also a priority.

The government’s support for the United Nations and multilateral approaches recognises that cooperative engagement is a core means of securing long-term peace and development.

The government will also work to strengthen relations with countries in the Asia-Pacific region in light of its importance to Australia’s economic prosperity and regional stability.

The government recognises that there are both immediate and potential longer term threats to Australia’s national security.

The government will develop a national security strategy statement to guide our military, police, diplomatic and international assistance efforts as we face the security challenges of the 21st century.

The government will commission a defence white paper to guide defence capability and ensure that defence expenditure provides the Defence Force that Australia needs.

In consultation with the United States, the United Kingdom and Iraq, the government will withdraw Australian combat troops from Iraq at the end of the next rotation, due for completion in mid-2008.

To contribute to a secure and stable Iraq, Australia will enhance its humanitarian and development assistance to Iraq.

Australian troops will continue to be deployed in Afghanistan as part of the international force in that region.

The government is also committed to stability and security in our immediate region, where the Australian Defence Force and Australian Federal Police perform crucial stabilisation and support roles in East Timor and the Solomon Islands.

The government is committed to strengthening Australia’s export performance.

The multilateral trading system and the World Trade Organisation Doha Round negotiations will be placed at the centre of Australia’s trade policy. Australia will continue to support regional and bilateral free trade.
agreements which are compatible with, and enhance, multilateral outcomes.

Measures will also be taken to lift Australia’s export competitiveness.

During recent years there has been a growing recognition that, with coordinated international efforts, major progress can be made on reducing global poverty.

The government will lift Australia’s contribution to these efforts in support of the internationally agreed Millennium Development Goals.

The government will increase the level of Australia’s overseas development assistance to 0.5 per cent of gross national income by 2015-16.

Australia’s aid program will play a critical role in promoting economic development, reducing instability and improving governance in the South Pacific.

**Governance and transparency**

The government will implement new measures to help make government more accessible to the community and more transparent in its decision making.

The government will hold regular community cabinet meetings in capital cities, regional towns and remote communities across Australia.

The government began this in Perth in January.

These meetings will give Australians from all walks of life the opportunity to talk to government ministers on a broad range of national and local issues.

The government is seeking to prepare Australia for the challenges of the future.

To do so, it has stated its preparedness to listen to the ideas that Australians have for the future of our country.

On 19 and 20 April, the government will convene an Australia 2020 Summit.

This summit will bring together 1,000 of Australia’s best and brightest minds to discuss and debate Australia’s long-term future.

The government is committed to then examining the policy ideas that arise from the summit and reporting back on them later in the year.

The government wants to leave no stone unturned to ensure Australia is on the right track for the future—and that means listening to Australians to hear their ideas for our country’s future.

It is important for the nation to lift its planning horizon beyond the three-year electoral cycle and to begin serious planning for the decade ahead and beyond.

Laws relating to government information will be enhanced by promoting a culture of disclosure and transparency.

This includes enhanced budget transparency by providing greater disclosure of accessible and useful government financial information.

A Freedom of Information Commissioner will be appointed to take overall responsibility for access to government information and improve review processes.

**Conclusion**

The Australian government is committed to building a modern Australia capable of meeting the challenges of the future.

It is committed to bringing a fresh approach to governing.

It is committed to being a government that listens to the Australian people, that consults with the Australian people and that is upfront with the Australian people on the problems it can solve—and the problems that lie beyond the powers of any government to solve.

The Australian government has a vision for Australia’s long-term future.
The government wants to seize the great opportunities that lie before us and make Australia competitive on every level with the rest of the world, with the aim of making this great country of ours an even greater place in which to live.

Sitting suspended from 3.48 pm to 5.00 pm

The PRESIDENT (Senator the Hon. Alan Ferguson) read prayers.

The PRESIDENT—I inform the Senate that I have received a copy of the opening speech which His Excellency the Governor-General was pleased to deliver to both houses of the parliament.

Ordered that consideration of the Governor-General’s opening speech be made an order of the day for the next day of sitting.

BUSINESS

Rearrangement

Senator CHRIS EVANS (Western Australia—Leader of the Government in the Senate) (5.01 pm)—by leave—I move:

That standing order 3(4) be suspended to enable the Senate to consider business other than that of a formal character before the address-in-reply to the Governor-General’s opening speech has been adopted.

Question agreed to.

MINISTERIAL ARRANGEMENTS

Senator CHRIS EVANS (Western Australia—Leader of the Government in the Senate) (5.02 pm)—by leave—I have the honour to inform the Senate that, following the election held on 24 November 2007 in which the Australian Labor Party was elected to government, the Governor-General commissioned the Prime Minister to form a government. Ministers and parliamentary secretaries were appointed on 3 December 2007.

For the information of honourable senators, I have a list of the full ministry. The document lists all ministers and parliamentary secretaries and the offices they hold. It shows those ministers who comprise the cabinet and provides details of representation arrangements in each chamber. I seek leave to have the document incorporated in Hansard.

Leave granted.

The document read as follows—

FIRST RUDD MINISTRY

CABINET

Prime Minister
Minister for Education
Minister for Employment and Workplace Relations
Minister for Social Inclusion
Deputy Prime Minister
Treasurer
Minister for Immigration and Citizenship
Leader of the Government in the Senate
Special Minister of State
Cabinet Secretary
Vice-President of the Executive Council
Minister for Trade
Minister for Foreign Affairs
Minister for Defence
Minister for Health and Ageing

The Honourable Kevin Michael Rudd, MP
The Honourable Julia Eileen Gillard, MP
The Honourable Wayne Maxwell Swan, MP
Senator the Honourable Christopher Vaughan Evans
Senator the Honourable John Philip Faulkner
The Honourable Simon Findlay Crean, MP
The Honourable Stephen Francis Smith, MP
The Honourable Joel Andrew Fitzgibbon, MP
The Honourable Nicola Louise Roxon, MP
Minister for Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs
The Honourable Jennifer Louise Macklin, MP

Minister for Finance and Deregulation
The Honourable Lindsay James Tanner, MP

Minister for Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Local Government
The Honourable Anthony Norman Albanese, MP

Leader of the House
Senator the Honourable Stephen Michael Conroy

Minister for Broadband, Communications and the Digital Economy
Senator the Honourable Kim John Carr

Deputy Leader of the Government in the Senate
Senator the Honourable Penelope Ying Yen Wong

Minister for Innovation, Industry, Science and Research
The Honourable Peter Robert Garrett, AM, MP

Minister for Climate Change and Water
The Honourable Robert Bruce McClelland, MP

Minister for the Environment, Heritage and the Arts
Senator the Honourable Joseph William Ludwig

Attorney-General
The Honourable Robert Bruce McClelland, MP

Minister for Human Services
Senator the Honourable Joseph William Ludwig

Manager of Government Business in the Senate
The Honourable Anthony Stephen Burke, MP

Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry
The Honourable Martin John Ferguson, AM, MP

Minister for Resources and Energy
The Honourable Martin John Ferguson, AM, MP

Minister for Tourism
The Honourable Martin John Ferguson, AM, MP

OUTER MINISTRY

Minister for Home Affairs
The Honourable Robert John Debus, MP

Assistant Treasurer
The Honourable Christopher Eyles Bowen, MP

Minister for Competition Policy and Consumer Affairs
The Honourable Alan Peter Griffin, MP

Minister for Veterans’ Affairs
The Honourable Tanya Joan Plibersek, MP

Minister for Housing
The Honourable Brendan Patrick John O’Connor, MP

Minister for the Status of Women
The Honourable Warren Edward Snowdon, MP

Minister for the Status of Women
The Honourable Dr Craig Anthony Emerson, AM, MP

Minister for Employment Participation

Minister for Defence Science and Personnel
The Honourable Nicholas John Sherry

Minister for Small Business, Independent Contractors and the Service Economy
The Honourable Maria Justine Elliott, MP

Minister for Employment Participation
The Honourable Katherine Margaret Ellis, MP

Minister Assisting the Finance Minister on Deregulation

Minister for Superannuation and Corporate Law

Minister for Ageing

Minister for Youth

Minister for Sport

PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARIES

Parliamentary Secretary for Early Childhood Education and Childcare
The Honourable Maxine Margaret McKew, MP

Parliamentary Secretary for Defence Procurement
The Honourable Gregory Ivan Combet, AM, MP

Parliamentary Secretary for Defence Support
The Honourable Dr Michael Joseph Kelly, AM, MP
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Parliamentary Secretary for Regional Development and Northern Australia</th>
<th>The Honourable Gary Gray, AO, MP</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Parliamentary Secretary for Disabilities and Children’s Services</td>
<td>The Honourable William Richard Shorten, MP</td>
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<tr>
<td>Parliamentary Secretary for International Development Assistance</td>
<td>The Honourable Robert Francis McMullan, MP</td>
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<tr>
<td>Parliamentary Secretary for Pacific Island Affairs</td>
<td>The Honourable Duncan James Colquhoun Kerr, SC, MP</td>
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<tr>
<td>Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister</td>
<td>The Honourable Anthony Michael Colquhoun</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parliamentary Secretary for Social Inclusion and the Voluntary Sector</td>
<td>Senator the Honourable Ursula Mary Stephens</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parliamentary Secretary Assisting the Prime Minister for Social Inclusion</td>
<td>The Honourable John Paul Murphy, MP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Trade</td>
<td>Senator the Honourable Jan Elizabeth McLucas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Health and Ageing</td>
<td>The Honourable Laurie Donald Thomas Ferguson, MP</td>
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<tr>
<td>Parliamentary Secretary for Multicultural Affairs and Settlement Services</td>
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**MINISTERIAL REPRESENTATION**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MINISTER</th>
<th>REPRESENTING</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Senator the Honourable Chris Evans</td>
<td>Prime Minister</td>
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<tr>
<td>Minister for Immigration and Citizenship</td>
<td>Minister for Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs</td>
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<tr>
<td>Leader of the Government in the Senate</td>
<td>Minister for Housing</td>
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<td>Minister for Sport</td>
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<tr>
<td>Senator the Honourable John Faulkner</td>
<td>Minister for Trade</td>
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<tr>
<td>Special Minister of State</td>
<td>Minister for Foreign Affairs</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cabinet Secretary</td>
<td>Minister for Defence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vice-President of the Executive Council</td>
<td>Minister for Defence Science and Personnel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senator the Honourable Stephen Conroy</td>
<td>Treasurer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minister for Broadband, Communications and the Digital Economy</td>
<td>Minister for Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Local Government</td>
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<tr>
<td>Deputy Leader of the Government in the Senate</td>
<td>Assistant Treasurer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senator the Honourable Kim Carr</td>
<td>Minister for Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minister for Innovation, Industry, Science and Research</td>
<td>Minister for Resources and Energy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senator the Honourable Penny Wong</td>
<td>Minister for Small Business, Independent Contractors and the Service Economy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minister for Climate Change and Water</td>
<td>Minister for Employment and Workplace Relations</td>
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<td>Minister for Social Inclusion</td>
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<td>Minister for the Environment, Heritage and the Arts</td>
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<td>Minister for the Status of Women</td>
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<td>Minister for Employment Participation</td>
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<td>Minister for Youth</td>
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<tr>
<td>Senator the Honourable Joe Ludwig</td>
<td>Minister for Health and Ageing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minister for Human Services</td>
<td>Attorney-General</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Manager of Government Business in the Senate

Senator the Honourable Nick Sherry
Minister for Superannuation and Corporate Law

Senator CHRIS EVANS—I would also like to inform the House that Senator Kerry O’Brien has been appointed Government Whip in the Senate and that Senator Dana Wortley and Senator Ruth Webber have been appointed Deputy Government Whips in the Senate.

I would like to congratulate all our front-benchers on their election to the roles of ministers and parliamentary secretaries and place on record my thanks to other members of the government team who served on the front bench—some of them over a long period of time—over the years we were in opposition for the contribution they made to the election of the Rudd Labor government. I would also like to congratulate the Northern Territory and ACT senators on their re-election to the parliament, and I would like to acknowledge the election of Senator Minchin as Leader of the Opposition in the Senate—a job which I hope he holds for many years—and Senator Abetz likewise as Deputy Leader of the Opposition in the Senate.

Mr President, I thank you for the manner in which you conducted the welcome to country ceremony today and I thank the officers of the parliament for their cooperation in facilitating it. I think it brought great credit to the parliament and its officers. I also acknowledge the role that Senator George Campbell played as a whip and thank him for his services.

There is one final thankyou: I understand that one of our favourite attendants, Lorna Lane, is giving it away at the end of the week. On behalf of the government, I would like to acknowledge her contribution to the parliament and wish her all the best.

LIBERAL PARTY OF AUSTRALIA
Leadership and Office Holders

Senator MINCHIN (South Australia—Leader of the Opposition in the Senate) (5.05 pm)—by leave—On behalf of the opposition, I congratulate Senator Evans and other ministers and office holders on their appointments. I congratulate the Labor Party on their election to government. They have been given an enormous responsibility by the people of Australia. It is our business and our job now to hold them to account for the responsibility they have for governing this great nation.

I inform the Senate that, as Senator Evans alluded to, I have been elected Leader of the Opposition in the Senate—a job I intend to hold for as little time as possible—and Senator Abetz the Deputy Leader. Senator Ellison is the Manager of Opposition Business and Senator Parry the Opposition Whip, with Senator Judith Adams as his deputy. Senator Scullion has been elected as the Leader of the Nationals in the Senate, and I congratulate him on that election and on his election as a senator for the Northern Territory. He will presently inform the Senate of other arrangements for the National Party.

For the information of senators, I seek leave to incorporate in Hansard a list of the shadow ministry and parliamentary secretariats, including Senate representational arrangements.
Leave granted.

_The document read as follows—_

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PORTFOLIO</th>
<th>SHADOW MINISTER</th>
<th>OTHER CHAMBER</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Shadow Cabinet</td>
<td>Brendan Nelson, MP</td>
<td>Senator Nick Minchin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leader of the Opposition</td>
<td>Julie Bishop, MP</td>
<td>Senator Eric Abetz</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employment, Business and Workplace Relations</td>
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<tr>
<td>Infrastructure, Transport and Local Government</td>
<td>Warren Truss, MP</td>
<td>Senator Nigel Scullion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Defence</td>
<td>Senator Nick Minchin</td>
<td>Bob Baldwin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Innovation, Industry, Science and Research</td>
<td>Senator Eric Abetz</td>
<td>Bruce Billson</td>
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<tr>
<td>Treasury</td>
<td>Malcolm Turnbull, MP</td>
<td>Senator Helen Coonan</td>
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<tr>
<td>Health and Ageing</td>
<td>Joe Hockey, MP</td>
<td>Senator Richard Colbeck</td>
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<tr>
<td>Foreign Affairs</td>
<td>Andrew Robb, MP</td>
<td>Senator Marise Payne</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trade</td>
<td>Ian MacFarlane, MP</td>
<td>Senator Chris Ellison</td>
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<tr>
<td>Families, Community Services, Indigenous Affairs and the Voluntary Sector</td>
<td>Tony Abbott, MP</td>
<td>Senator Cory Bernardi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry</td>
<td>Senator Nigel Scullion</td>
<td>Warren Truss</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Human Services</td>
<td>Senator Helen Coonan</td>
<td>Joe Hockey</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education, Apprenticeships and Training</td>
<td>Tony Smith, MP</td>
<td>Senator Brett Mason</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Climate Change, Environment and Urban Water</td>
<td>Greg Hunt, MP</td>
<td>Senator David Johnston</td>
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<tr>
<td>Finance, Competition Policy and Deregulation</td>
<td>Peter Dutton, MP</td>
<td>Senator George Brandis</td>
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<tr>
<td>Immigration and Citizenship</td>
<td>Senator Chris Ellison</td>
<td>Christopher Pyne</td>
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<tr>
<td>Broadband, Communications and the Digital Economy</td>
<td>Bruce Billson, MP</td>
<td>Louise Markus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attorney General</td>
<td>Senator George Brandis</td>
<td>Christopher Pyne</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resources and Energy, Tourism</td>
<td>Senator David Johnston</td>
<td>Ian Macfarlane</td>
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<tr>
<td>Regional Development, Water Security</td>
<td>John Cobb, MP</td>
<td>Steven Ciobo</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Shadow Outer Ministry**

| Shadow Minister for Immigration and Citizenship                          | Chris Pyne, MP            | Senator George Brandis      |
| Shadow Special Minister of State                                         | Senator Michael Ronaldson | Peter Dutton                |
| Small Business, the Service Economy and Tourism                          | Steven Ciobo, MP          | Senator David Johnston      |
| Environment, Heritage, the Arts and Indigenous Affairs                   | Sharman Stone, MP         | Senator Ian Macdonald       |
| Shadow Assistant Treasurer, Superannuation and Corporate Governance       | Michael Keenan, MP        | Senator Helen Coonan        |

CHAMBER
16 SENA TE Tuesday, 12 February 2008

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ageing</th>
<th>Margaret May, MP</th>
<th>Senator Richard Colbeck</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Defence Science, Personnel and Assisting Shadow Minister for Defence Business Development, Independent</td>
<td>Bob Baldwin, MP</td>
<td>Senator Nick Minchin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Veterans' Affairs</td>
<td>Bronwyn Bishop, MP</td>
<td>Senator Nick Minchin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employment Participation and Apprenticeships and Training</td>
<td>Andrew Southcott, MP</td>
<td>Senator Brett Mason</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Housing, Status of Women</td>
<td>Sussan Ley, MP</td>
<td>Senator Marise Payne</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Youth and Sport</td>
<td>Pat Farmer, MP</td>
<td>Senator Cory Bernardi</td>
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**Parliamentary Secretaries**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Role</th>
<th>Person</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Assisting the Leader of the Opposition and Shadow Cabinet</td>
<td>Don Randall, MP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secretary</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assisting the Leader of the Opposition, Northern Australia</td>
<td>Senator Ian Macdonald</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health</td>
<td>Senator Richard Colbeck</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>Senator Brett Mason</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Defence</td>
<td>Peter Lindsay, MP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Infrastructure, Roads and Transport</td>
<td>Barry Haase, MP</td>
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<tr>
<td>Trade</td>
<td>John Forrest, MP</td>
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<tr>
<td>Immigration and Citizenship</td>
<td>Louise Markus, MP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local Government</td>
<td>Sophie Mirabella, MP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tourism</td>
<td>Jo Gash, MP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ageing and the Voluntary Sector</td>
<td>Mark Coulton, MP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foreign Affairs</td>
<td>Senator Marise Payne</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Families, Community Services</td>
<td>Senator Cory Bernardi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chief Opposition Whip</td>
<td>Alex Somlyay</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deputy Opposition Whip</td>
<td>Michael Johnson</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nationals Whip</td>
<td>Kay Hull</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opposition Whip in the Senate</td>
<td>Senator Stephen Parry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deputy Opposition Whip in the Senate</td>
<td>Senator Judith Adams</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nationals Whip in the Senate</td>
<td>Senator Fiona Nash</td>
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</table>

**THE NATIONALS**

**Leadership and Office Holders**

**Senator SCULLION** (Northern Territory—Leader of the Nationals in the Senate) (5.06 pm)—by leave—I would like to join with the Leader of the Opposition in the Senate in congratulating the Leader of the Government in the Senate and those opposite for their win and their ascension to the treasury bench. I would also like to inform the Senate that I am the Leader of the National Party in the Senate. My deputy is Senator Ron Boswell and the National Party Whip in the Senate will be Senator Fiona Nash.

I would like to join both the leaders in congratulating Lorna and wishing her well, particularly with her grandchildren in Brisbane.

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CHAMBER
AUSTRALIAN GREENS
Leadership and Office Holders
Senator BOB BROWN (Tasmania—Leader of the Australian Greens) (5.07 pm)—by leave—I too would like to congratulate Lorna and thank her for the wonderful attendance and friendliness she has shown over so many years to me and to everybody here.

I would like to inform the Senate that at our party meeting on 17 December I was re-elected the Leader of the Greens. Senator Rachel Siewert was elected as our party whip and Senator Milne was elected as the party chair.

I take the opportunity to congratulate the government on their win in the election. I do wish them well. I also wish the opposition and other parties well in the important years we have ahead.

AUSTRALIAN DEMOCRATS
Leadership and Office Holders
Senator MURRAY (Western Australia) (5.08 pm)—by leave—I wish to extend the congratulations of the Australian Democrats to the Labor Party, and to the ministers and parliamentary secretaries represented in the Senate, at their ascension to the treasury bench. I also want to congratulate all those senators who stood for election and were re-elected and to commiserate with those who were not.

I share, and my party shares, the chamber’s affection for Lorna. We do indeed wish you well, Lorna, on your departure.

On the formal side, Senator Allison remains the party leader. Senator Bartlett remains the deputy leader and the whip for the Australian Democrats.

FAMILY FIRST PARTY
Leadership and Office Holders
Senator FIELDING (Victoria—Leader of the Family First Party) (5.09 pm)—by leave—On behalf of Family First, I would like to congratulate the Labor Party on forming government.

I would also like to say thank you to Lorna. She will be very sadly missed. She does tremendous work around here, and everybody knows that.

On the formal part, my party has unanimously elected me as the party leader and also the party whip.

TEMPORARY CHAIRMEN OF COMMITTEES
The PRESIDENT—Order! Pursuant to standing order 12, I lay on the table a warrant nominating Senators Barnett, Bartlett, Bishop, Carol Brown, Chapman, Forshaw, Hutchins, Kirk, Lighfoot, Sandy Macdonald, McEwen, Marshall, Moore, Murray, Troeth and Watson as temporary chairmen of committees when the Deputy President and Chairman of Committees is absent.

PETITIONS
The Clerk—Petitions have been lodged for presentation as follows:

Asylum Seekers
To the Honourable the President and the Members of the Senate in Parliament assembled:
Whereas the 1998 Synod of the Anglican Diocese of Melbourne carried without dissent the following motion:
“That this Synod regrets the Government’s adoption of procedures for certain people seeking political asylum in Australia which exclude them from all public income support while withholding permission to work, thereby creating a group of beggars dependent on the Churches and charities for food and the necessities of life;
and calls upon the Federal government to review such procedures immediately and remove all practices which are manifestly inhumane and in some cases in contravention of our national obligations as a signatory of the UN Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.”

We, therefore, the individual, undersigned attendees at Glen Iris Uniting Church, Glen Iris, Victoria 3146, petition the Senate in support of the above mentioned motion.

AND we, as in duty bound will ever pray.

by Senator Allison (from 51 citizens)

Abortion

To the Honourable President and Members of the Senate in Parliament assembled.

We the undersigned citizens support a woman’s fundamental right to safe, affordable and legal abortion.

We oppose any moves within the Parliament to deny women this right or to restrict or to impose conditions on women’s access to termination of pregnancy.

Your petitioners request that Senators reject any legislation that comes before the Senate that would undermine a woman’s right to access abortion.

by Senator Allison (from 22 citizens)

Immigration

The humble Petition of the Citizens of Australia, respectfully showeth:

That we re affirm our support for the Constitution of the Commonwealth of Australia which states “Whereas the people of New South Wales, Victoria, South Australia, Queensland and Tasmania humbly relying on the blessing of Almighty God, have agreed to unite in one indissoluble Federal Commonwealth” (Constitution Act 9th July 1900) and the affirmation of 69% of our Australian population that they are Christians, and the statement of one of our founders that “this Commonwealth of Australia from its first stage will be a Christian Commonwealth” (Sir John Downer 1898), and the Opening Prayer of the Parliaments “Almighty God we humbly beseech Thee to vouchsafe Thy blessing upon this Parliament. Direct and prosper our deliberations to the advancement of Thy glory” and recognises the importance of these beliefs in ensuring the ongoing stability and unity of our Christian nation.

Your petitioners therefore pray the Parliament of Australia will:

(1) Review our Commonwealth Immigration Policy to ensure the priority for Christians from all races and colours, especially from persecuted nations, as both immigrants and refugees.

(2) Adopt a ten year moratorium on Muslim immigration, so an assessment can be made on the social and political disharmony currently occurring in the Netherlands, France and the UK, so as to ensure we avoid making the same mistakes; and allow a decade for the Muslim leadership and community in Australia to reassess their situation so as to reject any attempt to establish a Muslim nation within our Australian nation.

And your petitioners, as in duty bound, will ever pray.

by Senator Faulkner (from 13 citizens)

Nuclear Waste

The honourable President and Members of The Senate Assembled in Parliament:

We, the undersigned, call on the Senate to commit to keeping Western Australia free of nuclear waste. We ask that you consider the burden that we will be leaving our children, and future generations of Western Australians, who will be forced to live with the results of our actions.

by Senator Webber (from 109 citizens)

Petitions received.

NOTICES

Presentation

Senator Ludwig to move on the next day of sitting:

That the Senate take note of the National Apology to the Stolen Generations.
Senator Ludwig to move on the next day of sitting:

That, on Thursday, 14 February 2008:

(a) the hours of meeting shall be 9.30 am to adjournment;
(b) consideration of general business shall not be proceeded with;
(c) the routine of business from not later than 4.30 pm shall be further consideration of the motion to take note of the National Apology to the Stolen Generations; and
(d) if that debate has not concluded by 6 pm, then:

(i) consideration of committee reports, government responses and Auditor-General’s reports under standing order 62(1) and (2) not be proceeded with, and
(ii) at the conclusion of the debate, the question for the adjournment of the Senate shall be proposed.

Senator Ludwig to move on the next day of sitting:

That the days of meeting of the Senate for 2008 be as follows:

Autumn sittings:
Tuesday, 12 February to Thursday, 14 February
Autumn sittings (2):
Tuesday, 11 March to Thursday, 13 March
Monday, 17 March to Thursday, 20 March
Budget sittings:
Tuesday, 13 May to Thursday, 15 May
Winter sittings:
Monday, 16 June to Thursday, 19 June
Monday, 23 June to Thursday, 26 June
Spring sittings:
Tuesday, 26 August to Thursday, 28 August
Monday, 1 September to Thursday, 4 September

Monday, 15 September to Thursday, 18 September
Monday, 22 September to Thursday, 25 September
Monday, 13 October to Thursday, 16 October

Spring sittings (2):
Monday, 10 November to Thursday, 13 November
Monday, 24 November to Thursday, 27 November
Monday, 1 December to Thursday, 4 December.

Senator Ludwig to move on the next day of sitting:

(1) That standing order 25(1) be amended as follows:

Omit: ‘Employment, Workplace Relations and Education’
Substitute: ‘Education, Employment and Workplace Relations’
Omit: ‘Environment, Communications, Information Technology and the Arts’
Substitute: ‘Environment, Communications and the Arts’.

(2) That departments and agencies be allocated to legislative and general purpose standing committees as follows:

Community Affairs
Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs
Health and Ageing
Economics
Treasury
Innovation, Industry, Science and Research
Resources, Energy and Tourism
Education, Employment and Workplace Relations
Education, Employment and Workplace Relations

CHAMBER
Senator Ludwig to move on the next day of sitting:

(1) That estimates hearings by standing committees for 2008 be scheduled as follows:

### 2007-08 additional estimates:

- Monday, 18 February and Tuesday, 19 February and, if required, Friday, 22 February (Group A)
- Wednesday, 20 February and Thursday, 21 February and, if required, Friday, 22 February (Group B).

### 2008-09 Budget estimates:

- Monday, 26 May to Thursday, 29 May and, if required, Friday, 30 May (Group A)
- Monday, 2 June to Thursday, 5 June and, if required, Friday, 6 June (Group B)
- Monday, 20 October and Tuesday, 21 October, and if required, 24 October (supplementary hearings—Group A)
- Wednesday, 22 October and Wednesday, 23 October and, if required, 24 October (supplementary hearings—Group B).

(2) That the committees consider the proposed expenditure in accordance with the allocation of departments and agencies to committees agreed to by the Senate.

(3) That committees meet in the following groups:

**Group A:**
- Environment, Communications and the Arts
- Finance and Public Administration
- Legal and Constitutional Affairs
- Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport

**Group B:**
- Community Affairs
- Economics
- Education, Employment and Workplace Relations
- Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade

(4) That the committees report to the Senate on the following dates:

(a) Tuesday, 18 March 2008 in respect of the 2007-08 additional estimates;
(b) Tuesday, 24 June 2008 in respect of the 2008-09 Budget estimates.

Senator Ludwig to move on the next day of sitting:

That the following operate as temporary orders until the conclusion of the 2008 sittings:

(1) **Adjournment debate on Tuesday**

On the question for the adjournment of the Senate on Tuesday, a senator who has spoken once subject to the time limit of 10 minutes may speak again for not more than 10 minutes if no other senator who has not already spoken once wishes to speak, provided that a senator may by leave speak for not more than 20 minutes on one occasion.
(2) **Divisions on Thursday**

If a division is called for on Thursday after 4.30 pm, the matter before the Senate shall be adjourned until the next day of sitting at a time fixed by the Senate.

(3) **Substitute members of committees**

If a member of a committee appointed under standing order 25 is unable to attend a meeting of the committee, that member may in writing to the chair of the committee appoint a participating member to act as a substitute member of the committee at that meeting. If the member is incapacitated or unavailable, a letter to the chair of a committee appointing a participating member to act as a substitute member of the committee may be signed on behalf of the member by the leader of the party or group on whose nomination the member was appointed to the committee.

**Senator Sherry** to move on the next day of sitting:

That the following bill be introduced: A Bill for an Act to amend the law relating to the financial sector, and for related purposes. *Financial Sector Legislation Amendment (Review of Prudential Decisions) Bill 2008.*

**Senator Sherry** to move on the next day of sitting:


**Senator Minchin** to move on the next day of sitting:

That the Senate—

(a) records its deep regret and sadness at the death of Trooper David Pearce who died as part of a roadside bomb attack in Afghanistan on 8 October 2007; and
(b) expresses its sincere condolences to Trooper Pearce’s wife and two children, and all loved ones for their tragic loss.

**Senator Minchin** to move on the next day of sitting:

That the Senate—

(a) records its sadness and regret at the death of Sergeant Matthew Locke who died while on operations in Afghanistan on 25 October 2007; and
(b) notes and commends his dedicated commitment to the Australian Defence Force, particularly his courageous service in East Timor, Iraq and Afghanistan, including 10 years with the Special Air Service Regiment; and
(c) expresses its sincere condolences to Sergeant Locke’s wife, son, family and friends for their tragic loss.

**Senator Minchin** to move on the next day of sitting:

That the Senate—

(a) records its deep regret at the tragic death of Private Luke Worsley who was killed while serving with the Special Operations Task Group in Afghanistan on 23 November 2007; and
(b) commends his loyal and dedicated service to Australia since enlisting in the Army Reserve in 2002, including his deployment to the Solomon Islands in 2005-06; and
(c) expresses its sincere condolences to Private Worsley’s family and loved ones for their sad and tragic loss.

**Senator Abetz** to move on 14 February 2008:

That, upon its introduction into the House of Representatives, the provisions of the Workplace Relations Amendment (Transition to Forward with Fairness) Bill 2008 be referred to the Education, Employment and Workplace Relations Committee for inquiry and report by 28 April 2008, with particular reference to:
(a) economic and social impacts from the abolition of individual statutory agreements;
(b) impact on employment;
(c) potential for a wages breakout and increased inflationary pressures;
(d) potential for increased industrial disputation;
(e) impact on sectors heavily reliant on individual statutory agreements; and
(f) impact on productivity.

Senator Fielding to move on the next day of sitting:
(1) That so much of standing orders be suspended as would prevent this resolution having effect.
(2) That the following bills be restored to the Notice Paper and that consideration of each bill resumed at the stage reached in the 41st Parliament:
   - Alcohol Toll Reduction Bill 2007
   - Qantas Sale (Keep Jetstar Australian) Amendment Bill 2007

Senator Fielding to move on the next day of sitting:
That the following bill be introduced: A Bill for an Act to amend the Australian Securities and Investments Commission Act 2001 to limit unfair banking and credit card penalty fees, and for related purposes. Australian Securities and Investments Commission (Fair Bank and Credit Card Fees) Amendment Bill 2008.

Senator Allison to move on the next day of sitting:
That the Senate—
(a) notes that:
   (i) Israel has not yet provided the United Nations Mine Action Coordination Centre, Southern Lebanon (MACC SL) with maps indicating the locations in Lebanon where cluster munitions were dropped or fired during 2006,
   (ii) according to MACC SL, Israel’s failure to provide these maps has severely hampered and continues to hamper efforts aimed at rendering the land safe for agricultural and other use by removing unexploded sub-munitions,
   (iii) removal of the estimated one million unexploded cluster munitions was expected to be completed by the end of 2007 but, to date, only 14 per cent have been cleared, and
   (iv) the media in Lebanon continue to report injuries and deaths brought about as a result of unexploded sub-munitions that remain from the 2006 war; and
(b) calls on the Australian Government:
   (i) to urge the Israeli Government to immediately provide MACC SL with maps to assist it in its efforts to remove all unexploded sub-munitions, and
   (ii) to increase Australia’s funding of sub-munition clearance activities being undertaken by MACC SL.

Senator Stott Despoja to move on the next day of sitting:
That the Senate—
(a) notes that:
   (i) the military junta in control of Myanmar, the State Peace and Development Council, has announced its intention to hold a constitutional referendum in May 2008, in advance of national elections by 2010,
   (ii) the drafting of guidelines for the new constitution has not involved representatives of the National League for Democracy (NLD) or minority ethnic groups and comes at a time when many pro-democracy activists are in prison, and
   (iii) a clause in the draft constitutional guidelines guarantees the military 25 per cent of the seats in the country’s parliament;
(b) expresses concern that this process will merely entrench military rule under the guise of democracy;
(c) welcomes the Australian Government’s long-term advocacy for pro-democracy and ethnic minority groups in Myanmar; and
(d) urges the Government to:
  (i) consider additional measures to pressure the military junta to adopt democratic reforms, and
  (ii) lobby India, China and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations to:
  (A) call for the release of NLD leader Daw Aung San Suu Kyi and other political prisoners, and
  (B) reject the ‘roadmap to democracy’ and pressure the junta to adopt a dialogue with pro-democracy and ethnic minority representatives for a genuinely inclusive constitutional drafting process.

Senator Allison to move on 14 February 2008:


Senator Heffernan to move on 14 February 2008:

(1) That a select committee, to be known as the Select Committee on Agricultural and Related Industries be appointed to initially inquire into and report by 16 June 2008, on the following matter:

The pricing and supply arrangements in the Australian and global chemical and fertiliser markets, the implications for Australian farmers of world chemical and fertiliser supply and pricing arrangements, monopolistic and cartel behaviour and related matters.

(2) That the committee consist of 6 senators, 2 nominated by the Leader of the Government in the Senate, 3 nominated by the Leader of the Opposition in the Senate, and 1 nominated by minority groups and independent senators.

(3) That the committee may proceed to the dispatch of business notwithstanding that not all members have been duly nominated and appointed and notwithstanding any vacancy.

(4) That the committee elect an Opposition member as chair.

(5) That the committee elect a deputy chair who shall act as chair of the committee at any time when the chair is not present at a meeting of the committee, and at any time when the chair and deputy chair are not present at a meeting of the committee the members present shall elect another member to act as chair at that meeting.

(6) That, in the event of an equally divided vote, the chair, or deputy chair when acting as chair, shall have a casting vote.

(7) That the quorum of the committee be 4 members.

(8) That the committee have power to appoint subcommittees consisting of 3 or more of its members and to refer to any subcommittee any of the matters which the committee is empowered to examine.

(9) That the quorum of a subcommittee be 2 members.

(10) That the committee and any subcommittee have power to send for and examine persons and documents, to move from place to place, to sit in public or in private, notwithstanding any prorogation of the Parliament or dissolution of the House of Representatives, and have leave to report from time to time its proceedings and the evidence taken and interim recommendations.

(11) That the committee be provided with all necessary staff, facilities and resources and be empowered to appoint persons with specialist knowledge for the purposes
of the committee with the approval of the President.

(12) That the committee be empowered to print from day to day such documents and evidence as may be ordered by it, and a daily Hansard be published of such proceedings as take place in public.

Senator Chris Evans to move (contingent on the Senate on any day concluding its consideration of any item of business and prior to the Senate proceeding to the consideration of another item of business):

That so much of the standing orders be suspended as would prevent a minister moving a motion to provide for the consideration of any matter.

Senator Chris Evans to move (contingent on the moving of a motion to debate a matter of urgency under standing order 75):

That so much of the standing orders be suspended as would prevent a minister moving an amendment to the motion.

Senator Minchin to move (contingent on the President presenting a report of the Auditor-General on any day or notifying the Senate that such a report had been presented under standing order 166):

That so much of the standing orders be suspended as would prevent the senator moving a motion to take note of the report and any senator speaking to it for not more than 10 minutes, with the total time for the debate not to exceed 60 minutes.

Senator Minchin to move (contingent on the Senate on any day concluding its consideration of any item of business and prior to the Senate proceeding to the consideration of another item of business):

That so much of the standing orders be suspended as would prevent the senator moving a motion relating to the conduct of the business of the Senate or to provide for the consideration of any matter.

Senator Minchin to move (contingent on the Senate proceeding to the consideration of government documents):

That so much of the standing orders relating to the consideration of government documents be suspended as would prevent the senator moving a motion relating to the order in which the documents are called on by the President.

Senator Minchin to move (contingent on a minister moving a motion that a bill be considered an urgent bill):

That so much of standing order 142 be suspended as would prevent debate taking place on the motion.

Senator Minchin to move (contingent on a minister moving a motion to specify time to be allotted to the consideration of a bill, or any stage of a bill):

That so much of standing order 142 be suspended as would prevent the motion being debated without limitation of time and each senator speaking for the time allotted by standing orders.

Senator Minchin to move (contingent on the moving of a motion to debate a matter of urgency under standing order 75):

That so much of the standing orders be suspended as would prevent further consideration of the bill, or the stage of the bill, without limitation of time or for a specified period.

Senator Minchin to move (contingent on the moving of a motion to debate a matter of urgency under standing order 75):

That so much of the standing orders be suspended as would prevent a senator moving an amendment to the motion.

Senator Minchin to move (contingent on the President proceeding to the placing of business on any day):

That so much of the standing orders be suspended as would prevent the senator moving a motion relating to the order of business on the Notice Paper.
Senator Minchin to move (contingent on a minister at question time on any day asking that further questions be placed on notice):

That so much of the standing orders be suspended as would prevent the senator moving a motion that, at question time on any day, questions may be put to ministers until 28 questions, including supplementary questions, have been asked and answered.

Senator Minchin to move (contingent on any senator being refused leave to make a statement to the Senate):

That so much of the standing orders be suspended as would prevent that senator making that statement.

Senator Minchin to move (contingent on any senator being refused leave to table a document in the Senate):

That so much of the standing orders be suspended as would prevent the senator moving that the document be tabled.

Senator Bob Brown to move (contingent on the President presenting a report of the Auditor-General on any day or notifying the Senate that such a report had been presented under standing order 166):

That so much of the standing orders be suspended as would prevent the senator moving a motion to take note of the report and any senator speaking to it for not more than 10 minutes, with the total time for the debate not to exceed 60 minutes.

Senator Bob Brown to move (contingent on the Senate on any day concluding its consideration of any item of business and prior to the Senate proceeding to the consideration of another item of business):

That so much of the standing orders be suspended as would prevent the senator moving a motion relating to the conduct of the business of the Senate or to provide for the consideration of any matter.

Senator Bob Brown to move (contingent on the Senate proceeding to the consideration of government documents):

That so much of the standing orders relating to the consideration of government documents be suspended as would prevent the senator moving a motion relating to the order in which the documents are called on by the President.

Senator Bob Brown to move (contingent on a minister moving a motion that a bill be considered an urgent bill):

That so much of standing order 142 be suspended as would prevent debate taking place on the motion.

Senator Bob Brown to move (contingent on a minister moving a motion to specify time to be allotted to the consideration of a bill, or any stage of a bill):

That so much of standing order 142 be suspended as would prevent the motion being debated without limitation of time and each senator speaking for the time allotted by standing orders.

Senator Bob Brown to move (contingent on the chair declaring that the time allotted for the consideration of a bill, or any stage of a bill, has expired):

That so much of standing order 142 be suspended as would prevent further consideration of the bill, or the stage of the bill, without limitation of time or for a specified period.

Senator Bob Brown to move (contingent on the moving of a motion to debate a matter of urgency under standing order 75):

That so much of the standing orders be suspended as would prevent a senator moving an amendment to the motion.

Senator Bob Brown to move (contingent on the President proceeding to the placing of business on any day):

That so much of the standing orders be suspended as would prevent the senator moving a motion relating to the order of business on the Notice Paper.

Senator Bob Brown to move (contingent on a minister at question time on any day asking that further questions be placed on notice):
That so much of the standing orders be suspended as would prevent the senator moving a motion that, at question time on any day, questions may be put to ministers until 28 questions, including supplementary questions, have been asked and answered.

Senator Bob Brown to move (contingent on any senator being refused leave to make a statement to the Senate):

That so much of the standing orders be suspended as would prevent that senator making that statement.

Senator Bob Brown to move (contingent on any senator being refused leave to table a document in the Senate):

That so much of the standing orders be suspended as would prevent the senator moving that the document be tabled.

Senator Fielding to move (contingent on the President presenting a report of the Auditor-General on any day or notifying the Senate that such a report had been presented under standing order 166):

That so much of the standing orders be suspended as would prevent the senator moving a motion to take note of the report and any senator speaking to it for not more than 10 minutes, with the total time for the debate not to exceed 60 minutes.

Senator Fielding to move (contingent on the Senate on any day concluding its consideration of any item of business and prior to the Senate proceeding to the consideration of another item of business):

That so much of the standing orders be suspended as would prevent the senator moving a motion relating to the order in which the documents are called on by the President.

Senator Fielding to move (contingent on a minister moving a motion that a bill be considered an urgent bill):

That so much of standing order 142 be suspended as would prevent debate taking place on the motion.

Senator Fielding to move (contingent on a minister moving a motion to specify time to be allotted to the consideration of a bill, or any stage of a bill):

That so much of standing order 142 be suspended as would prevent the motion being debated without limitation of time and each senator speaking for the time allotted by standing orders.

Senator Fielding to move (contingent on the chair declaring that the time allotted for the consideration of a bill, or any stage of a bill, has expired):

That so much of standing order 142 be suspended as would prevent further consideration of the bill, or the stage of the bill, without limitation of time or for a specified period.

Senator Fielding to move (contingent on the moving of a motion to debate a matter of urgency under standing order 75):

That so much of the standing orders be suspended as would prevent a senator moving an amendment to the motion.

Senator Fielding to move (contingent on the President proceeding to the placing of business on any day):

That so much of the standing orders be suspended as would prevent the senator moving a motion relating to the order of business on the Notice Paper.

Senator Fielding to move (contingent on a minister at question time on any day asking that further questions be placed on notice):

That so much of the standing orders be suspended as would prevent the senator moving a motion that, at question time on any day, questions may be put to ministers until 28 questions,
including supplementary questions, have been asked and answered.

Senator Fielding to move (contingent on any senator being refused leave to make a statement to the Senate):

That so much of the standing orders be suspended as would prevent that senator making that statement.

Senator Fielding to move (contingent on any senator being refused leave to table a document in the Senate):

That so much of the standing orders be suspended as would prevent the senator moving that the document be tabled.

Senator Allison to move (contingent on the President presenting a report of the Auditor-General on any day or notifying the Senate that such a report had been presented under standing order 166):

That so much of the standing orders be suspended as would prevent the senator moving a motion to take note of the report and any senator speaking to it for not more than 10 minutes, with the total time for the debate not to exceed 60 minutes.

Senator Allison to move (contingent on the Senate on any day concluding its consideration of any item of business and prior to the Senate proceeding to the consideration of another item of business):

That so much of the standing orders be suspended as would prevent the senator moving a motion relating to the conduct of the business of the Senate or to provide for the consideration of any matter.

Senator Allison to move (contingent on the Senate proceeding to the consideration of government documents):

That so much of the standing orders relating to the consideration of government documents be suspended as would prevent the senator moving a motion relating to the order in which the documents are called on by the President.

Senator Allison to move (contingent on a minister moving a motion that a bill be considered an urgent bill):

That so much of standing order 142 be suspended as would prevent debate taking place on the motion.

Senator Allison to move (contingent on a minister moving a motion to specify time to be allotted to the consideration of a bill, or any stage of a bill):

That so much of standing order 142 be suspended as would prevent the motion being debated without limitation of time and each senator speaking for the time allotted by standing orders.

Senator Allison to move (contingent on a minister at question time on any day asking that further questions be placed on notice):

That so much of the standing orders be suspended as would prevent the senator moving a motion that, at question time on any day, questions may be put to ministers until 28 questions, including supplementary questions, have been asked and answered.
Senator Allison to move (contingent on any senator being refused leave to make a statement to the Senate):

That so much of the standing orders be suspended as would prevent that senator making that statement.

Senator Allison to move (contingent on any senator being refused leave to table a document in the Senate):

That so much of the standing orders be suspended as would prevent the senator moving that the document be tabled.

Senator Scullion to move (contingent on the President presenting a report of the Auditor-General on any day or notifying the Senate that such a report had been presented under standing order 166):

That so much of the standing orders be suspended as would prevent the senator moving a motion to take note of the report and any senator speaking to it for not more than 10 minutes, with the total time for the debate not to exceed 60 minutes.

Senator Scullion to move (contingent on the Senate on any day concluding its consideration of any item of business and prior to the Senate proceeding to the consideration of another item of business):

That so much of the standing orders be suspended as would prevent the senator moving a motion relating to the conduct of the business of the Senate or to provide for the consideration of any matter.

Senator Scullion to move (contingent on the Senate proceeding to the consideration of government documents):

That so much of the standing orders relating to the consideration of government documents be suspended as would prevent the senator moving a motion relating to the order in which the documents are called on by the President.

Senator Scullion to move (contingent on a minister moving a motion that a bill be considered an urgent bill):

That so much of standing order 142 be suspended as would prevent debate taking place on the motion.

Senator Scullion to move (contingent on a minister moving a motion to specify time to be allotted to the consideration of a bill, or any stage of a bill):

That so much of standing order 142 be suspended as would prevent the motion being debated without limitation of time and each senator speaking for the time allotted by standing orders.

Senator Scullion to move (contingent on the chair declaring that the time allotted for the consideration of a bill, or any stage of a bill, has expired):

That so much of standing order 142 be suspended as would prevent further consideration of the bill, or the stage of the bill, without limitation of time or for a specified period.

Senator Scullion to move (contingent on the motion of a motion to debate a matter of urgency under standing order 75):

That so much of the standing orders be suspended as would prevent a senator moving an amendment to the motion.

Senator Scullion to move (contingent on the President proceeding to the placing of business on any day):

That so much of the standing orders be suspended as would prevent the senator moving a motion relating to the order of business on the Notice Paper.

Senator Scullion to move (contingent on a minister at question time on any day asking that further questions be placed on notice):

That so much of the standing orders be suspended as would prevent the senator moving a motion that, at question time on any day, questions may be put to ministers until 28 questions, including supplementary questions, have been asked and answered.

Senator Scullion to move (contingent on any senator being refused leave to make a statement to the Senate):
That so much of the standing orders be suspended as would prevent that senator making that statement.

Senator Scullion to move (contingent on any senator being refused leave to table a document in the Senate):

That so much of the standing orders be suspended as would prevent the senator moving that the document be tabled.

Senator Chris Evans to move on the next day of sitting:

That—

Today we honour the Indigenous peoples of this land, the oldest continuing cultures in human history.

We reflect on their past mistreatment.

We reflect in particular on the mistreatment of those who were Stolen Generations – this blighted chapter in our nation’s history.

The time has now come for the nation to turn a new page in Australia’s history by righting the wrongs of the past and so moving forward with confidence to the future.

We apologise for the laws and policies of successive Parliaments and governments that have inflicted profound grief, suffering and loss on these our fellow Australians.

We apologise especially for the removal of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children from their families, their communities and their country.

For the pain, suffering and hurt of these Stolen Generations, their descendants and for their families left behind, we say sorry.

To the mothers and the fathers, the brothers and the sisters, for the breaking up of families and communities, we say sorry.

And for the indignity and degradation thus inflicted on a proud people and a proud culture, we say sorry.

We the Parliament of Australia respectfully request that this apology be received in the spirit in which it is offered as part of the healing of the nation.

For the future we take heart; resolving that this new page in the history of our great continent can now be written.

We today take this first step by acknowledging the past and laying claim to a future that embraces all Australians.

A future where this Parliament resolves that the injustices of the past must never, never happen again.

A future where we harness the determination of all Australians, Indigenous and non-Indigenous, to close the gap that lies between us in life expectancy, educational achievement and economic opportunity.

A future where we embrace the possibility of new solutions to enduring problems where old approaches have failed.

A future based on mutual respect, mutual resolve and mutual responsibility.

A future where all Australians, whatever their origins, are truly equal partners, with equal opportunities and with an equal stake in shaping the next chapter in the history of this great country, Australia.

Senator Bob Brown to move on the next day of sitting:

That paragraph 10 of the Government’s notice of motion no. 1 be amended in the following terms: After the words: ‘We the Parliament of Australia’ insert ‘commit to offering just compensation to all those who suffered loss and’.

Senator Fielding to move on the next day of sitting:

That the following bill be introduced: A Bill for an Act for the administration of poker machine harm reduction tax and the establishment of the Poker Machine Harm Reduction Transition Fund, and for related purposes. Poker Machine Harm Reduction Tax (Administration) Bill 2008.
Senator Bob Brown to move on 14 February 2008:

That the following bill be introduced: A Bill for an Act to repeal the Euthanasia Laws Act 1997, and for related purposes. Rights of the Terminally Ill (Euthanasia Laws Repeal) Bill 2008.

Senator MURRAY (Western Australia) (5.15 pm)—At the request of Senator Bartlett, I give notice that, on the next day of sitting, he will move:

That the following bill be introduced: A Bill for an Act to amend the Defence Act 1903 to provide for parliamentary approval of overseas service by members of the Defence Force, and for related purposes. Defence Amendment (Parliamentary Approval of Overseas Services) Bill 2008.

Senator Bob Brown to move on 14 February 2008:

That the Senate—

(a) notes the Reserve Bank of Australia’s concern about ‘significant inflation pressures’ and the Rudd Government’s call for wage restraint from Australian workers; and

(b) acknowledges that parliamentarians should lead by example in that wage restraint.

Senator Milne to move on 14 February 2008:

That the Senate—

(a) notes that: 

(i) in December 2007, the Prime Minister (Mr Rudd) said that the Government believe that ‘climate change represents one of the greatest moral, economic and environmental challenges of our age’.

(ii) on 6 February 2008, the Minister for Finance and Deregulation (Mr Tanner) announced funding cuts to climate-related programs, including $3 million from the Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation’s Research Vessel Southern Surveyor, $6 million from the Biodiversity Hotspots program and $42 million from the Renewable Remote Power Generation Program, and

(iii) in 2007, the Institute for Sustainable Futures at the University of Technology in Sydney calculated that perverse subsidies supporting fossil fuel industries amounted to between $6.4 billion and $7.2 billion in the 2005-06 financial year; and

(b) calls on the Government to phase out perverse subsidies to the fossil fuel industry and to reverse its decision to cut funding
to research into climate change science and renewable energy programs.

BUSINESS

Rearrangement

Senator LUDWIG (Queensland—Manager of Government Business in the Senate) (5.15 pm)—by leave—I move:

(1) That the Senate meet on Wednesday, 13 February, at 9.30 am.

(2) That, recognising the historic importance of a National Apology to the Stolen Generations, the first item of business after prayers shall be consideration of government business notice of motion no. 1 proposing a National Apology to the Stolen Generations.

(3) That only the leaders of each party represented in the Senate may speak to the motion, and that each leader may speak for no more than 20 minutes.

(4) That, immediately after all of the leaders have spoken, the question for the resolution shall be put.

(5) That consideration of matters of public interest not occur at 12.45 pm, and that consideration of government business continue till 2 pm.

Senator ELLISON (Western Australia—Manager of Opposition Business in the Senate) (5.15 pm)—The opposition does not oppose this motion. However, I point out that there was an amendment to paragraph (2), inserting the reason why this should be given such priority. Obviously, it is a matter of history and that is why the words ‘That, recognising the historic importance of a National Apology to the Stolen Generations, the first item of business’ are included. I want to make that clear to the Senate.

The other aspect is that this is unprecedented in nature due to the fact that we will be having a debate with a limited number of speakers. The motion will then be moved and, later on, the debate will continue under the guise of ‘taking note’. That is unprecedented and, for the record—quite separate from the subject matter, which is an important issue—it should be recognised that this is an unprecedented procedure being used on a historic occasion. People who look back on this measure and the way it was dealt with procedurally should not take this as a precedent for the future. This is a course taken only due to the unique issue that we are dealing with. Normal procedure in the Senate is to have a debate. Once everyone who wishes to participate in that debate has spoken, the motion is put and then voted upon. That is the normal procedure. In this case, it will be different. We appreciate why and we have agreed to that, but, just for the record, we believe that the points I have made should be spelt out for posterity.

Senator BOB BROWN (Tasmania—Leader of the Australian Greens) (5.17 pm)—On behalf of the Greens, I want to concur with the Leader of the Opposition but go further and say that we do not support the arrangement which effectively means that those senators who speak after the vote is taken will have their contribution to this historic debate downgraded. There is no way that that will not occur. Every senator is elected equal to this place and every senator has an equal right to contribute to this debate. At the end, the debate should go to a vote, not least because of but most because of the historic nature of the move to extend an apology to the stolen generations.

I am very concerned that there is a lack of respect for this chamber in this move by the government. We all have a right as senators to contribute to something as important as this. We know that the procedure tomorrow is being tightly controlled by the government, and we wish the government well. I will be contributing to the congratulations to the government on making this move, but the process in here is not right. It should not be depriving every senator of their contribution to this historic debate. It was simply a matter
of the government scheduling the final vote to be taken on Thursday or giving everybody a five-minute contribution. We could have finished it tomorrow afternoon, but the government, in the process it has set out, is taking away from the due respect that every senator has a right to speak in this place. While we support the motion to bring on the matter for debate tomorrow, we do not support that component. I put on the record that we do not support the component which says that those senators who contribute after the vote will effectively be doing so as also-rans.

Senator CHRIS EVANS (Western Australia—Leader of the Government in the Senate) (5.20 pm)—I just want to make a couple of comments in response. I thank the chamber for the cooperation shown in terms of support for this motion. I understand that the procedure is unusual, but, as Senator Ellison quite rightly pointed out, this is a historic occasion. We have attempted to get the cooperation of the Senate in order to do this in a proper way and to show proper respect for those people who are waiting for the apology. I appreciate that Senator Minchin and other party leaders have shown cooperation on that. I understand, with 28 votes in this chamber, that I am not capable of delivering that on behalf of the government—that it requires the cooperation of others. I put on record my appreciation of that and the indication of support for the motion.

Senator Bob Brown, it is not a question of not respecting the chamber. When we discussed this at a meeting of the leaders and whips, we all understood that it is actually a question of respecting those Indigenous people to whom we apologise.

Senator Bob Brown—We can respect those.

Senator CHRIS EVANS—Senator Brown, you were represented at the meeting and we just came to the conclusion that the best way was to have some finality to the issue on the day when the apology was made in the House of Representatives and that we did so in the Senate at the same time. That was the consensus that we reached. As I said, I appreciate the cooperation on that matter. What we have done in moving a second motion, effectively noting the apology, is try to facilitate the ability of all senators to contribute to the debate about the apology and to express their views on it. I know it is an unusual method, but it met the two requirements that we sought to achieve: firstly, to finalise the apology—have the expression of the view of the parliament on the day when the House of Representatives and the Senate debate the issue; and, secondly, to ensure that every senator has the ability to contribute to the debate.

There are a lot of government senators who want to speak, but the reality is that if we allow a full debate on the Wednesday, given the normal scheduling of events, it would not conclude on the Wednesday but would roll over to Thursday. If everyone who wanted to speak did speak, potentially it might have to then be deferred until we return in three or four weeks time. Clearly that is not an appropriate way to proceed.

I think we have come to a reasonable compromise. I understand the concerns expressed. I do not think in any way the contributions of senators later on tomorrow will be downgraded. They will be in the Hansard; they will be an expression of their views. I know Labor senators will take the opportunity to speak and I certainly will not devalue any of the contributions that are made. So I think it is a question on this occasion of balancing the respect for the institution of the Senate and its procedures with the respect for those to whom we seek to apologise on behalf of the nation tomorrow. I think we have...
got the balance right, and I appreciate the support of the chamber.

Senator BARTLETT (Queensland) (5.23 pm)—I wanted to put briefly the Democrats’ perspective on this issue. I think, frankly, Senator Evans has got it about right. It is not an ideal process but it is an unusual arrangement, as I think has been said in another context. This apology is not about all of us getting a say; this apology is for Indigenous Australians. Obviously it is important what is said in this chamber and what is decided by this chamber and in the other place, but what is also extremely important is the experiences of so many Indigenous Australians, particularly members of the stolen generations themselves and what they experience tomorrow in particular. The role the Senate plays in debating this motion, and I assume in passing it, is just one part of that wider experience and the wider impact it will have on them.

I think it is right to suggest that this should not become a precedent as a matter of course. These are an unusual set of circumstances but there will be, of course, opportunities for all of us to put our views before this chamber, not just about this motion but the wider issues regarding the stolen generations, as I and many in the Democrats have for many years and as others will continue to do. When we are talking about a historic, unique and formal type of process and motion such as this, I think it is understandable to need to take into account not just our needs as a chamber but what works best, particularly for the many Indigenous people who are looking to tomorrow with great anticipation. That role should not be forgotten.

I would also note that my understanding is that, whilst less than ideal, it is still somewhat better than what is being proposed in the House of Representatives, where I think it is just the Leader of the Opposition and the Prime Minister and nobody else, neither Independents nor the National Party, who will get a guernsey at all there. What we have is a slight improvement on that and at least a recognition of the full diversity of voices who are getting an opportunity to be heard through the party representative structure. I think it is satisfactory given the context and is a unique set of circumstances. But, as all senators would appreciate, it certainly will not be the last time that the Democrats or anybody else, I imagine, hopefully, will be debating these issues, because there is a lot of other unfinished business regarding the stolen generations and the Bringing them home report and we need to be continuing to debate that in this chamber. The formal resolution tomorrow is a unique circumstance and, given the context and the other activities that are happening around here and in this house, as opposed to in this chamber, I think it is a reasonable compromise.

Question agreed to.

**DOCUMENTS**

**Tabling**

The PRESIDENT—Pursuant to standing orders 38 and 166, I present documents listed on today’s Order of Business at items 11 (a) to (f) which were presented to the President, the Deputy President and temporary chairs of committees since the Senate last sat. In accordance with the terms of the standing orders, the publication of the documents was authorised.

The list read as follows—

**Documents certified by the President**

Department of the Senate—Report for 2006-07 (received 15 October 2007)

Department of Parliamentary Services—Report for 2006-07 (received 26 October 2007)
Parliamentary Service Commissioner—Report for 2006-07 (received 26 October 2007)

Committee reports and related documents
Parliamentary Joint Committee on Intelligence and Security—Report—Review of the re-listing of three terrorist organisations (received 27 September 2007)
Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade Committee—Interim report—Changing nature of Australia’s involvement in peacekeeping operations (received 19 October 2007)
Community Affairs Committee—Budget estimates 2007-08—Additional information received between 13 September and 25 October 2007 [Health and Ageing portfolio and Families, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs portfolio] (received 26 October 2007)
Economics Committee—Budget estimates 2007-08—Additional information received between 20 September and 25 October 2007 [Treasury portfolio] (received 26 October 2007)
Finance and Public Administration Committee—Budget estimates 2007-08—Additional information received between 20 September and 24 October 2007 (received 19 November 2007)
Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade Committee—Budget estimates 2007-08—Additional information received between 20 September and 23 November 2007 (received 23 November 2007)
Standing Committee of Senators’ Interests—Register of senators’ interests incorporating statements of registrable interests and notifications of alterations of interests of senators lodged between 19 June and 7 December 2007 (received 11 December 2007)
Economics Committee—Budget estimates 2007-08—Additional information received between 26 October 2007 and 17 January 2008 [Treasury portfolio] (received 18 January 2008)
Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport Committee—Additional estimates 2006-07—Additional information received between 14 August 2007 and 31 January 2008 [Transport and Regional Services portfolio] (received 31 January 2008)
Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport Committee—Budget estimates 2007-08—Additional information received between 18 September 2007 and 31 January 2008 [Transport and Regional Services portfolio] (received 31 January 2008)
Economics Committee—Interim report—Australian Securities and Investments Commission (Fair Bank and Credit Card Fees) Amendment Bill 2007 and the National Market Driven Energy Efficiency Target Bill 2007, together with submissions received by the committee (received 11 February 2008)

Government documents
Medibank Private Limited—Report for 2006-07 (received 10 October 2007)
Australian Bureau of Statistics—Report for 2006-07 (received 11 October 2007)
Commissioner for Superannuation (ComSuper)—Report for 2006-07 (received 11 October 2007)
Gene Technology Regulator—Report for 2006-07 (received 11 October 2007)
Report of the review of the prostheses listing arrangements (received 15 October 2007)

Director of National Parks—Report for 2006-07 (received 15 October 2007)

Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority—Report for 2006-07 (received 15 October 2007)

Crimes Act 1914—Controlled operations—Report for 2006-07 (received 16 October 2007)

Australian Trade Commission (AUSTRADE)—Report for 2006-07 (received 16 October 2007)

Office of Parliamentary Counsel—Report for 2006-07 (received 16 October 2007)

Australian Postal Corporation (Australia Post)—Report for 2006-07 (received 17 October 2007)

ASC Pty Ltd—Report for 2006-07 (received 17 October 2007)

Defence Force Retirement and Death Benefits Authority—Report for 2006-07 (received 17 October 2007)

Army and Air Force Canteen Service Board of Management (trading as Frontline Defence Services)—Report for 2006-07, including report on the equal employment (EEO) management plan (received 17 October 2007)

Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry—Report for 2006-07 (received 17 October 2007)


Export Finance and Insurance Corporation (EFIC)—Report for 2006-07 (received 18 October 2007)

Australian Government Solicitor—Report for 2006-07 (received 18 October 2007)

Federal Court of Australia—Report for 2006-07 (received 18 October 2007)

Department of the Environment and Water Resources—Report for 2006-07 (received 19 October 2007)


Private Health Insurance Administration Council—Report for 2006-07 (19 October 2007)

Film Australia Limited—Report for 2006-07 (received 19 October 2007)

Australian Film Commission—Report for 2006-07 (received 19 October 2007)

Veterans—Review Board—Report for 2006-07 (received 19 October 2007)

Attorney-General’s Department—Report for 2006-07 (received 19 October 2007)

Future Fund Management Agency and Future Fund Board of Guardians—Report for 2006-07 (received 19 October 2007)

Australian Film, Television and Radio School—Report 2006-07 (received 22 October 2007)

Film Finance Corporation Australia Limited—Report for 2006-07 (received 22 October 2007)

Repatriation Medical Authority—Report for 2006-07 (received 22 October 2007)

Repatriation Commission, Department of Veterans’ Affairs and the National Treatment Monitoring Committee—Reports for 2006-07 (received 22 October 2007)

Military Rehabilitation and Compensation Commission—Report for 2006-07 (received 22 October 2007)

Australian Customs Service—Report for 2006-07 (received 23 October 2007)

Australian Wine and Brandy Corporation—Report for 2006-07 (received 23 October 2007)

Australian Sports Anti-Doping Authority—Report for 2006-07 (received 23 October 2007)

National Residue Survey—Report for 2006-07 (received 23 October 2007)

Interactive Gambling Act 2001—Report for 2006 on the operation of the prohibition on interactive gambling advertisements (received 23 October 2007)

Australia Council—Report for 2006-07 (received 24 October 2007)

Australian Federal Police—Report for 2006-07 (received 24 October 2007)

Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority—Report for 2006-07 (received 24 October 2007)

Australian Reward Investment Alliance (ARIA)—Report for 2006-07 (received 24 October 2007)

Commonwealth Grants Commission—Report for 2006-07 (received 24 October 2007)

Food Standards Australia New Zealand—Report for 2006-07 (received 24 October 2007)

Rural Industries Research and Development Corporation—Report for 2006-07 (received 24 October 2007)

Department of the Treasury—Report for 2006-07 (received 24 October 2007)

Wet Tropics Management Authority—Report for 2006-07, together with State of the Wet Tropics report for 2006-07 (received 24 October 2007)

Grains Research and Development Corporation—Report for 2006-07 (received 25 October 2007)


Military Superannuation and Benefits Board of Trustees—Report for 2006-07 (received 25 October 2007)

Office of the Official Secretary to the Governor-General—Report for 2006-07 (received 25 October 2007)


Australian Institute of Criminology and Criminology Research Council—Reports for 2006-07 (received 25 October 2007)

National Native Title Tribunal—Report for 2006-07 (received 25 October 2007)

Director of Public Prosecutions—Report for 2006-07 (26 October 2007)

Bundanon Trust—Report for 2006-07 (received 26 October 2007)

Public Lending Right Committee—Report for 2006-07 (received 26 October 2007)

Fisheries Research and Development Corporation—Report for 2006-07 (received 26 October 2007)

Forest and Wood Products Research and Development Corporation—Report for 2006-07 (received 26 October 2007)

Centrelink—Report for 2006-07 (received 26 October 2007)

Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation (CSIRO)—Report for 2006-07 (received 26 October 2007)

National Water Commission—Report for 2006-07 (received 26 October 2007)

Family Law Council—Report for 2006-07 (received 26 October 2007)

CrimTrac Agency—Report for 2006-07 (received 26 October 2007)

Australian Electoral Commission—Report for 2006-07 (received 29 October 2007)

National Australia Day Council—Report for 2006-07 (received 29 October 2007)

Health Services Australia Group (HAS Group)—Report for 2006-07 (received 29 October 2007)

Bureau of Meteorology—Report for 2006-07 (received 29 October 2007)

Department of Health and Ageing—Report for 2006-07 (received 29 October 2007)

Grape and Wine Research and Development Corporation—Report for 2006-07 (received 29 October 2007)

Aged Care Standards and Accreditation Agency Limited—Report for 2006-07 (received 29 October 2007)

Department of Veterans’ Affairs—Data-matching program—Report on progress 2005-07 (received 29 October 2007)

Australian Transaction Reports and Analysis Centre (AUSTRAC)—Report for 2006-07 (received 29 October 2007)

Acts Interpretation Act—Statement pursuant to section 34C(6) relating to extension of specified period for presentation of a report—
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Australian Security Intelligence Organisation—Report for 2006-07 (received 31 October 2007)


Australian Research Council—Report for 2006-07 (received 31 October 2007)

Land and Water Resources Research and Development Corporation (Land and Water Australia)—Report for 2006-07 (received 1 November 2007)

Australian Nuclear Science and Technology Organisation (ANSTO)—Report for 2006-07 (received 2 November 2007)

Aboriginal Hostels Limited—Report for 2006-07 (received 2 November 2007)

Crimes Act 1914—Authorisations for the acquisition and use of assumed identities for 2006-07—Australian Customs Service (received 2 November 2007)

Indigenous Land Corporation—Report for 2006-07 (received 2 November 2007)

Department of Families, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs—Report for 2006-07 (received 2 November 2007)

Special Broadcasting Service Corporation (SBS)—Report for 2006-07 (received 2 November 2007)

Australian Centre for International Agricultural Research—Report for 2006-07 (received 2 November 2007)

Family Court of Australia—Report for 2006-07 (received 7 November 2007)

Teaching Australia: Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership Limited—Report for 2006-07 (received 7 November 2007)

Sugar Research and Development Corporation—Report for 2006-07 (received 8 November 2007)

Cotton Research and Development Corporation—Report for 2006-07 (received 9 November 2007)

Customs Act 1901—Conduct of customs officers [Managed deliveries]—Report for 2006-07 (received 9 November 2007)

Aged Care Act 1997—Report for 2006-07 on the operation of the Act (received 9 November 2007)

Australian Institute of Family Studies—Report for 2006-07 (received 12 November 2007)

Native Title Act 1993—Central Land Council—Report for 2006-07 (received 12 November 2007)

Native Title Act 1993—Northern Land Council—Report for 2006-07 (received 12 November 2007)

Anindilyakwa Land Council—Report for 2006-07 (received 12 November 2007)

Australian Institute of Marine Science—Report for 2006-07 (received 12 November 2007)

Australian Fisheries Management Authority—Report for 2006-07 (received 13 November 2007)

Australian Sports Commission—Report for 2006-07 (received 13 November 2007)

Royal Australian Air Force Veterans—Residences Trust Fund—Report for 2006-07 (received 13 November 2007)

The Carrick Institute for Learning and Teaching in Higher Education Limited—Report for 2006-07 (received 14 November 2007)

Torres Strait Regional Authority—Report for 2006-07 (received 14 November 2007)

Natural Heritage Trust—Report for 2005-06 (received 19 November 2007)

Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet—Report for 2006-07 (received 19 November 2007)

Inspector-General of Intelligence and Security—Report for 2006-07 (received 20 November 2007)


Administrative Review Council—Report for 2006-07 (received 21 November 2007)
Office of Film and Literature Classification—Classification Board and Classification Review Board—Reports for 2006-07 (received 21 November 2007)

Industry Research and Development Board—Report for 2006-07 (received 22 November 2007)

Murray-Darling Basin Commission—Report for 2006-07 (received 22 November 2007)

Defence Housing Authority—Statement of corporate intent 2007-08 (received 23 November 2007)

Aged Care Act 1997—Report for 2006-07 on the operation of the Act—Correction (received 23 November 2007)

Insolvency and Trustee Service Australia—Report for 2006-07 (received 23 November 2007)


Acts Interpretation Act—Statement pursuant to section 34C(6) relating to extension of specified period for presentation of a report—Australian Public Service Commissioner’s annual report 2006-07 (received 23 November 2007)

Public Service Commissioner—Report for 2006-07, together with the report of the Merit Protection Commissioner (received 26 November 2007)

Acts Interpretation Act—Statement pursuant to section 34C(6) relating to extension of specified period for presentation of a report—Department of Employment and Workplace Relations annual report 2006-07 (received 26 November 2007)

Acts Interpretation Act—Statement pursuant to section 34C(6) relating to extension of specified period for presentation of a report—Comcare annual report 2006-07 (received 26 November 2007)

Acts Interpretation Act—Statement pursuant to section 34C(6) relating to extension of specified period for presentation of a report—Australian Industrial Relations Commission and Australian Industrial Registry—Reports for 2006-07 (received 26 November 2007)

Acts Interpretation Act—Statement pursuant to section 34C(6) relating to extension of specified period for presentation of a report—Workplace Ombudsman—Report for 2006-07 (received 26 November 2007)


Australian Prudential Regulation Authority—Report for 2006-07 (received 28 November 2007)

Inspector-General of Taxation—Report for 2006-07 (received 28 November 2007)

Superannuation Complaints Tribunal—Report for 2006-07 (received 28 November 2007)

Tiwi Land Council—Report for 2006-07 (received 30 November 2007)

Australian Institute of Health and Welfare—Australia’s welfare 2007 (received 6 December 2007)


Australian Public Service Commission—State of the service—Report for 2006-07 (received 10 December 2007)

Financial Management and Accountability Act—Statement under subsection 55(3) relating to the delay in provision of the 2006-07 Consolidated Financial Statements to the Auditor-General (received 11 December 2007)


Department of Immigration and Citizenship—Report for 2006-07 (received 13 December 2007)
Private Health Insurance Administration Council—Operations of the Private Health Insurers—Report for 2006-07 (received 14 December 2007)

Tourism Australia—Report for 2006-07 (received 19 December 2007)

Department of Finance and Deregulation—Consolidated financial statements for the year ended 30 June 2007 (received 19 December 2007)

Commissioner of Taxation—Report for 2006-07 (received 20 December 2007)

Productivity Commission—Report No. 42—Safeguards inquiry into the import of pigmeat: Accelerated report (received 20 December 2007)

Department of Employment and Workplace Relations—Report for 2006-07 (received 20 December 2007)

Australian Industrial Relations Commission and Australian Industrial Registry—Reports for 2006-07 (received 20 December 2007)

Workplace Ombudsman—Report for 2006-07 (received 20 December 2007)

Employment Advocate—Report for 2006-07 (received 20 December 2007)

Defence Force Remuneration Tribunal—Report for 2006-07 (received 20 December 2007)

Coal Mining Industry (Long Service Leave Funding) Corporation—Report for 2006-07 (received 20 December 2007)

Department of Finance and Deregulation—Consolidated financial statements for the year ended 30 June 2007—Correction (received 20 December 2007)

Migration Review Tribunal and Refugee Review Tribunal—Report for 2006-07 (received 21 December 2007)

Comcare—Report for 2006-07 (received 21 December 2007)

Safety, Rehabilitation and Compensation Commission—Report for 2006-07 (received 21 December 2007)

Seafarers Safety, Rehabilitation and Compensation Authority (Seacare)—Report for 2006-07 (received 21 December 2007)

Research Involving Human Embryos Act 2002—National Health and Medical Research Council—NHMRC Embryo Research Licensing Committee—Report for the period 1 April to 30 September 2007 (received 21 December 2007)

National Capital Authority—Report for 2006-07 (received 21 December 2007)

Equal Opportunity for Women in the Workplace Agency—Report for 2006-07 (received 3 January 2008)

Australian Fair Pay Commission—Report for 2006-07 (received 9 January 2008)

Australian Fair Pay Commission Secretariat—Report for 2006-07 (received 9 January 2008)

Indigenous Business Australia—Report for 2006-07 (received 10 January 2008)

Migration Agents Registration Authority—Report for 2006-07 (received 15 January 2008)


International Air Services Commission—Report for 2006-07 (received 17 January 2008)


Innovation Australia—Activities of the Venture Capital Registration Board—Report for 2006-07 (received 21 January 2008)

Australian Rail Track Corporation Ltd—Report for 2006-07 (received 22 January 2008)

Private Health Insurance Administration Council—Operations of the Private Health Insurers—Report for 2006-07—Correction (received 23 January 2008)

Parliamentarians—travel paid by the Department of Finance and Deregulation—January to June 2007 (received 24 January 2008)

Former Parliamentarians—travel paid by the Department of Finance and Deregulation—January to June 2007 (received 24 January 2008)

Parliamentarians—overseas study travel reports—January to June 2007 (received 24 January 2008)
Department of the Treasury—Tax expenditures statement 2007, January 2008 (received 25 January 2008)
Albury-Wodonga Development Corporation—Report for 2006-07 (received 29 January 2008)
Australian Industry Development Corporation—Report for 2006-07 (received 29 January 2008)
National Transport Commission—Report for 2006-07 (received 5 February 2008)
Civil Aviation Safety Authority—Report for 2006-07 (received 5 February 2008)
Indigenous education and training—Report for 2005 (received 6 February 2008)
National Health and Medical Research Council—Report for 2006-07 (received 7 February 2008)
Acts Interpretation Act—Statement pursuant to section 34C(6) relating to extension of specified period for presentation of a report—Authorisations for the acquisition and use of assumed identities—Report for 2006-07—Australian Crime Commission (received 8 February 2008)
Pharmaceutical Benefits Pricing Authority—Report for 2006-07 (received 11 February 2008)

Tabling of guidelines pursuant to an Act

Australian Security Intelligence Organisation. Attorney- General’s guidelines under section 8A (in relation to the performance by ASIO of its function of obtaining, correlating, evaluating and communicating intelligence relevant to security (including politically motivated violence)) (received 12 October 2007)

Reports of the Auditor-General

Audit report no. 7 of 2007-08. Performance audit—The Senate order for departmental and agency contracts (calendar year 2006 compliance) (received 27 September 2007)
Audit report no. 8 of 2007-08. Performance audit—Proof of identity for accessing Centrelink payments: Centrelink and the Department of Human Services (received 3 October 2007)
Audit report no. 9 of 2007-08. Performance audit—Australian apprenticeships: Department of Education, Science and Training (received 4 October 2007)
Audit report no. 10 of 2007-08. Performance audit—Whole of Government Indigenous service delivery arrangements (received 17 October 2007)
Audit report no. 11 of 2007-08. Performance audit—Management of the FFG capability upgrade: Department of Defence and the Defence Materiel Organisation (received 31 October 2007)
Audit report no. 12 of 2007-08. Performance audit—Administration of high risk income tax refunds in the individuals and micro enterprises market segments: Australian Taxation Office (received 1 November 2007)
Audit report no. 14 of 2007-08. Performance audit—Regional partnerships programme: Volume 1: Summary and recommendations; Volume 2: Main report; Volume 3: Project case studies: Department of Transport and Regional Services (received 15 November 2007)
Audit report no. 15 of 2007-08. Performance audit—Administration of Australian business number registrations: follow-up audit: Australian Taxation Office (received 29 November 2007)
Audit report no. 16 of 2007-08. Performance audit—Data integrity in the Child Support Agency: Child Support Agency and the Department of Human Services (received 30 November 2007)
Audit report no. 17 of 2007-08. Performance audit—Management of the IT refresh programme: Centrelink (received 19 December 2007)
Audit report no. 18 of 2007-08. Financial statement audit—Audits of the financial state-
ments of Australian government entities for the period ended 30 June 2007 (received 20 December 2007)

Audit report no. 19 of 2007-08. Performance audit—Administration of the automotive competitiveness and investment scheme: Department of Innovation, Industry, Science and Research; Australian Customs Service (received 22 January 2008)

Audit report no. 20 of 2007-08. Performance audit—Accuracy of Medicare claims processing: Medicare Australia (received 23 January 2008)

Audit report no. 21 of 2007-08. Performance audit—Regional delivery model for the Natural Heritage Trust and the National Action Plan Salinity and Water Quality: Department of the Environment, Water, Heritage and the Arts and the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry (received 7 February 2008)

**Statements of compliance with Senate orders**

Statements of compliance with the continuing order of the Senate of 30 May 1996, as amended on 3 December 1998, relating to indexed lists of files:

- Austrade (received 16 October 2007)
- Communications, Information Technology and the Arts portfolio agencies (received 16 October 2007)
- Department of Health and Ageing (received 16 October 2007)
- Transport and Regional Services portfolio agencies (received 16 October 2007)

Statement of compliance with the continuing order of the Senate of 20 June 2001, as amended on 27 September 2001 and 18 June, 26 June and 4 December 2003, relating to lists of contracts:

- Health and Ageing portfolio agencies (received 16 October 2007)

Ordered that the committee reports be printed.

Ordered that consideration of each of the committee reports tabled today be listed on the *Notice Paper* as a separate order of the day.

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**Tabling**

The PRESIDENT—I table the following documents:

- Report to the Senate on government responses outstanding to parliamentary committee reports
- Supplement to the 11th edition of Odgers’ *Australian Senate Practice – Updates to 31 December 2007*
- Business of the Senate: 1 January to 31 December 2007
- Questions on notice summary: 16 November 2004 to 15 October 2007
- Work of Committees: 1 January to 31 December 2007
- Consolidated Register of Senate Committee Reports: Volume 2 – 2004 to 2007
- Register of Senate Senior Executive Officers’ Interests, incorporating notifications of alterations of interests of senior executive officers lodged between 19 June and 7 December 2007

Senator O’BRIEN (Tasmania) (5.27 pm)—I move:

That the *Business of the Senate, Work of Committees* and the consolidated register of Senate committee reports be printed.

Question agreed to.

**CONDOLENCES**

Sergeant Matthew Locke
Trooper David Pearce
Private Luke Worsley

Senator CHRIS EVANS (Western Australia—Minister for Immigration and Citizenship) (5.28 pm)—by leave—I move:

That the Senate record its deep regret at the deaths in late 2007 of Sergeant Matthew Locke, Trooper David Pearce and Private Luke Worsley while on combat operations in Afghanistan and place on record its appreciation of their service to their country and tender its profound sympathy to their families in their bereavement.

Honourable senators—Hear, hear!

Question agreed to.
Hon. Kim Edward Beazley, AC
Former Senator the Hon. Robert Lindsay Collins, AO
Mr Leonard Joseph Keogh
Mr Kenneth Lionel Fry
Mr Peter James Andren
Ms Helen Mayer

The PRESIDENT (5.29 pm)—It is with deep regret that I inform the Senate of the death of a former senator and members:

(a) on 12 October 2007, the Honourable Kim Edward Beazley, AC, a member of the House of Representatives for the division of Fremantle, Western Australia, from 1945 to 1977;
(b) on 21 September 2007, Senator the Honourable Robert Lindsay Collins, AO, a senator for the Northern Territory from 1990 to 1998;
(c) on 10 October 2007, Leonard Joseph Keogh, a member for the division of Bowman, Queensland, from 1969 to 1975, and from 1983 to 1987;
(d) on 10 October 2007, Kenneth Lionel Fry, a member for the division of Fraser, Australian Capital Territory, from 1974 to 1984;
(e) on 3 November 2007, Peter James Andren, a member for the division of Calare, New South Wales, from 1996 to 2007; and
(f) on 7 February 2008, Helen Mayer, a member for the division of Chisholm, Victoria, from 1983 to 1987.

Hon. Kim Edward Beazley, AC

Senator CHRIS EVANS (Western Australia—Minister for Immigration and Citizenship) (5.30 pm)—I move:

That the Senate records its deep regret at the death, on 12 October 2007, of the Honourable Kim Edward Beazley, AC, former federal minister and member for Fremantle, and places on record its appreciation of his long meritorious public service and tenders its profound sympathy to his family.

Unlike the people referred to on some occasions in condolence motions, I actually knew Kim Beazley Sr. He was a learned and courteous man who continued to contribute to public life right up until his passing. He, of course, was a great Labor hero. In my youth he was one of the men who I looked up to. He was an inspiration to many young Labor people as they became interested in politics. I had the honour of attending his funeral, representing the Prime Minister, Kevin Rudd—as senators would understand, it was in the period leading up to the federal election. There was a very good attendance of current and former members of parliament from both sides of politics. We certainly appreciated that. Of course, former Prime Ministers Keating, Hawke and Whitlam all attended and the former Governor-General, Bill Hayden, was also there. I think that is a sign of the respect with which Kim Beazley Sr was held.

At the age of 28, he entered the House of Representatives as its youngest member, representing the Western Australian electorate of Fremantle. During his 32 years in parliament, Kim earned the respect of both sides of politics and was widely recognised as one of the best parliamentary debaters and orators of his time. Kim was a great Labor figure, often said to be the ‘conscience of the Labor Party’. His career was deeply influenced by his Christian faith and his passion for education and Indigenous issues. I think he would appreciate what the parliament intends to do tomorrow very much. He made a significant and lasting contribution in government and in opposition and has had a defining influence on policy both nationally and within the Labor Party. In 1979 he was awarded the Order of Australia. Kim Beazley Sr died in Perth on 12 October 2007 at the age of 90,
leaving a country so much the richer for his many years on earth.

In his early life, Kim had a sort of classic working-class upbringing and often went barefooted to school. In fact, when the Duke and Duchess of York visited his primary school in Fremantle in 1927 he was assigned to flag waving at the back because he had no shoes. Despite not being able to afford school shoes, his mother knew the value of something much more important—education. Kim would later say:

...we might have been bare-footed, but we could recite Wordsworth.

Kim topped the state in English and history and gained a scholarship to Perth Modern School, the alumni of a number of great Australians, including Sir Paul Hasluck, Dr ‘Nugget’ Coombs, Bob Hawke, John Stone and my partner, Miriam. He subsequently studied at Claremont Teachers’ College and then the University of Western Australia.

In 1937 he commenced work with the education department and taught successively at Richmond, a school in East Fremantle, Arthur River, Midland Junction and Claremont. At the time of his nomination for the Fremantle seat in 1945 he was living in Claremont and tutoring at Claremont Teachers’ Training College. He had also tutored at the University of Western Australia and became vice-president of the state school teachers’ union and a member of the Australian Teachers’ Federation.

Kim Beazley Sr first joined the ALP through the Labor Club of the University of WA and became a delegate to the metropolitan council and member of the state executive. He became the ALP senior vice-president and was a member of the federal executive of the ALP. In 1945, on the sudden death of the Prime Minister, John Curtin, he was endorsed for and won the seat of Fremantle. In a field of six candidates, he won the seat with an absolute majority of nearly 9,000 votes, and, at 28, became the youngest member of the House of Representatives. A year later he defeated his Liberal opponent in the 1946 general election by almost 20,000 votes. His majority went up and down over the years, but he continued to hold the seat strongly for Labor.

His youthful looks and intellect earned him the nickname of ‘the student prince’, but he was also known by some of his colleagues, not entirely charitably, as ‘the young Lochinvar’. Not surprisingly, when Kim Beazley Sr first entered parliament, he was immediately touted as having ministerial potential. When Labor won government under Gough Whitlam in 1972, Kim held the education portfolio throughout the government’s three-year span. Mungo MacCallum described Kim Beazley Sr as a ‘towering and intimidating figure with something of the style of an Old Testament prophet’. He was renowned for his deep Christian faith and strong moral stances on issues that led to some testing relationships with members of his own party.

Kim’s commitment to the Christian faith never wavered, even if politically it may not have been the most pragmatic thing for him to do. In 1953, Kim Beazley Sr became involved in the Moral Rearmament Movement and made a commitment to ‘concern myself daily with the challenge of how to live out God’s will and to turn the searchlight of absolute honesty onto my motives.’ He committed himself very much to the work of the Moral Rearmament Movement. Many within the Labor Party felt uneasy at Kim’s commitment to honesty and the Christian faith. Alan Reid, an influential correspondent of the time, wrote that Beazley was facing political destruction taking such a highly principled approach to politics. Reid wrote:

Powerful office-hungry individuals fear that his idealism and his current determination to pursue
truth, whatever the price, could cost the Labor Party the next election. The story they are assiduously and effectively peddling is, ‘Beazley has lost his balance.’

However, it was far from destroying Kim; he went on to become one of Australia’s most successful education ministers and played an influential role within the ALP. The election of the Whitlam government gave Kim Beazley Sr the opportunity, after 27 years in parliament, to make a real difference as education minister. Driven by his sense of fairness and equality, Kim Beazley Sr was responsible for some of the most influential education reforms in Australia’s history. Perhaps his crowning achievement in education was the abolition of university fees, to provide free education for a generation of tertiary students, of which I am one. Also, under his watch as education minister, enrolments in technical education leaped from 400,000 to 705,000.

Kim was also responsible for introducing government funding for both private and public schools. He said at the time, ‘The Constitution doesn’t say that the Commonwealth may give benefits to the states, but nothing to Catholics. What we must do is look at all Australian children as Commonwealth citizens, and meet their needs.’ Kim cared deeply for those most in need—in particular underprivileged children. He once said: ‘We love the brilliant child and the scholar, but what about the others—children who are physically, socially, or geographically handicapped, children who go to school without the precognitive use of speech because they were without books or intelligent conversation? These are my first priorities.’

As education minister, Kim implemented a range of Commonwealth programs to help Indigenous children, migrant children and children with special needs, as well as providing assistance for people to embark on technical and adult education. Kim’s work ethic and desire to make Australia’s education system more equitable were second to none. His work ethic once led to his collapsing of exhaustion after embarking on a barnstorming campaign which saw him speaking every night, jumping from state to state, to explain the Karmel committee recommendations to provide funding to government and non-government schools through a grants program.

As this parliament prepares to say sorry to a generation of people who were removed from their families as children, it is pertinent that Kim’s passion for the rights of Aboriginal people is acknowledged. Kim’s commitment to this issue was an enduring feature of his life, both in and out of parliament. In 1952, he was the first member of federal parliament to raise the issue of Aboriginal land rights but, as we know, it took years before anything was implemented. His passionate advocacy for Aboriginal rights inspired many. Former Western Australian Premier Geoff Gallop has said that he would never forget, as a student, listening to Mr Beazley Sr speak about Indigenous rights. Kim pushed for and was successful in having Aboriginal land rights installed into the Labor Party platform and was the parliamentary representative on the council of the Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies from 1964 to 1972. One of the first things he initiated as Minister for Education was to enable Aboriginal children to be taught in their own languages—with English as a second language—and within three years Aboriginal children around Australia were being taught in 22 of their own languages. Kim also introduced scholarships for Indigenous children to encourage and assist them to gain an education.

After his parliamentary career, Kim Beazley Sr did not stand down from public life. He headed a major ground-breaking inquiry into Western Australia’s education...
system, the results of which form the foundations of the current Western Australian education system. Kim chaired a joint parliamentary lay committee which investigated aspects of parliamentary privilege during the term of the Dowding WA state Labor government. He continued his passionate interest in Aboriginal rights and remained a very strong public advocate. He also kept a grassroots connection with the Labor Party: up to the age of 80, he and his partner, Betty, held branch meetings in his house in Cottesloe. Betty has remained active at the branch level to this day.

There is no doubt that Kim Edward Beazley was one of Australia’s most respected political postwar figures, not so much for the relatively brief yet remarkable achievements of his time as federal Minister for Education, but for his consistently righteous stand on issues affecting public life. On behalf of the government, I wish to offer our sincere thanks to a man who made such an enormous contribution to the parliament and to public life. Last year was a very difficult year for the Beazley family. Sadly, Kim Beazley Senior’s younger son, David, died last year as well. We extend our condolences to his wife, Betty, and to his children, Kim Beazley Jr and Merrilyn Wasson, and their respective families. They have much to be proud of on the passing of a very great Australian.

Senator MINCHIN (South Australia) (5.42 pm)—I have pleasure in rising on behalf of the coalition to support the motion by Senator Evans and extend our sympathies to the family of Kim Beazley Sr upon his very sad passing on 12 October 2007. There is no doubt that Kim Beazley was a true stalwart of the Labor Party. He had a tremendous political career. He was very well respected on all sides of politics, both during his long service as a member of the House of Representatives and in his retirement. It is certainly true that the Labor Party has lost one of its real gentlemen, and the Australian people have lost a very loyal former representative.

Senator Evans has detailed Mr Beazley’s long and distinguished political career, which I will not repeat. I note that he had probably one of the longest parliamentary careers in our history, and spent over one-third of his life in this place. Regrettably for him, he spent some 25 of his 32 years in opposition. He had the great misfortune that his career coincided with the long reign of the coalition under Sir Robert Menzies. How on earth anyone could put up with 25 years of opposition is certainly beyond me, so I applaud Mr Beazley’s clear resolve, tenacity and commitment to his cause. I think he was acknowledged by all sides of politics as a man of great principle, and he endeavoured to ensure that those principles guided his decision making. Indeed, many on our side of politics had great respect for his deep commitment to his Christian faith. That led to many coalition members of parliament having much in common with Kim Beazley on the great moral issues of our time. I should note that he also had, as a parent, the great good fortune to see his son Kim enter politics and have a very distinguished career as a senior figure in the Australian Labor Party. I think that Kim Beazley Jr shares many of his father’s great qualities and he is unlucky not to have had the opportunity to become Australia’s prime minister. Perhaps he will have an opportunity to serve Australia in some other capacity in the future.

At the time of Kim Beazley Senior’s death in October, former Prime Minister John Howard, who knew Kim Beazley well, highlighted his enormous respect for Kim’s great debating skills and his innate courtesy to the Australian people. John Howard, of course, overlapped with Kim Beazley—I think John’s first three years were Kim’s last three years—and he noted what many understood
then and understand now, that he was one of our great parliamentarians. He was also a great Australian, and, in my view, in honour of him we should all endeavour to conduct ourselves in our public lives in such a fashion as to ensure that the Commonwealth parliament continues to attract men and women of his great character.

To his wife, Betty, and to Kim, Merrilyn and their families the opposition places on record its appreciation of Kim’s long and meritorious public service and tenders its profound sympathy to them in their bereavement. We join with Senator Evans in also offering our condolences for the sad loss of David Beazley last year.

Senator FAULKNER (New South Wales—Special Minister of State and Cabinet Secretary) (5.46 pm)—When Kim Edward Beazley was elected to represent the Labor Party for the seat of Fremantle in 1945, succeeding John Curtin, he was 27 years old and the youngest member of the House of Representatives. When he retired in 1977, he was the longest serving member—from ‘student prince’, as he was once nicknamed, to the ‘father of the House’. But not all the parliamentary records Kim Beazley could claim were so enviable. As the Leader of the Opposition has said, of the 32 years Kim Beazley Sr spent in the parliament, 25 of them were in opposition. And they were all as a member for a Western Australian electorate. Every parliamentarian understands the pressure that distance and travel place on family life. For our colleagues from Western Australia those difficulties are proportionally greater.

Beazley wrote in his memoir that neither he nor his wife, Betty, had any idea at the beginning of his career how difficult it would be to combine family life with the demands of a political career. It was especially difficult in Beazley’s early years in parliament when the frugal Labor Prime Minister Ben Chifley restricted parliamentarians’ travel. Ironically, it was not until Labor lost government that Kim Beazley had access to improved parliamentary perks, as the newly elected Liberal government expected parliamentarians to have allowances and travel more in line with businessmen’s expense accounts than Chif’s more parsimonious standards. I am sure that Kim Beazley would have traded those perks any day for a return to office. But it would be 23 years before he would have the chance.

Nearly three decades in opposition indicates a certain undeniable endurance. It is a measure of not only Kim Edward Beazley’s endurance, but also his consistency that when he finally took his place on the government benches it was to introduce reforms addressing the issue that had first prompted his political involvement.

Like many Labor figures—like me, for example—Beazley’s path through tertiary education was made possible by his employment as a teacher. Even without the burden of fees at the University of Western Australia, the cost of books and other expenses were beyond the means of a young man from a battling family during the Depression. Beazley took a monitorship at a state school and then a course at teachers training school; he was paid £60 in return for a commitment to teach for five years. He discovered that he loved teaching.

There are those in political life who have always aimed to become reformers, whose ambition for social change has guided all their choices. And there are those whose political career emerges, almost taking them unaware, from a deep and genuine commitment to an issue dear to them. Kim Beazley Sr was one of the latter.

His own experience, from a boy standing in the back row, as the Leader of the Gov-
ernment has said, for the royal visit with the other children whose parents could not afford shoes, to the future unlocked for him at Perth Modern School, to teaching in the state school system, left Beazley with a powerful understanding of the role education played in transforming lives, and an abiding conviction of the responsibility government bore in making that transforming opportunity available to all Australians.

Struck by the vast difference between education opportunities available in the state’s public schools and private schools, Kim Beazley joined the Australian Labor Party with the aim, he later wrote, of bringing to Australia high-quality universal education. His education in politics followed.

Western Australia was not immune to the thorny issue of state aid. Beazley found there was no great political will in the Western Australian Labor Party at that time to wade into the debate of funding, or lack thereof, for the Catholic school system. He came to believe that the antipathy between the government and non-government systems was the root cause of successive governments’ inability to provide high-quality universal education. It took nearly 30 years but before the end of his parliamentary career Beazley was able to say that he had overcome that obstacle and achieved the aims that first took him into politics.

He was a minister for only three years but in those three years he had responsibility for what became some of the Whitlam government’s most enduring and iconic reforms. As Minister for Education, Kim Beazley oversaw the ending of the funding divide that separated private and public schools and the introduction of free tertiary education. Those policy reforms changed the landscape of Australian education. Two ideas were firmly enshrined in Australia’s education policy: the principle that university access ought to depend on merit, not wealth; and the idea that the government is responsible for ensuring the quality of education for all Australian students.

There are a great many Australians today who have had an opportunity to make far more of their lives than they otherwise could have because of their access to education—access that they owe to the reforms introduced by education minister Kim Beazley in the Whitlam government. Beazley was so dedicated to the reforms that he worked night and day, criss-crossing the country until he collapsed from exhaustion. The legislation was introduced while he was in hospital.

The expansion of access to high-quality education may be the greatest of Kim Beazley’s legacies but it was neither the only cause he championed nor the only success he had. He held strong opinions about the direction of the Labor Party, opinions that placed him at odds with his own party branch in Western Australia. Although not a Catholic and never a Grouper he had a deep antipathy to the atheist convictions of the Communist Party and a belief that the tragedies of the world were due to mankind ignoring the tenets of religion.

He did not leave the Labor Party during the split but, as for so many members of the Labor Party in that era, the split had a long-lasting effect on Kim Beazley’s career, as it did on the fortunes of the Labor Party. Beazley lost his membership of the federal executive for defying the left-wing state secretary, Joe Chamberlain, by voting to support Gough Whitlam’s intervention into the un-electable Victorian branch and voting against intervention into the right-dominated New South Wales branch. He paid and was willing to pay a personal price to support Whitlam’s leadership and his very necessary party reforms, without which there would not have been a Whitlam government.
In other ways I think his views could be described as to the left of the party. His experience in 1961 as a member of the Select Committee on the Voting Rights for Aborigines, which travelled 21,000 miles to hold hearings all around the country, had a profound impact on Beazley’s views. He became a long-time supporter of the rights of Australia’s first inhabitants, championing the principle of what was then termed ‘tribal title’ but what we now know as land rights. He argued for government recognition that Indigenous people had a relationship to the land that was different to but not lesser than the European model. He also understood that economic security was a fundamental right for all Australians, and that for Indigenous Australians economic security had to start with title to their land.

He believed in listening to Indigenous communities, not to officials and welfare officers, and it was from listening to and talking with Indigenous Australians that he developed his views. He was resistant both to assimilationist insistence that Indigenous Australians completely surrender their heritage and to the brand of noble-savage racism that sought to impose unwanted paralysis and stagnation.

The ability to meet his fellow men as equals regardless of race or nation influenced his views on foreign policy. Beazley was able to see Australia in the context of our region without the fear of Asia that poisoned so many of his contemporaries. When it came to national security, international relations and the rights of the original inhabitants of Australia, his views would not be shared by the majority until long after his retirement from parliament. In these respects he was ahead of his time. There is a certain irony that the internationalism and anti-racism that informed these views grew from the deep and abiding religious convictions and advocacy of moral rearmament that led many to characterise him as behind the times.

It is often said of Kim Edward Beazley that he might well have led Labor were it not for the enemies he made through his devout faith and moral rearmament convictions. I think this is perhaps a little simplistic. His views were strongly and sincerely held, were always rooted in conviction, and were without desire for personal or political gain. However, they were, in many cases, not the views of the Australian Labor Party or the Australian people.

On matters that are traditionally regarded as questions of conscience—such as the availability of divorce—Kim Beazley was, even in the days of the Whitlam government, part of a minority fighting to hold back a tide of change. His declaration that he had made a decision to ‘concern myself daily with the challenge of how to live out God’s will and to turn the searchlight of absolute honesty on my motives’ was viewed with consternation by some political colleagues. Nor was his enthusiastic evangelising on questions of personal morality welcome in all quarters. Although some of his views may seem alienating to us, the sincere impulses from which they sprang, I think, can only be viewed as admirable.

Kim Beazley Senior’s childhood was marred by the poverty and fear that followed his father’s struggles with alcohol. In his unpublished memoir he recounts going around the house hiding all the razors, believing his father might even use them on his family. At the same time his mother, a bastion of love and security for Kim and his six older siblings, emphasised the importance of education and of religion—education as the escape from poverty and insecurity, and religion as the guide to a decent and moral life. Throughout his life, Kim Edward Beazley would continue to be guided by these values.
His lifelong determination, expressed in political activism and religious faith, was to be a good husband, a good father and a good man. At his funeral, his family testified movingly how well he lived up to the first two of those ambitions. Speaking as a member of the Australian Labor Party, to which Kim Edward Beazley gave so many decades of service and in whose name he achieved so much on behalf of the disadvantaged, the marginalised and the embattled in our community, I believe it is undeniable that he achieved the third as well. Knowing Kim Edward Beazley’s son Kim Christian Beazley so well, we of course feel this loss very keenly. Our sympathies are with Betty Beazley and all the Beazley family. We have lost a colleague. They have lost a dearly loved husband, father and friend.

Senator ROBERT RAY (Victoria) (6.02 pm)—It was quite a moving funeral service for Kim Beazley, and I thought it was a testament to him that six former Labor leaders attended. I do not think I have seen a bigger gathering of former Labor leaders. I express from the Labor Party’s point of view, too, our appreciation to the many Liberal members of parliament who attended the funeral, right in the middle of a vigorous election campaign. It was a great tribute you gave him to turn up and to see him off in the way you did.

At the funeral my memory went back to 1966, to a lounge room in East Bentley. The Henty Young Labor Association had as a guest speaker that night Kim Beazley. He was the first federal politician I had ever met. He came along and gave up the whole night to address just 15 members, and he was inspiring. I probably would not say that I share a lot of things in common with him in terms of religion and other things but, as a young 18-year-old, I found him absolutely inspiring as a federal member of parliament. We all used to listen to parliament in those days, so every time I knew he was due to speak we would always listen to parliament to hear him.

Mention has been made today of Kim Beazley’s contribution in the education area, but I think one point has been overlooked. It was not so much his passion for kids and what he did for them: his activities helped mark the end of sectarianism in this country as we knew it. This country, up until 1970, had a great sectarian divide between Catholics and Protestants. The police forces were divided. Political parties were divided on these lines. Indeed, on occasions even our national cricket side divided on these lines. His great contribution—and he was not alone in it; he had friends on the other side of the House who contributed—was that around 1970 to 1972, almost overnight, sectarianism disappeared in this country. We are a much greater country for it, and Kim Beazley contributed enormously to that.

Not many people in Australian politics have been successful in politics when they have succeeded a prime minister in their seat. If you look back at all those individuals who have inherited or taken over a seat from a prime minister, you see that very few have succeeded. You might argue that Andrew Peacock did in Menzies. You can argue, certainly, for Kim Beazley. But for most people the anticipation is just too great and they never amount to having the sort of career their predecessor had. Several people have talked today about how soul destroying it must have been for him to be in opposition so long, but I have to say that that was the norm at the time. If you were a Tasmanian Liberal, you would have been in opposition for 33 years, from 1935 to 1968, as you would have been if you were a Liberal member in New South Wales from 1941 to 1965 or a Labor member in Victoria from 1955 to 1982. And imagine being a Liberal or a Country Party member in Queensland where
you were only in power for 2½ years out of 42. So it was quite a common thing in Australian history. But at least you did not have to travel every week or every second week from Western Australia to the national capital.

Kim Beazley was one of five members of the House of Representatives on the Labor side who saw out the entire time, from 1949 to 1972. Arthur Calwell saw out the 23 years of opposition. Charlie Griffiths did so and made, I think, six speeches in that entire 23 years. There were also Clyde Cameron and Fred Daly. So five of them spent the 23 years in opposition. I look at the two Liberals opposite who spent 13 years in opposition here. You know how long it is, and we have just spent 11½ years. Imagine almost doubling that, being in opposition for that long and having the persistence to stay involved—an absolutely remarkable quality, I think.

John Faulkner alluded to it but did not really expand on a much tougher thing that Kim Beazley had to do. Kim Beazley was an outsider. He was an outsider in his own state branch and for several years never knew, from day to day, week to week, whether he would be expelled. That is a very hard political life, when you keep your faith, when you keep your principles. They were at odds. And this was in an era when, in Western Australia and Victoria, the democratic centralism was only excelled by the politburo in Moscow—nowhere else. This was a time when there was no tolerance of another point of view, and no real will to win. That is where the modern Labor Party at least has changed and is different. And he had to live through the frustration of that, knowing that he was not appreciated by his own state branch and, quite often, by his own federal caucus. Yet he overcame all that—odds that would have daunted most of us and led us to give it away. So he lived his life very much as the outsider.

It is also true to say that his biggest disappointment in politics came late in his political life. He bore a great shame about the Iraqi loans affair in 1976, and so he should have. It was the lowest moment in the history of the Australian Labor Party—a matter that I am still ashamed about. But you learn from those mistakes; you do not give up. But it was a horrendous moment for him. He resigned from the front bench and left politics a year and a half later, in 1977. I am sorry he went out that way, but he did not, of course, just say, ‘Well, that’s it.’ He went on to give meritorious service in education inquiries and, as the leader has referred to, the inquiry into parliamentary privilege in Western Australia. He went on to be a constructive citizen for the rest of his life.

Of course, we know him partly from knowing him and partly through the prism of his son, someone I admire immensely. It was a very tough time for Kim Beazley Jr. As those who were at the funeral know, he spoke magnificently about his father, something that must have been very difficult for him to do. So could I pass on my condolences to his family and his friends and, again, thank all those who made the effort in the middle of an election campaign to attend his funeral.

Senator ALLISON (Victoria—Leader of the Australian Democrats) (6.09 pm)—I join in the condolence motion on behalf of the Australian Democrats and offer my condolences on the sad passing of Kim Edward Beazley on 12 October 2007. We were represented at his funeral by my colleague Senator Andrew Murray. I also want to express my most sincere sympathy to his family—to his wife, Betty, and to his children, including Kim Beazley Jr.

Kim Beazley Sr had a long and distinguished record within the parliament. He was described as a political giant, as a student
prince, even, in some of the clippings I have seen. He was intelligent and passionate, but he was also a moderate and a reasonable man and a great orator. At 27 he was the youngest person to enter the House of Representatives and he went on to become one of parliament’s longest serving members, lasting 32 years. In that time he made an enormous contribution, one which he continued after leaving politics.

Kim Beazley Sr was education minister in the Whitlam government from 1972 to 1975. I must say that I owe him a debt of gratitude because, when he was education minister, the government abolished university fees due to his initiative, as I understand it, and I was the beneficiary of that—as, I suspect, were many now in this place. On taking office, one of his first initiatives was to arrange for Aboriginal children to be taught in their own language, with English as a second language. This was a very farsighted initiative on his part. By the time Kim Beazley left the ministry, Aboriginal children were being taught in 22 of their own languages. I think it is a great pity that we do not now see very many schools offering Indigenous languages. I think it is a great pity that we do not now see very many schools offering Indigenous languages. Educationists know that it is preferable for children who come to school without English to be able to start in their own language. I think it is also a great pity that so many Indigenous languages around the country have been lost. Very few have in fact been recorded and are used, except perhaps in the Northern Territory.

He also introduced needs based funding for all schools through his Schools Commission, and that started funding for non-government schools in the interests of greater equality. He had a great affinity for Indigenous Australians and in 1952 he made the first speech on Aboriginal reconciliation. He would no doubt have been very proud of the welcome to country ceremony which took place this morning before the opening of parliament.

He was awarded an AO in 1979 and I think that he will be remembered very well in this parliament and at large for his many contributions to this country. I want to finish with one quote from him: ‘If you can read and write, your future is in your own hands.’ I think that is very good advice indeed. We should be very grateful to the Hon. Kim Edward Beazley for his contribution to education in this country.

Question agreed to, honourable senators standing in their places.

Mr Peter James Andren

Senator BOB BROWN (Tasmania—Leader of the Australian Greens) (6.13 pm)—by leave—I move:

That the Senate records its deep regret at the death, on 3 November 2007, of Peter James Andren, former member for Calare, and places on record its appreciation of his long and meritorious public service and tenders its profound sympathy to his family in their bereavement.

I thank the Senate. I note, as is so appropriate, that as I rise here the Prime Minister is speaking about the magnificent contribution to parliamentary life that Peter Andren made in the House of Representatives. Last year, when he knew that he was terminally ill, Peter Andren said, ‘I look back on the last 11½ years with great pride, having forever silenced the sceptics who say an Independent is wasted space within the political system.’ That pride was warranted.

Peter was a son of Gulargambone, a much-loved independent member for Calare and one extraordinarily good Australian. To quote his fellow independent, Tony Windsor: He never took a backward step when it came to representing the people of Calare and, more broadly, country Australians.

Peter Andren was also described as the conscience of Australia’s parliament. He put
himself to the people of Lithgow, Bathurst, Orange and all the rest of Calare and, when they said yes, he turned out to be an outstanding representative for them and for the country. At each election since, he won by a bigger margin. That is not because Peter followed opinion polls. Rather, he was a leader who knew the thinking of his constituents. He worked hard for Calare, disproving the notion that, if you are not in government, you languish. As Prime Minister Rudd said in the House, Peter Andren gave the instruction to his staff that, when members of his electorate phoned the office, that call was to be treated as the most important thing going on in that person’s life on that day.

In his first speech to the House in 1996, Peter outlined his independent viewpient as follows:

There is a growing awareness in the electorate that honest, effective representation of constituents’ interests can be achieved through channels other than political parties. Inflexible ideology on either side will bring swift retribution. People want fair and reasonable government, no domination by one school of thought whether it be union or rationalist economics.

In a note to me in 2003, Peter Andren spoke about ‘grit, determination and ethic’, which are three words that fit his politics like a glove. His ethics were shown in his stand for Aboriginal Australians. His grit was shown in his insistence that the Tampa refugees be treated with decency. His determination was shown by his attempts to get better transport, telecommunications and other essential services for his people of Calare. He saw the sale of Telstra as economic rationalism, serving the interests of the big end of town rather than those of the people of Millthorpe, Trunkey Creek or Molong.

Peter took on the systematic abuse of parliamentary travel allowances. He said:

Here is a golden opportunity to lift the standards, and I am sure the Prime Minister—

he was referring to Prime Minister Howard—

will address it.

After hurling a few disgruntled words at the member for Calare, Prime Minister Howard did lift the standards. It was over this issue that Peter said he got his dander up, so he stood up again and objected. But instead of listening, the Speaker had Peter ejected. Peter said, ‘That was probably one of the silliest things the Prime Minister has done in question time since I have been here because it focused attention on the issue and I got calls from all over Australia.' Tandberg drew the famous cartoon of Peter Andren being booted out of the House, showing it to the Australian people gathered outside. The cartoon carried the words:

The cheek of him! Coming in here representing the mob.

Peter enjoyed his political life, but he spurned the blatant self-interest of politicians’ superannuation and pay rises, which are so often a matter of public opprobrium. He wanted hard-working MPs to have a fair reward, but he was the voice for all Australians in insisting that the 69 per cent top-up of MPs superannuation be brought back to nine per cent, which was what all other citizens could expect.

What is not well known is that Peter never took up the $15,000 of overseas travel that he was entitled to each time he was re-elected. Nor did he take the $180, or thereabouts, per night in travel allowance when out of his electorate, because he saw the $39,000 per annum electoral allowance as generous enough. Who of us knows anybody else in this parliament who has that attitude?

He gave politics a good name indeed. In an article she wrote in the Bulletin, the then
columnist, Maxine McKew, who replaced Prime Minister Howard as the member for Bennelong, observed:

He certainly makes a three-hour drive from Sydney to his electoral office in Bathurst more than worth while. It is hard to think of another politician who is so waffle free. Andren indicates nothing. He gives you the facts and tells you what he thinks.

Peter campaigned for better rural health services. He argued:

Communities without a doctor want to know why taxpayer-trained doctors can’t be required to work for a period in the country in return for taxpayer-funded Medicare provider privileges. Globalisation, competition policy and government hands-off markets may work well at the top end of town, but can have devastating effects on rural and regional areas.

He spoke out for a free East Timor during all those years in which the major parties—no matter who was in government or in opposition—endorsed Indonesia’s military occupation. And time has proved him right of course. Peter said, ‘I might only be a pinprick on an elephant hide, but I can raise matters at national level.’ People told him, ‘You stick your neck out. We don’t always agree with you, Peter, but we know you are not being driven by other forces.’ That is so true.

His driving force was the people of Calare, their children and their grandchildren, and this nation of Australia. His decency was noted across the political spectrum and throughout the press gallery, which was stunned and saddened by the news of his illness in the middle of last year. An editorial in the Daily Telegraph put it:

They say in politics we get the MPs we deserve—which would suggest the people of Calare are possessed of exceptional character and decency.

Peter Andren ended his first speech here in Canberra by saying:

To my father and mother, both deceased, thanks for the strength and guidance—

On behalf of his admiring colleagues and all the Australians in the future who ever put up their hands for high office and, seeking a lead, read about his contribution to national life, Peter Andren, now that you are deceased, to you we can say, ‘Thank you for your strength and your guidance.’

On a personal note, I will never forget Peter coming with his partner, Valerie Faber, to walk in Tasmania’s giant forests, which were and are threatened needlessly by woodchipping and now by the Gunns pulp mill. In fact, after that visit, the two of them held a magnificent fundraising dinner in Orange in the mists on Mount Canobolas to help save the forests of Tasmania so far away. In the Styx Valley, which is a living wonder of the world, we talked about how much we human beings rely on nature for the air we breathe, for the food we eat, for the medicines that give us aid and for the inspiration that wild nature brings to every heart. This notable member of parliament went out of his way for those forests, as he did for the people of his beloved Calare. Like the great eagles of the forest, Peter Andren’s integrity, his example, and his impact on Australian affairs will forever soar high in this nation’s political history.

Question agreed to, honourable senators standing in their places.

COMMITTEES

Membership

The PRESIDENT—I have received letters from party leaders nominating senators to be members of committees.

Senator CHRI$ EVANS (Western Australia—Leader of the Government in the Senate) (6.24 pm)—by leave—I move:

That senators be appointed to committees as follows:
Community Affairs—Standing Committee—

Appointed—

Senators Adams, Boyce, Carol Brown, Humphries, Lundy, Moore and Polley


Economics—Standing Committee—

Appointed—

Senators Bishop, Bushby, Campbell, Eggleston, Hurley, Joyce and Webber


Employment, Workplace Relations and Education—Standing Committee—

Appointed—

Senators Boyce, Campbell, Fisher, Marshall, Sterle, Watson and Wortley

Participating members: Senators Abetz, Adams, Barnett, Bernardi, Birmingham, Boswell, Brandis, Bushby, Chapman, Colbeck, Coonan, Cormann, Eggleston, Ellison, Fierravanti-Wells, Fifield, Heffernan, Johnston, Joyce, Kemp, Lightfoot, Ian Macdonald, Sandy Macdonald, McGauran, Mason, Minchin, Nash, Parry, Patterson, Payne, Ronaldson, Scullion, Troeth and Trood

Environment, Communications, Information Technology and the Arts—Standing Committee—

Appointed—

Senators Birmingham, Kemp, Lundy, McEwen, Parry, Webber and Wortley


Finance and Public Administration—Standing Committee—

Appointed—

Senators Carol Brown, Fierravanti-Wells, Fifield, Forshaw, Moore, Polley and Watson

Participating members: Senators Abetz, Adams, Barnett, Bernardi, Birmingham, Boswell, Boyce, Brandis, Bushby, Chapman, Colbeck, Coonan, Cormann, Eggleston, Ellison, Fisher, Heffernan, Humphries, Johnston, Joyce, Kemp, Lightfoot, Ian Macdonald, Sandy Macdonald, McGauran, Mason, Minchin, Nash, Parry, Patterson, Payne, Ronaldson, Scullion, Troeth and Trood

Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade—Standing Committee—

Appointed—

Senators Bishop, Cormann, Forshaw, Hogg, Sandy Macdonald, McEwen and Trood

Participating members: Senators Abetz, Adams, Barnett, Bernardi, Birmingham, Boswell, Boyce, Bran-
TAXATION (TRUSTEE BENEFICIARY NON-DISCLOSURE TAX) BILL (No. 1) 2007

TAXATION (TRUSTEE BENEFICIARY NON-DISCLOSURE TAX) BILL (No. 2) 2007

INTERNATIONAL TAX AGREEMENTS AMENDMENT BILL (No. 2) 2007

INTERNATIONAL TRADE INTEGRITY BILL 2007

CORPORATIONS (NATIONAL GUARANTEE FUND LEVIES) AMENDMENT BILL 2007

FINANCIAL SECTOR LEGISLATION AMENDMENT (DISCRETIONARY MUTUAL FUNDS AND DIRECT OFFSHORE FOREIGN INSURERS) BILL 2007

MARITIME LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL 2007

SYDNEY HARBOUR FEDERATION TRUST AMENDMENT BILL 2007

TELECOMMUNICATIONS LEGISLATION AMENDMENT (PROTECTING SERVICES FOR RURAL AND REGIONAL AUSTRALIA INTO THE FUTURE) BILL 2007

BUILDING AND CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY IMPROVEMENT AMENDMENT (OHS) BILL 2007

FINANCIAL SECTOR LEGISLATION AMENDMENT (SIMPLIFYING REGULATION AND REVIEW) BILL 2007

PRODUCT STEWARDSHIP (OIL) AMENDMENT BILL 2007

AUSTRALIAN POSTAL CORPORATION AMENDMENT (QUARANTINE INSPECTION AND OTHER MEASURES) BILL 2007
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Messages from His Excellency the Governor-General were reported informing the Senate that he had assented to the bills.

**SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**

The PRESIDENT (6.24 pm)—At midnight last night the term of the Hon. David Hawker as Speaker of the House of Representatives ceased. I take this opportunity to briefly, but warmly, acknowledge the contribution to the Australian parliament of Speaker Hawker. David Hawker was Speaker from 16 November 2004 and it has been a privilege to serve with him, albeit briefly, as a fellow presiding officer. David will be remembered for the decent and honourable manner in which he fulfilled his duties as Speaker and his interest and enthusiasm for the administration of the parliament.

I would also like to take this opportunity to congratulate the new Speaker, Mr Harry Jenkins, on his election in the House of Representatives this morning, and I look forward to working with new Speaker Jenkins, although it may only be for a certain period.

**ADJOURNMENT**

Senator CHRIS EVANS (Western Australia—Leader of the Government in the Senate) (6.24 pm)—I move:

That the Senate do now adjourn.

Ms Margret Roadknight

Senator MOORE (Queensland) (6.25 pm)—Before I start, I would just like to put on record how deeply moved I have been listening to the condolence comments in the chamber this afternoon. They have been particularly moving and give great dignity to the people about whom they were created.

I want to talk about one of the icons of Australian entertainment, and that is Margret Roadknight. I want to stress at this point that her name is Margret, as she says when she gives her unique performances: M-a-r-g-r-e-t Roadknight. Last Saturday evening I was very privileged to be able to attend a concert in Brisbane which was sponsored by the Brisbane Labour History Association with the help of the wonderful Woodford Folk Festival people and also sponsored by the Queensland Council of Unions. That particular concert was put on to celebrate songs of protest. It went by the astounding name of Rekindle the Flames of Discontent. Who better to be one of the headline acts at that particular function than Margret Roadknight?

During 2007 Ms Roadknight celebrated 44 years of performance across the world. Not just in Australia, but most particularly representing Australia across the world. You can see by looking at her performance history that she has worked on all continents. She has brought her unique style and also her passion for community, her passion for social justice and, most importantly, her passion for engaging the community with her skill. She has brought that to people across the globe, and done us proud as Australians as she has been there, so often, representing Australia.

I will quote from one of Margret Roadknight’s many reviews, and I do encourage people who may be listening to follow up some of the reviews that Margret has received in the last 44 years of performance. Margret has travelled to America many times because of the linkages with the folk and the music scene there. This was quoted in the Oakland Tribune in San Francisco:

... as much as for her impressive voice and choice of songs, Roadknight is delightful because she sheds so much fresh light on the nature of the world and its people.
This is her gift. She enjoys the world, she learns from her community and then she takes her special gift, her craft, her musicality and her wonderful voice to engage all of us.

Margret has been known most commonly for her love of social justice. When you look at her biography, you see that she has taken song to engage all of us in so many issues of social justice. While she is performing, she consistently tells stories to the audience—not just in her performance, but in anecdotes, sharing over those many years of performance and over 35 recordings. She laughingly says that her career spans the history of recording. She holds up LPs and then looks at video disks and DVDs. That shows that she has gone through most of the recent years of seeing how this industry developed.

In that time, she has taken her gift to look at what has been happening in our world. When performing, she often talks about one of her favourite experiences—one which we can share, because it is about the issue of peace. She has been a genuine peace activist for all of her life, not just in her recording period. She talks with great pride and humour about when she was privileged to play at a United Nations event in 1982 talking about nuclear war and disarmament. That is a continuing argument that we have in our world. Margret talks about performing in front of the world audience and doing her particular interpretation of that wonderful song, Imagine. Anyone who has been privileged to hear Margret Roadknight perform Imagine will not forget that experience.

As Margret performs, she engages with the audience and encourages all of us to use our voices because she says that voice is our tool; voice is communication. She says with authority that, towards the end of her performance before this massive audience, the electronic digital machinery around the top of the area began, without warning, to pick up the words of Imagine. So as her voice was ringing across the square, with thousands of people there and an international audience, as she was singing about peace, imagining a world with peace and crying for a world where we can make peace, across the area which shows the international news and also the Wall Street figures, the words of Imagine were being printed. She stood alone with her guitar and her voice and the world heard this message. She states that the world must continue to hear this message because we still have not attained peace. But Margret Roadknight will continue in the battle to ensure that we can.

Ms Roadknight also has the gift of engaging and teaching all of us to use our voices, because she is committed to see that the world can sing. Over these many years, she has always had voice workshops where she challenges all of us to use our own voices and she says quite rightly, ‘When you are happy sing; when you are sad sing louder.’ She says that is the way to perform and to make our lives better.

I am particularly keen to talk about Margret in this place tonight because over 20 years ago when this building was being created Margret was actually part of the Deep Bells Ring touring program, which she helped to develop, in which she and others travelled around work sites and talked to workers and people who were gathered around work sites and engaged them with the power of voice and the power of linking voice with getting across your message. I was speaking with Senator Lundy the other day and she was at the Parliament House work site when Deep Bells Ring headlined by Margret Roadknight was performed. I ask all of you who are here to think about how that message—with the workers gathered, talking about the songs of workers, the songs of construction—took a moment in the crea-
tion of this building. Now we are, more than 20 years later, talking about a major celebration of this wonderful building. I hope that, when we are actually celebrating 20 years of our Parliament House, we will be able to have Margret Roadknight’s voice again in this area, speaking about how with our voices we can share and make a difference to our world.

Margret speaks often about her travels and about the wonderful experience you can have travelling through other lands, learning their instruments, learning their music and sharing. For those of us who know Margret, she says that she ‘does not blend in easily’. She is a woman who I think claims a height of six foot five or more and she talks about travelling through China in the 1970s and 1980s. That image brings to mind a particular, classic image of a very tall and impressive European woman working with many of the Chinese people. She did stand out, but she was welcomed and loved and she still in performances today recounts some experiences and some of the beautiful melodies that she learnt from the Chinese people which she integrates into performance now. Margret learns from other communities. She engages with and enjoys their music. She then gives that the Roadknight touch, and that splendid voice, which is distinctive and extremely impressive, gives us the chance to learn so much about so many other cultures and ways of performing.

Margret is not a songwriter; she consistently says that she does not write songs. She gathers songs from other people and then presents them in her own way. It can be Chinese folk music, Israeli dance music, or the magical rhythms of South America or South Africa. I think some of my favourites of hers are from Australian songwriters. As a young woman, I remember going to folk festivals and hearing her particular version of Girls in Our Town and its message stays in my mind about the hope and the hopelessness of young women growing up in country towns. I also think she has a particular relationship with the music of Ted Egan. Some of her music celebrating women as pioneers have become anthems for women in our country and others. I want to give great praise to Margret Roadknight for her skill, for her passion, for her social activism and for all the entertainment and enjoyment she has given me and so many others. We remember her message: ‘When you are happy sing; when you are sad sing louder.’

Tasmania: Centrelink
Tasmania: Hospitals

Senator Barnett (Tasmania) (6.35 pm)—Tonight I stand to speak on my view that the Rudd Labor government should be condemned for the loss of 150 Centrelink call centre jobs in Launceston, which was announced today. I am calling, on behalf of the Tasmanian Liberal Senate team, on the Rudd Labor government to reverse this decision. I am calling on the Tasmanian federal Labor senators in this place to stand up and state their position either in support of this decision or in support of the people of Launceston and the people of Tasmania who are going to have their jobs axed.

I highlight the point that the new federal Labor member for Bass, Jodie Campbell, has failed in her first major test. I also wish to speak to the issues of the Ouse and Rosebery hospitals and to the communities of the west coast of Tasmania and the central highlands districts who have been gutted by the withdrawal of the $1 million that was not only promised but paid to those communities to upgrade and support those local hospitals. I highlight also the concerns I have for the Launceston General Hospital in particular, about the promises made, commitments given and plans that are now being sketched
and prepared as a result of those commitments to the Launceston General Hospital.

But firstly, to the cruel hoax that has been perpetrated on Launceston working families. I am personally disgusted that the Rudd Labor government today had Centrelink do its dirty work by confirming the job cuts, in a feeble attempt to protect the federal member for Bass. Before parliament had even started for the year, this Labor government was already politicising and manipulating government agencies. Centrelink has confirmed today that up until this week it was ‘in the middle of a recruitment process for those 150 jobs’. Those jobs were announced by the Prime Minister last year on 13 July, well and truly before the election was called. He said on that day:

I am pleased to announce that the Australian Government will expand its Centrelink staffing numbers in its Launceston call centre operation by an estimated 150 full time equivalent employees. ...

While selection for these positions will be subject to the usual Australian Public Service recruitment process and based on merit, given the skills and experience of the Telstra employees, I expect that a large number of these people will be successful in gaining positions in Centrelink.

The agreement to expand the Centrelink call centre network will importantly keep these skilled jobs in the region.

The former Prime Minister noted that:

This expansion comes on top of an announcement earlier this year to expand Centrelink’s Port Macquarie Call Centre ... and call centres in Hobart and Coffs Harbour by 125 employees in mid-2008.

Of course, we found out today that the 125 extra jobs for Glenorchy, in Hobart, are also being axed. I am very upset about this on behalf of the Tasmanian Liberal Senate team and on behalf of the local community where I live in Launceston. People have been very concerned for over a week. The concern is that the federal Labor member has done nothing. What has she done? She has failed in her first major test as the member for Bass by emerging empty-handed on Monday from a meeting with the Minister for Human Services, Senator Joe Ludwig, where she sought assurances about the jobs. The concerns were first brought to light over a week ago on 5 February, when I was tipped off about those concerns, and I expressed concern that the Howard government’s pledge of 150 more jobs at the Centrelink call centre in Launceston would fall victim to the Rudd Labor government’s budget razor gang. That is what I said in the media. It is on the public record. So you would think that the local federal member would make inquiries and that local federal Labor senators would also make inquiries and stand up for their communities and for those jobs. They have not done so and they have failed.

So tonight I ask federal Labor senators Nick Sherry, Carol Brown, Kerry O’Brien, who lives in Launceston, and Senator Helen Polley, who lives in Launceston: what is your position? Will they state their views as to whether they support these 150 jobs being cut in Launceston? In doing so, I highlight the fact that the Premier of Tasmania today has put out a statement headed ‘Disappointment at Centrelink call centre decision’, saying he has:

... written to the Prime Minister voicing the State Government’s extreme disappointment at confirmation that the 150-seat Centrelink call centre proposed for Launceston will not go ahead.

... ...

Now, less than three months on, the Rudd Government gives the people of Northern Tasmania every reason to feel their votes have been taken for granted.

It is extremely disappointing that the new government has chosen not to honour this important commitment; to renge on a promise to save 150 call centre jobs in Launceston.
This the Labor Premier of Tasmania. The statement continues:

Mr Lennon said the decision was especially harsh given that federal Labor gave every appearance of supporting the Centrelink jobs when announced by John Howard well before caretaker conventions were triggered.

He said the enviable reputation of the Launceston call centre and its workers, combined with a projected federal budget surplus of more than $14 billion in 2007-08, made the decision even harder to fathom.

… … … …

Sacrificing this investment in the name of cost-cutting is a bitter pill for the North.

Goodness me! What more do you need, federal Labor senators? What more do you need, federal Labor member for Bass, than to get that message from your premier? The deputy leader of the Liberals in Tasmania, Jeremy Rockliff, was onto this about a week ago, highlighting his concerns. I congratulate the Tasmanian state Liberals for standing up for their communities. Well done, Will Hodgman, Jeremy Rockliff, Peter Gutwein and Sue Napier, for standing up for your communities—unlike their state colleagues. I commend Michelle O’Byrne, the state member for Bass, for expressing—I will not say in a feeble way—in a moderate way her concerns about the fact that the federal Labor government should abide by this decision and not axe these jobs.

Ms Campbell has claimed that the Centrelink jobs were unfunded. This is wrong. Mr Tanner, in his media release of 6 February, pointed to the $5.1 million in savings. I have the document here. This is a federal Labor government document. It says:

Reversal of measure—Centrelink—further call centre supplementation.

They have reversed the decision—the money was committed, the decision was made, the promise was given, commitments were made, interviews were had, and so on, but they have reversed the decision and are not now going ahead with that. I asked the federal member for Bass: when did you first learn of this decision? Was it in the meeting with Senator Joe Ludwig or was it before then? Why did she remain silent for six days after federal minister Lindsay Tanner announced, on 6 February this year, the government’s intention to axe the funding? I feel for the families of those Telstra call centre workers who banked on Jodie Campbell and banked on a job with Centrelink based on John Howard’s announcement eight months ago. I note that Jodie Campbell has made a statement today attacking me and also attacking the former member for Bass, Michael Ferguson, who fought so hard to get these jobs and was successful in his efforts. I congratulate him and thank him for standing up for Bass and for trying to make Bass strong again. The federal member, Jodie Campbell, has attacked me personally and Michael Ferguson in a statement today, saying that the promise was never specifically funded. That is clearly wrong.

In conclusion, I want to make it clear that I have spoken to a number of people in the community today who are very upset. I have spoken to Damon Thomas, from the Tasmanian Chamber of Commerce and Industry, and I have got a call in to the local mayor, Albert Van Zetten. A lot of other local people are very upset and concerned about the 150 jobs that are going to be axed. What are the implications? I ask for this government to reverse that decision and to change its view. I empathise with the people of the west coast and thank the west coast mayor, Darryl Gerring, for fighting so hard for his local community. I thank the Rosebery hospital action group for fighting so hard for their community and to upgrade their hospital. I also want to thank Mayor Deirdre Flint and the Ouse hospital action group for their efforts to save
the $1 million that was promised and delivered to them last year by the Howard government that has now been taken back by the federal Labor government. I acknowledge their work. I say thank you to them on behalf of their local communities for standing up. With support, with effort and with their local communities, we can do that.

Finally, I say that there are concerns regarding the Launceston General Hospital. Money has been committed and decisions have been made. In fact, it is a huge amount of money that has been committed to the Launceston General Hospital—millions of dollars for a cardiac unit, $8 million for patient transport services along the north-west coast and further millions of dollars. It is a serious concern and I draw that to the attention of the Senate, the Labor government and those Labor senators in this place. I ask them to please reverse this decision for the sake of Tasmania.

**Social Inclusion**

Senator STEPHENS (New South Wales—Parliamentary Secretary for Social Inclusion and the Voluntary Sector and Parliamentary Secretary Assisting the Prime Minister for Social Inclusion) (6.46 pm)—Tonight I want to speak about the important social inclusion agenda that is part of the new Labor government. I want to remind people of something that Hugh Mackay wrote not too long ago:

In the past few years, many Australians have simply lost interest in the political process. Their response to their sense of powerlessness was not to take to the streets in angry demonstrations, but to turn away from the issues of the day and take refuge in their own local, immediate, personal concerns.

He wrote:

As a nation, we took our eye off the big picture; our focus turned inward; we became self-absorbed.

A few things have happened since Hugh Mackay wrote that, most importantly the election of the Labor government on 24 November last year. In the Governor-General’s speech today he gave impetus to the social inclusion agenda of the Rudd government and tonight, as the Parliamentary Secretary for Social Inclusion and the Voluntary Sector, I want to elaborate a little bit on that agenda and what it really means for people who are suffering from entrenched disadvantage in Australia.

A social inclusion agenda is about making a tangible difference to people who face barriers to participation in aspects of Australian life that most of us take for granted. That is about work or education, but it is also about engagement with family and friends and the local and broader communities. Social inclusion recognises that there are complex reasons that prevent people from participating. These might be poverty, education and literacy, access to transport and housing, disability, drug and alcohol problems, chronic ill health or mental illness. It may be the circumstances of older Australians, people living in rural, remote or even growing regions or those who have recently come to Australia. All of them face particular barriers to participation in work and in their communities. Our national social inclusion strategy is about finding innovative ways to remove barriers to participation in the nation’s social, economic and civic life, as one means to address entrenched and localised disadvantage in Australia.

We have heard a lot in recent years about the term ‘whole of government’. It has become a commonplace term. It is thrown around all the time in public policy, but what it means in the social inclusion context is both common sense and radical. It is about realising that people’s lives are not easily segmented by government department. Social inclusion demands a whole-of-
government strategy because the people who face the most significant barriers to participation in our society do not fit neatly into a category. The barriers that they face fall within the jurisdiction of more than one department, and of course they are interconnected. They affect each other and how any one person might access the services they need to find a path out of disadvantage.

Social inclusion is about realising that, if we want to make our country a fair place to live and for everyone to have an opportunity to live a happy and fulfilling life, we need to look at wider issues than just poverty. What better example do we have than what we heard about Kim Beazley Sr in the condolence debate this afternoon. He was propagating this agenda all those years ago. This is a burning issue—it is alive for the Labor Party; it is certainly alive for the Labor government—and it is one that I hope to champion throughout my career as parliamentary secretary.

But there are other people who are championing such an approach. An extraordinary thing happened that really takes us back to Hugh Mackay’s comments about people waking up, engaging again in the big picture and focusing much more on the kind of country that they want Australia to be. That occurred last year in a campaign that was run by GetUp! Action for Australia. It developed a ‘People’s agenda for the new parliament’, and what great hope we as a Labor government provide to the 32,500 people who participated in this extraordinary and unprecedented exercise in real democracy on Tuesday, 11 December last year. Thousands of people met all around Australia in informal gatherings—‘vision get-togethers’, they were called. People who shared a postcode met at their local club or in lounge rooms around the country to decide their priorities for the recently elected parliament, and they have come up with some extraordinary priorities.

Significantly, these people want the country to become environmentally sustainable and they want to combat climate change. They want the country to have high-quality primary, secondary and tertiary public education and they want us to respect the rights and improve the living standards of Indigenous Australians. Those three top priorities of the GetUp! campaign were reflected accurately in the Governor-General’s address this afternoon and have been reflected in all of the messages that the Prime Minister has given to the nation since his election.

In terms of the issue of social inclusion, which I am responsible for and intimately engaged with, the GetUp! campaign demanded that the national government address the issue of entrenched poverty. Their fifth priority was combating entrenched poverty and narrowing the divide between the rich and the poor. This is the very important message to this parliament from 32,500 ordinary, engaged Australians who for the last 10 years have not wanted to be part of a political process but have found a way of doing it by connecting locally in their communities:

We need the political will and vision to address the issue of entrenched poverty which stretches over many different issue areas, some of them covered in this Agenda. That national vision must address both the causes and the symptoms of inequality. We want affordable housing to be a focus, especially for the homeless, low-income earners and renters. A culture that enshrines human rights as a prism to view all policy areas through should begin to alleviate the conditions producing poverty and widening the gap. Access to the system must be improved for rural and Indigenous communities.

The message is that our social inclusion agenda has to be seen in terms of ‘the measure of the failure of our economic systems’. They also tell us:

Poverty is the single most preventable factor in inequities in health and access to education and living opportunities. Take care of this one and
there will be a marked influence on aboriginal health, educational opportunities, social cohesion ... The ‘People’s agenda’ is a stunning document that brings us back to the fundamental concerns of ordinary Australians. It takes us to the issues of Iraq. It takes us back to the issues of protecting our human rights and our civil liberties. It focuses on preventative health care. These are the big picture agenda issues that were outlined by both the Governor-General this afternoon and the Prime Minister in his addresses to the nation. And, of course, it goes to the issue of our relationship with Indigenous Australians. And what better indicator could there be than the welcome to country ceremony that marked the beginning of the 42nd Parliament and of course the sorry debate that we are going to have tomorrow.

I was heartened this morning at the ecumenical service that also marked the beginning of the 42nd Parliament to have proudly stood with over 100 senators and members of parliament and their families, members of the diplomatic corps, members of the Canberra community and many schoolchildren today, who have taken great hope and enthusiasm from the direction of the Rudd Labor government. I am proud to be part of it.

Senate adjourned at 6.56 pm

DOCUMENTS

The following documents were tabled by the Clerk:

[Legislative instruments are identified by a Federal Register of Legislative Instruments (FRLI) number]

A New Tax System (Family Assistance) Act—

A New Tax System (Family Assistance) (Child Care Benefit — Eligible Hours of Care) Amendment Determination 2007 (No. 1) [F2007L04260]*.

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2 (Multiple Applications) 2008 [F2008L00026]*.
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4 of 2007-2008 [F2008L00203]*.
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National Capital Plan—Amendment 67—Provisions for Mobile Home Park (Blocks 6 & 8 Section 97 and Block 17 Section 102 Symonston) [F2007L04060]*.
Notification of Declaration of National Land, dated 23 August 2007 [F2007L04025]*.
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Instrument IMMI 07/080—Instrument of Authorisation [F2007L04275]*.
Select Legislative Instrument 2007 No. 313—Australian Citizenship Amendment Regulations 2007 (No. 1) [F2007L03871]*.
Australian Communications and Media Authority Act—Telecommunications (Protection Zone and Submarine Cable Permit — Application Charges) Determination 2008 [F2008L00256]*.
Australian Film, Television and Radio School Act—Determination of Degrees, Diplomas and Certificates No. 2007/1 [F2007L04436]*.
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16 of 2007—Information provided by locally-incorporated banks and foreign ADIs under Reporting Standard ARS 320.0 (2005) [F2007L04754]*.
1 of 2008—Information provided by locally-incorporated banks and foreign ADIs under Reporting Standard ARS 320.0 (2005) [F2008L00136]*.
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10 of 2007—Prudential standard APS 117 Capital Adequacy: Interest Rate Risk in the Banking Book (Advanced ADIs) [F2007L04598]*.

11 of 2007—Prudential standard APS 120 Securitisation [F2007L04599]*.

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23/08—Instructions — use of RNAV (GNSS) approaches by RNP capable aircraft [F2008L00040]*.
25/08—Permission and direction — helicopter special operations [F2008L00044]*.
38/08—Instructions — RNAV (RNP-AR) approaches and departures [F2008L00047]*.
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EX58/07—Exemption — replacement components [F2007L04400]*.
EX60/07—Exemption — maintenance releases for class B aircraft [F2007L04590]*.
EX65/07—Authorisation — to carry out maintenance on warbirds; Exemption — to allow supervision of maintenance [F2007L04652]*.
EX69/07—Exemption — from take-off and landing minima inside and outside Australian Territory [F2007L04906]*.
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Cirrhosis of the Liver No. 107 of 2007 [F2007L04282]*.
Cirrhosis of the Liver No. 108 of 2007 [F2007L04283]*.
Clonorchiasis No. 113 of 2007 [F2007L04288]*.
Clonorchiasis No. 114 of 2007 [F2007L04289]*.
Cut, Stab, Abrasion and Laceration No. 3 of 2008 [F2008L00020]*.
Cut, Stab, Abrasion and Laceration No. 4 of 2008 [F2008L00022]*.
Diabetes Mellitus No. 9 of 2008 [F2008L00027]*.
Diabetes Mellitus No. 10 of 2008 [F2008L00030]*.
External Bruise No. 109 of 2007 [F2007L04284]*.
External Bruise No. 110 of 2007 [F2007L04285]*.
Hypertension No. 11 of 2008 [F2008L00031]*.
Hypertension No. 12 of 2008 [F2008L00032]*.
Loss of Teeth No. 121 of 2007 [F2007L04297]*.
Loss of Teeth No. 122 of 2007 [F2007L04298]*.
Malignant Neoplasm of the Urethra No. 1 of 2008 [F2008L00018]*.
Malignant Neoplasm of the Urethra No. 2 of 2008 [F2008L00019]*.
Opisthorchiasis No. 111 of 2007 [F2007L04286]*.
Opisthorchiasis No. 112 of 2007 [F2007L04287]*.
Otosclerosis No. 119 of 2007 [F2007L04295]*.
Otosclerosis No. 120 of 2007 [F2007L04296]*.
Posttraumatic Stress Disorder No. 5 of 2008 [F2008L00023]*.
Posttraumatic Stress Disorder No. 6 of 2008 [F2008L00024]*.
Presbyopia No. 117 of 2007 [F2007L04292]*.
Presbyopia No. 118 of 2007 [F2007L04293]*.
Sarcoidosis No. 115 of 2007 [F2007L04290]*.
Sarcoidosis No. 116 of 2007 [F2007L04291]*.

CHAMBER
Veterans’ Entitlements (Delayed Lodgement of Claims for Pension Bonus) Guidelines 2007 [F2007L04158]*.

Veterans’ Entitlements (Guidelines for Determining whether Income Stream is Asset-test Exempt) Determination 2007 (No. 1) [F2007L03757]*.


Veterans’ Entitlements (Pension Bonus Scheme — Non-accruing Members) Declaration 2007 [F2007L04156]*.


Veterans’ Entitlements (Top Up of Pension Bonus — Specified Circumstances) Determination 2007 [F2007L04157]*.

Workplace Relations Act—Select Legislative Instrument 2007 No. 307—Workplace Relations (Registration and Accountability of Organisations) Amendment Regulations 2007 (No. 1) [F2007L03832]*.

Workplace Relations Act and Workplace Relations Amendment (Work Choices) Act—Select Legislative Instrument 2007 No. 306—Workplace Relations Amendment Regulations 2007 (No. 4) [F2007L03829]*.

Governor-General’s Proclamations—Commencement of Provisions of Acts


Corporations Amendment (Insolvency) Act 2007—Items 1 to 48 of Schedule 1—31 December 2007 [F2007L03798]*.

Financial Framework Legislation Amendment Act (No. 1) 2007—Items 1 to 8 of Schedule 1—1 January 2008 [F2007L04788]*.

Maritime Legislation Amendment Act 2007—Schedule 1—1 January 2008 [F2007L04141]*.


Telecommunications (Interception and Access) Amendment Act 2007—Schedule 1—1 November 2007 [F2007L03941]*.

Pursuant to subsection 42(3) of the Legislative Instruments Act, the following documents were taken to have been tabled on 12 February 2008:

Australian Passports Act—Australian Passports Amendment Determination (No. 4) [F2007L02328]*.

Civil Aviation Act—Civil Aviation Regulations—Instrument No. CASA 222/07—Direction – number of cabin attendants [F2007L02044]*.

Corporations Act—Select Legislative Instrument 2007 No. 227—Corporations Amendment Regulations 2007 (No. 9) [F2007L02255]*.

Defence Service Homes Act—Instrument 2007 No. 3—Variation of statement of conditions under subsection 38A(3) [F2007L01550]*.


Financial Transaction Reports Act—Select Legislative Instrument 2007 No. 214—Financial Transaction Reports Amendment Regulations 2007 (No. 1) [F2007L02151]*.
Health Insurance Act—Select Legislative Instrument 2007 No. 224—Health Insurance (Diagnostic Imaging Services Table) Amendment Regulations 2007 (No. 5) [F2007L02006]*.


National Health Act—Instrument No. PB 52 of 2007—Conditions [F2007L02396]*.


Private Health Insurance (Prostheses Application and Listing Fees) Act—Private Health Insurance (Prostheses Application and Listing Fee) Rules 2007 (No. 2) [F2007L02347]*.

Radiocommunications Taxes Collection Act—Select Legislative Instrument 2007 No. 142—Radiocommunications Taxes Collection Amendment Regulations 2007 (No. 1) [F2007L01545]*.

Safety, Rehabilitation and Compensation Act—Safety, Rehabilitation and Compensation (Revocation of Declaration and Specification) Notice 2007 (1) [F2007L01981]*.

Therapeutic Goods Act—Therapeutic Goods (Emergency) Exemption 2007 (No. 3) [F2007L02271]*.

Trade Practices Act—Select Legislative Instrument 2007 No. 228—Trade Practices Amendment Regulations 2007 (No. 4) [F2007L02257]*.

Workplace Relations Act—Select Legislative Instruments 2007 Nos—

183—Workplace Relations Amendment Regulations 2007 (No. 2) [F2007L01880]*.

216—Workplace Relations Amendment Regulations 2007 (No. 3) [F2007L02288]*.

* Explanatory statement tabled with legislative instrument.
QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

The following answers to questions were circulated:

National Heritage List
(Question No. 1591)

Senator Siewert asked the Minister representing the Minister for the Environment and Water Resources, upon notice, on 16 February 2006:

(1) Is the Minister or his department in receipt of nominations for National Heritage or World Heritage listing for the Burrup Peninsula or Dampier Rock Art Province; if so: (a) how many nominations; (b) from which parties; and (c) on what dates.

(2) Has the Minister or his department received any urgent listing nominations; if so, what is the status of those nominations.

(3) Has the Minister or his department received any appeals against the National Heritage listing for the Burrup Peninsula or Dampier Rock Art Province; if so, how many and from whom.

(4) If the Minister or his department has received appeals against the listing, will the details of those appeals be released.

(5) If the Minister has received appeals against the listing, are those appeals available to the nominees and by what process.

(6) Has the Minister or his department had any discussions or correspondence with agencies or the Government of Western Australia in relation to their views on the National Heritage listing of the Burrup Peninsula or Dampier Rock Art Province; if so, can an outline of those discussions be provided.

(7) Has the Minister or his department had any discussions or correspondence with agencies or the Government of Western Australia in relation to their views on the World Heritage listing of the Burrup Peninsula or Dampier Rock Art Province; if so, can an outline of those discussions be provided.

(8) Has the Minister or his department commissioned any reports into the heritage or other values of the Burrup Peninsula or Dampier Rock Art Province; if so: (a) what are they; (b) how many have been concluded; (c) how many are outstanding; and (d) can any completed reports be released.

(9) Does the Minister acknowledge that the heritage values of the area are of global significance.

Senator Abetz—The Minister for the Environment and Water Resources has provided the following answer to the honourable senator’s question:

(1) (a) There have been three nominations to the National Heritage List relating to the Burrup Peninsula and Dampier Archipelago. (b) The nominations are from the International Federation of Rock Art Organisations, Indigenous groups from the region, and the National Trust of Western Australia. (c) The nominations were received on 25 March 2004, 10 May 2004 and 24 May 2004, respectively.

I have not, nor has my Department, received a nomination for World Heritage listing. In accordance with the World Heritage Convention only the Australian Government can nominate places within its jurisdiction for inscription on the World Heritage List.

(2) Yes. A request for emergency listing of the area was received on 19 May 2004. The request was subsequently withdrawn and the matter was concluded. A second request for emergency listing was received on 12 December 2006. On 22 December 2006 this request for emergency heritage listing was declined.

QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
(3), (4) and (5) There are no provisions in the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999 for appeals against proposed inclusions in the National Heritage List.

(6) Yes. The Western Australian Government provided information under [then] section 324G (available on the WA Department of Industry and Resources website) and [then] 324H of the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999 in relation to the potential National Heritage List boundary and the economic and management implications if the place was included in the National Heritage List. I received correspondence from the Western Australian Deputy Premier in March and met with him on 16 April 2007 to discuss the timing of a decision on National Heritage listing and the development of Western Australian management arrangements. I also received correspondence from the Deputy Premier regarding the list on 2 July. My Department also met with officials from the Western Australian Government to discuss procedural aspects of the inclusion of the Dampier Archipelago in the National Heritage List and options for addressing the potential economic, social and management implications.

(7) In 2003 there was correspondence leading to informal discussions between officers from my Department and Western Australian Government officials about preliminary and procedural aspects of a possible World Heritage Serial Rock Art nomination. These discussions did not continue following the commencement of the National Heritage listing processes.

(8) Yes. The Department has commissioned two reports. The first report was completed in 2005 and was a desktop study of scientific values for Indigenous cultural heritage on the Burrup Peninsula and Dampier Archipelago. This report has been released to the nominators and to the persons identified under s.324G(4) of the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999 as owners and occupiers and Indigenous persons with rights and interests in the nominated area. In 2006 this report was updated, as information that could not be accessed in 2005 was subsequently made available for consideration. This second report was completed in August 2006.

(9) On 3 July 2007 I acknowledged the Dampier Archipelago and Burrup Peninsula’s outstanding heritage value to the nation by including it in the National Heritage List. I also acknowledge it has significance of an international scale.

**Exclusive Brethren**

*(Question No. 2542)*

**Senator Bob Brown** asked the Minister for Fisheries, Forestry and Conservation, upon notice, on 4 October 2006:

With reference to meetings between the Minister and representatives of the Exclusive Brethren: Has the Minister met with representatives of the Exclusive Brethren in the past 5 years: if so, in each case: (a) when was the meeting; (b) where was the meeting held; (c) who attended the meeting; and (d) what matters were discussed.

**Senator Abetz**—The answer to the honourable senator’s question is as follows:

As Minister for Fisheries, Forestry and Conservation, I meet with many organisations to discuss issues important to them.

The disclosure of meetings with individual constituents, groups, organisations or individual representatives of those organisations is usually treated as confidential to ensure the protection of privacy considerations.
Therefore, it would be inappropriate to breach privacy considerations. It would also be an unacceptable use of resources to search through diary entries for the past five years to ascertain what meetings may or may not have been held with representatives of the Exclusive Brethren, as many meetings may be included in a diary under a person’s name, rather than the organisation which is represented by that person.

A faith test is not required to gain access to my office, nor is a person’s religious belief or persuasion necessarily registered next to the name for an appointment.

**Disaster Assistance**

*(Question No. 2576)*

Senator McLucas asked the Minister representing the Minister for Local Government, Territories and Roads, upon notice, on 18 October 2006:

With reference to applications for relief and/or assistance under the Cyclone Larry/Monica relief package:

(1) (a) How many applications were received; (b) how many were approved; and (c) what was the total funding approved for each application.

(2) Can a list be provided of the applications that were rejected and the reasons for each rejection.

Senator Johnston—The Minister for Local Government, Territories and Roads has provided the following answer to the honourable senator’s question:

(1) The Department of Transport and Regional Services was involved through the Natural Disaster Relief Arrangements. The Arrangements provide for reimbursement to the Queensland Government of expenditure on eligible relief and recovery activities following Tropical Cyclones Larry and Monica, including an enhanced loans/grant measure for primary producers and businesses, up to a maximum value of $200,000.

(a) to (c) The loans/grant measure is administered by the Queensland Rural Adjustment Authority (QRAA), which considers the eligibility of each application.

As at 27 October 2006, 9 applications had been received; 7 applications were approved with total funding of $1,310,000, comprising 75 per cent loan component of $982,500 and 25 per cent grant component of $327,500.

(2) Two applications, by the same applicant, were declined on the basis that the applicant was assessed by the QRAA to be not in need.

Due to privacy considerations, it is not appropriate to discuss individual cases.

**Disaster Assistance**

*(Question No. 2579)*

Senator McLucas asked the Minister for Human Services, upon notice, on 18 October 2006:

With reference to applications for relief and/or assistance under the Cyclone Larry/Monica relief package:

(1) (a) How many applications were received; (b) how many were approved; and (c) what was the total funding approved for each application.

(2) Can a list be provided of the applications that were rejected and the reasons for each rejection.
Senator Ellison—The answer to the honourable senator’s question is as follows:

(1) (a) The total number of applications received for Cyclone Larry is 67,728. The total number of applications received for Cyclone Monica is 929.
(b) The total number of applications granted for Cyclone Larry is 60,074. The total number of applications granted for Cyclone Monica is 531.
(c) Funding approved for each assistance type is outlined in the table below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Ex-Gratia Payments</th>
<th>Business Assistance Fund</th>
<th>Income Support for farmers and small business</th>
<th>Fuel Excise</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cyclone Larry</td>
<td>$38,076,400</td>
<td>$140,725,000</td>
<td>$8,829,535</td>
<td>$2,309,551</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cyclone Monica</td>
<td>Not Applicable*</td>
<td>$6,105,000</td>
<td>$187,538</td>
<td>Not Applicable*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Not part of this assistance package

(2) Due to privacy considerations, it is not appropriate to discuss individual cases. The reasons for rejections were that the claimants did not meet the Australian Government’s guidelines for assistance.

Human Services

(Question No. 2614)

Senator O’Brien asked the Minister for Human Services, upon notice, on 6 November 2006:

(1) Has the department instituted an internal costing or cost recovery system; if so, what was the reason for instituting this system.

(2) How many staff are there at each Australian Public Service (APS) level (including executive and senior executive level staff) by business unit, division or branch as at 30 September 2006.

(3) What is the average salary of staff at each APS level (including executive and senior executive level staff) by business unit, division or branch as at 30 September 2006.

(4) (a) What is the methodology used to calculate time and cost of the preparation of answers to questions on notice; (b) what is the justification of this costing methodology; and (c) why has the department not embraced a cost estimate system linked to blocks of time such as that used by law and accounting firms.

(5) What is the justification of the methodology used to calculate the time and cost of the preparation of this answer, including: (a) the number of staff involved; (b) the substantive or acting levels of the staff members involved; (c) the salary cost per staff member involved; (d) the on costs per staff member involved; and (e) the time taken per staff member in the preparation of the answer.

Senator Ludwig—The answer to the honourable senator’s question is as follows:

(1) The Department has not instituted an internal cost recovery system.

(2) The following table indicates the number, level and business unit of staff in the core department as at 30 November 2007:
(3) The average salary for each level is shown in the following table:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Business Area</th>
<th>APS2</th>
<th>APS3</th>
<th>APS4</th>
<th>APS5</th>
<th>APS6</th>
<th>EL1</th>
<th>EL2</th>
<th>SES1</th>
<th>SES2</th>
<th>SES3</th>
<th>Sec</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Executive</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>9</td>
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<td>24</td>
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<tr>
<td>Legal</td>
<td>1</td>
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<td>1</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finance &amp; Corporate</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Policy &amp; Strategy</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Service Delivery</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Operations</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>5</td>
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<tr>
<td>Access Card</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>249</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Average salaries as at 30 November 2007

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Average salary as at 30 June 2007</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>APS 3</td>
<td>$50,394</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>APS 4</td>
<td>$53,580</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>APS 5</td>
<td>$58,823</td>
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<td>APS 6</td>
<td>$67,689</td>
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<tr>
<td>EL 1</td>
<td>$85,429</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EL 2</td>
<td>$107,145</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SES Band 1</td>
<td>$131,477</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SES Band 2/3</td>
<td>$169,712</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(4) The Minister for Human Services advised the Finance and Public Administration Committee on 24 May 2007 (Hansard Page F&P A 80) that costs would be no longer included when providing answers to questions on notice.

(5) Please see part (4).

**Australian Broadcasting Corporation: Toowong**

*(Question No. 3042)*

**Senator Bob Brown** asked the Minister representing the Minister for Health and Ageing, upon notice, on 1 March 2007:

With reference to the breast cancer cluster which led to the evacuation of the Australian Broadcasting Corporation’s studios in Toowong, Queensland:

1. What causal role did extremely low frequency electro-magnetic fields (ELFEMF) have.
2. Has ELFEMF been eliminated as a cause or contributory factor; if so, on what grounds.
3. (a) What were the ELFEMF levels measured in the studios; and (b) how much higher than background ELFEMF were the levels.
4. (a) When were those measurements taken; (b) exactly where were they taken; and (c) by whom.
5. What are the ELFEMF levels to be expected in a media studio.
6. Do ELFEMF levels affect melatonin production; if so: (a) how; and (b) how might this relate to breast cancer.

**Senator Ellison**—The Minister for Health and Ageing has provided the following answer to the honourable senator’s question:

(1) and (2) ELF EMF is not a known causative agent for breast cancer. It cannot be determined whether or not it played a role in this case.

The official investigation of the Toowong cluster by an expert panel ruled that ELF EMF was unlikely to be a cause.
“It was highly unlikely that this increase was caused by exposure during work on the Toowong site to radiofrequency electromagnetic fields, extremely low frequency electromagnetic fields, ionising radiation or chemicals known or suspected to cause breast cancer.”


(3) (a) The final report of the expert panel summarises the results of the Australian Radiation Protection and Nuclear Safety Agency (ARPANSA) measurements:

“During the walk-through, the magnetic fields generally measured under 2 milliGauss (mG), but there were occasional spikes to between 5 and 10mG and rare spikes above 15mG. Average levels in different work areas were all below 2mG with the exception of the kitchen on the first floor of the TV building (2.5mG), the news control room on the ground floor (3.5mG) and the ground floor equipment room (21.1mG). The level in the general office area, in which most newsroom staff members worked, was 1.2mG. The average measurement was 0.87mG.

“All staff member measurements on the ground floor of the TV building were less than 2mG, and most were less than 1mG. The average was 0.34mG. Most staff member measurements on the first floor of the TV building were less than 2mG, but there were several spikes, two in close proximity, reaching just under 9mG. The average was 0.56mG.

“In the radio building, the baseline magnetic field was about 2mG, with periods of increase to about 4mG and occasional peaks to 6-8mG and to between 15 and 20mG. The average was 2.03mG.”

(b) These are similar to levels that would be expected in many residences. Natural background levels away from electrical power distribution will be less than 0.1 mG*.

*mG: milligauss, unit of magnetic flux density commonly used in Australia and USA in reporting environmental levels of magnetic field. The equivalent metric (SI) unit is the microtesla (µT) which is a unit 10 times larger.

(4) Measurements were taken on 18 December 2006 between the hours of 11:00 am and 3:00 pm. Spot measurements were carried out on the ground and first floors of the TV building by doing a walk-through survey of the majority of areas accessible to staff. Personal monitoring was carried out to ascertain the magnetic field exposure of three staff members (one each from the ground and first floor of the TV building and one from the radio building). The measurements were carried out by a scientific officer employed by ARPANSA.

(5) At locations where personnel sit or work, ELF EMF levels in a media studio are not expected to be different from other office environments. Sources of ELF EMFs other than those related to media production are likely to dominate in most circumstances.

(6) There is little experimental evidence to indicate that ELF EMF at levels commonly encountered affect melatonin production in humans. A recent World Health Organization publication, stated:

“The results of volunteer studies as well as residential and occupational studies suggest that the neuroendocrine system is not adversely affected by exposure to power-frequency electric and/or magnetic fields. This applies particularly to the circulating levels of specific hormones of the neuroendocrine system, including melatonin, released by the pineal gland, and a number of hormones involved in the control of body metabolism and physiology, released by the pituitary gland.” and

“Most laboratory studies of the effects of ELF exposure on night-time melatonin levels in volunteers found no effect when care was taken to control possible confounding.”

Other factors, such as night-time exposure to light and undertaking of shift work, are believed to influence melatonin production. There is also inconsistent evidence relating differing melatonin levels to varying risks of breast cancer.

**Internet Commerce**

(Question No. 3059)

**Senator Bob Brown** asked the Minister representing the Attorney-General, upon notice, on 21 March 2007:

What are the implications of cyberspace commercial activities for: (a) the integrity of the Australian taxation system; (b) consumer protection of Australian citizens; and (c) copyright and defamation laws.

**Senator Johnston**—The Attorney-General has provided the following answer to the honourable senator’s question:

(a) The following information has been sourced from the Department of the Treasury and the Australian Institute of Criminology.

The taxation system applies equally to cyberspace commercial activities and conventional commercial activities.

Internet and related technologies do reduce the barriers to entry for certain types of commercial activities, including international transactions. In addition, these technologies can create variations on the types of challenges that occur in the taxation of conventional commerce. However, there are no challenges which are unique to cyberspace commercial activities.

The Australian taxation system presently addresses international transactions, including those conducted by cyberspace. Through work with international bodies the Australian Government is ensuring that there is increasing international cooperation between countries in relation to all types of international transactions.

The Australian Taxation Office (ATO) has an ongoing program of environmental scanning to identify developments, patterns, trends and drivers in the economy and assess these for their tax implications. As part of that program the ATO monitors developments in relation to cyberspace commercial activities and electronic commerce and the use of technology by business.

The ATO has also engaged the Australian Institute of Criminology (AIC) to conduct research into serious taxation fraud including the risks created by information and communications technologies. The results of this research are expected in late 2007.

In relation to the challenges posed by cyberspace commercial activities, the ATO first published an internationally recognised report in 1997 and continues to apply the tax laws to cyberspace commercial activity in the same way as the laws are applied to conventional commerce.

(b) The following information has been sourced from the Department of the Treasury, the Department of Communications, Information Technology and the Arts and the Australian Institute of Criminology.

When dealing with an Australian business, consumers are afforded the same protection in cyberspace commercial activities that they would be in a physical consumer environment. The *Trade Practices Act 1974* protects consumers from unconscionable conduct and misleading or deceptive conduct.

However, cyberspace commercial activities entail different risks to those that a consumer might usually encounter. The Australian Government, through its *Consumers online* website portal (www.consumeronline.gov.au) provides guidance to consumers about shopping online. The site refers consumers to the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission’s (ACCC) internet shopping web page, which outlines 10 Things to Check before Shopping on the Internet. In addi-
The site provides a link to the Ministerial Council on Consumer Affairs’ online publication, *Shopping in the electronic age*, which provides lists of ‘do’s’ and ‘don’ts’ in electronic transactions. The Australian Government is also committed to providing online businesses with the information they require to interact effectively with consumers in an electronic environment. In March 2006, the Australian Government published *The Australian Guidelines for Electronic Commerce* booklet which provides guidance to businesses on how to deal with consumers when engaged in business-to-consumer electronic commerce.

Unfortunately, consumers can become the target of unscrupulous operators both in an offline and online setting. The Australian Government understands the risks posed by scams and is committed to providing consumers with the information necessary for them to avoid being caught in a scam. To assist in this process, the Australasian Consumer Fraud Taskforce was launched in 2005. The brief of the Taskforce is to work collaboratively to enhance the Australian and New Zealand Governments’ enforcement activity against fraud and scams and create a co-ordinated information campaign for consumers. The Taskforce has also contributed to the Scamwatch website (www.scamwatch.gov.au) which explains how to recognise, and how to help stop scams. The AIC has undertaken research for the Taskforce on the nature of consumer fraud victimisation and the extent to which risks emanate from the Internet.

To raise awareness of the types of scams consumers may encounter, the Australian Government first published *The Little Black Book of Scams: A Consumer’s Guide to Scams, Swindles, Rorts and Rip Offs* in 2006. The book details some of the different types of scams which are prevalent both online and offline, how to avoid them and who to contact when a consumer is approached by a scam operator. The book has proved to be instructive for consumers and a fifth edition has recently been published. This information is also available for free download from the ACCC website or from www.consumeronline.gov.au.

The Australian Government, through the Department of Communications, Information Technology and the Arts and the AIC, also provides some important information regarding e-security and internet crime to educate and empower consumers in their electronic transactions. For example, the AIC as part of its research work for the Australian High Tech Crime Centre (AHTCC) has published a series of “High Tech Crime Briefs” and other reports which provide information on the nature and extent of current and future risks of technology-enabled crime for Australians. In addition, a major national survey of Australian businesses is being conducted by the AIC in 2007 to assess the computer security risks which they face and how they are responding to them.

The Australian Government recognises that building and maintaining consumers’ trust and confidence in the online environment is imperative to the continuing growth in the information economy and the productivity that it generates. A package of measures to enhance the protection of home users and small businesses against electronic attacks and fraud was announced in the 2007-08 Budget. These initiatives will focus on raising the level of e-security awareness of home users and small businesses with a view to improving their computer defences and the security of their online behaviours. The Australian Government has also conducted a number of awareness raising activities to assist Australian consumers to transact online in a secure manner.

Other initiatives which protect Australian online consumers include anti-spamming legislation which was introduced in 2003, a review of the legislative framework in relation to spyware, and involvement of Australia’s major banks in investigating phishing or hoax emails.

(c) The Australian Government has always been quick to respond to changes in the technological landscape that affect commercial exploitation of copyright works online. In 2000, the Australian Government’s ground-breaking Digital Agenda copyright law reforms modernised Australian copyright law to balance protection for creators in the online environment with access to copyright material
through new communications technology. Since that time, business models for the commercial exploitation of digital copyright material have grown in number and sophistication.

Last year the Australian Government responded by implementing new copyright laws to protect the digital locks which secure the release of copyright works in the digital and online environment. Providing a strong regulatory system for copyright owners to exploit their works ensures that a variety of copyright material is released in the Australian market to the benefit of the Australian consumer.

The Australian Government is also committed to a robust global copyright regime and is currently preparing to accede to the World Intellectual Property Organisation Internet Copyright treaties. In joining the treaties, Australia will strengthen international copyright protection.

As the content of defamation laws in Australia is determined by State and Territory legislation, questions about the operation of the law in a particular State or Territory jurisdiction should be directed to that jurisdiction.

**Forward Estimates**

(Question No. 3179)

**Senator Sherry** asked the Minister representing the Treasurer, upon notice, on 2 May 2007:

(1) Can the uncommitted forward estimates for each financial year up to and including 2010-11 be provided for the following 2006-07 Budget measures: (a) ‘Australian Securities and Investments Commission – broadening surveillance capability’; (b) ‘Australian Securities and Investments Commission – enforcement funding’; and (c) ‘Tax Practitioner Legislative Framework – implementation’.

(2) Can the forward estimates for each financial year up to and including 2010-11 be provided for the Inspector-General of Taxation.

**Senator Minchin**—The Treasurer has provided the following answer to the honourable senator’s question:

(1) to (2) Relevant Figures are provided in 2006-07 Budget Paper No. 2 and the Treasury Portfolio Budget Statements 2007-08. Further figures will be released with the mid-year economic review.

**Health and Social Services Access Card**

(Question No. 3180)

**Senator Sherry** asked the Minister for Human Services, upon notice, on 2 May 2007:

Can the uncommitted forward estimates for each financial year up to and including 2010-11 be provided for the 2006-07 Budget measure ‘Health and social services access card - introduction’, consistent with the format presented on page 295 of the 2006-07 Budget Paper No. 2.

**Senator Ludwig**—The answer to the honourable senator’s question is as follows:

The Government has decided not to proceed with the Access Card Program. Details of funding to be returned to the Budget will be provided as part of the forthcoming Budgetary processes. However, in response to the above question the following information is presented in the requested format:
Health and Social Services Access Card

Uncommitted Forward Estimates (current as at 6 June 2007)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Expense ($m)</th>
<th>2007-08</th>
<th>2008-09</th>
<th>2009-10</th>
<th>2010-11</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Centrelink</td>
<td>67.7</td>
<td>87.0</td>
<td>73.3</td>
<td>27.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medicare Australia</td>
<td>11.5</td>
<td>62.6</td>
<td>68.7</td>
<td>16.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Department of Human Services</td>
<td>115.5</td>
<td>190.5</td>
<td>137.7</td>
<td>19.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Department of Veterans’ Affairs</td>
<td>6.7</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>1.9</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Department of Families, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>201.5</strong></td>
<td><strong>343.2</strong></td>
<td><strong>281.7</strong></td>
<td><strong>63.4</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Related Capital ($m)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Expense ($m)</th>
<th>2007-08</th>
<th>2008-09</th>
<th>2009-10</th>
<th>2010-11</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Centrelink</td>
<td>12.7</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
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<tr>
<td>Medicare Australia</td>
<td>6.6</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>0.1</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Department of Human Services</td>
<td>51.8</td>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>0.0</td>
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<tr>
<td>Department of Veterans’ Affairs</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
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<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>72.6</strong></td>
<td><strong>2.5</strong></td>
<td><strong>2.6</strong></td>
<td><strong>0.0</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Health and Social Services Access Card

(Question No. 3199)

Senator Stott Despoja asked the Minister for Human Services, upon notice, on 11 May 2007:

With reference to the article, ‘Banks join forces to beat e-fraud’, in the Australian Financial Review of 24 April 2004, in which it was reported that Westpac’s plan to build a national registry of electronic keys to validate public key infrastructure (PKI) technology was on hold, in part due to uncertainty about whether the Federal Government’s welfare smartcard will use PKI technology:

(1) Will the access card proposal use PKI technology; if not, why not.

(2) If PKI technology is not being used to secure personal information within the access card system, what alternative security arrangements, if any, is the Minister proposing.

Senator Ludwig—The answer to the honourable senator’s question is as follows:

The Government has decided not to proceed with the Access Card Program. Details of funding to be returned to the Budget will be provided as part of the forthcoming Budgetary processes. With respect to the specific questions asked by the Senator, the answers are as follow:

(1) It was intended that Public Key Technology be used in developing the Access Card Program.

(2) N/A
Health and Ageing: Appropriations
(Question No. 3345)

Senator Sherry asked the Minister representing the Minister for Health and Ageing, upon notice, on 15 June 2007:

(1) Was there any appropriationreceivable included as an asset in the balance sheet at 30 June 2006.
(2) Is there an appropriationreceivable included as an asset in the estimated balance sheet at 30 June 2007.
(3) What are the reasons for any movement in the appropriation receivable between 30 June 2006 and 30 June 2007.
(4) With reference to the estimated actual results and financial position for the 2006-07 financial year, what amounts have been identified, for the 2007-08 financial years and for future years, for funding employee entitlements or asset replacements from the appropriation receivable balance.
(5) For the 2007-08 financial year and future years, what other items have been identified for funding from the appropriation receivable balance.
(6) What tests are applied by the Department of Finance and Administration over access to the appropriation receivable.

Senator Ellison—The Minister for Health and Ageing has provided the following answer to the honourable senator’s question:

(1) The Department reported an appropriation receivable of $119.610m in the Balance Sheet as at 30 June 2006. Portfolio agencies that have an appropriation receivable are provided in the following table:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Agency</th>
<th>Appropriation Receivable $’m</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>National Blood Authority (Special Account)</td>
<td>7.700</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional Services Review Scheme</td>
<td>5.045</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Portfolio agencies that did not have an appropriation receivable as at 30 June 2006 include:

- Aged Care Standards and Accreditation Agency Limited
- Australian Institute of Health and Welfare
- Australian Radiation Protection and Nuclear Safety Bureau
- Cancer Australia
- Food Standards Australia New Zealand
- General Practice and Training Limited
- National Health and Medical Research Council
- Private Health Insurance Administration Council
- Private Health Insurance Ombudsman

(2) The Department’s estimated appropriation receivable in the Balance Sheet as at 30 June 2007 is $122.880m. Portfolio agencies that will report an appropriation receivable balance at 30 June 2007 are provided in the following table:
QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Agency</th>
<th>Appropriation Receivable Estimate $’m</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Australian Radiation Protection and Nuclear</td>
<td>4,097</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Safety Bureau</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cancer Australia</td>
<td>1,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National Blood Authority (Special Account)</td>
<td>7,508</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National Health and Medical Research Council</td>
<td>21,200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional Services Review Scheme</td>
<td>9,538</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Portfolio agencies that do not have an estimated appropriation receivable as at 30 June 2007 include:

- Aged Care Standards and Accreditation Agency Limited
- Australian Institute of Health and Welfare
- Food Standards Australia New Zealand
- General Practice and Training Limited
- Private Health Insurance Administration Council
- Private Health Insurance Ombudsman

The movement in the departmental appropriation receivable balance between 30 June 2006 and 30 June 2007 can be attributed to the annual operating result, capital expenditure and balance sheet movements specifically annual changes in receivables, creditors and employee entitlements account balances.

National Blood Authority
There was a nil movement in Appropriations Receivable under an Appropriation Bill. The movement in the Appropriation Receivable Special Account between the 2005-06 balance and the estimated 2006-07 balance was a reduction of cash held in the Official Public Account of $0.192m. The reduction related to cash drawn down to meet agency expenses during the 2006-07 financial year.

National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC)
The movement relates to the appropriation receivable balance which transferred when NHMRC was established as an entity separate from the Department plus departmental appropriation funds not drawn down in 2006-07.

Professional Services Review Scheme
The movement in the appropriation receivable balance between 30 June 2006 and 30 June 2007 can be mainly attributed to the operating surpluses accumulated over recent years as a result of delays in the processing of cases involving legal challenges in the Federal Court, and a reduction in requests for review from Medicare Australia.

Portfolio agencies for which this question is not applicable:

- Aged Care Standards and Accreditation Agency Limited
- Australian Institute of Health and Welfare
- Cancer Australia
- Food Standards Australia New Zealand
- General Practice and Training Limited
- Private Health Insurance Administration Council
- Private Health Insurance Ombudsman
(4) The Department manages its annual operating performance with the aim of balancing the budget or achieving small operating surpluses each financial year. In addition, the Department’s creditors and receivables have historically remained relatively constant whilst employee entitlement provisions have generally increased. As a consequence of these factors the Department’s appropriation receivable balance has gradually increased over time. However, the Department’s accommodation strategy anticipates the refurbishment or relocation to new property leasehold office space over the next five years. The Department will utilise its appropriation receivable balance to fund this capital expenditure. Similarly, the Department also anticipates utilising the appropriation receivable balance to improve the Department’s IT environment.

Australian Radiation Protection and Nuclear Safety Bureau (ARPANSA)

The agency manages its annual budget with the aim of achieving a balanced budget each financial year. This is not always possible due to external factors impacting on project progress, particularly those associated with international contractual obligations. Delays in the delivery and installation of scientific and IT equipment also affected the year end position. ARPANSA will be implementing a large scale IT update program including a staged desktop refresh and backup facility enhancement. The appropriation receivable balance will be applied to improve the Agency’s ICT infrastructure.

Cancer Australia

The estimated end of financial year appropriation receivable for the 2006-07 financial year will include accumulated depreciation relating to future asset replacements of $75,940 and provisions for employee entitlements of $137,473. Please note, an estimate of employee entitlements for prior service is not yet available and as a result this balance equates to provisions relating to employee tenure at Cancer Australia only.

National Blood Authority

For the 2007-08 financial year $1.1m has been identified to fund employee entitlements (2008-09: $1.2m, 2009-10: $1.3m, 2010-11: $1.4m) and $0.8m to fund asset replacements (2008-09: $0.5m, 2009-10: $1.4m, 2010-11: $0.1m).

National Health and Medical Research Council

$1.8m has been identified to fund asset replacements and an estimate of $2.7m to fund employee entitlements.

Professional Services Review Scheme (PSR)

PSR is anticipating a significant increase in the number of cases being referred by Medicare Australia which will necessitate additional staffing and other resources. PSR will closely monitor progress to determine if costs can be met from recurrent funding. Asset replacements will include IT equipment of some $500,000 over the next two financial years.

Portfolio agencies for which this question is not applicable:

- Aged Care Standards and Accreditation Agency Limited
- Australian Institute of Health and Welfare
- Food Standards Australia New Zealand
- General Practice and Training Limited
- Private Health Insurance Administration Council
- Private Health Insurance Ombudsman
QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Tuesday, 12 February 2008

(5) The Department has identified two major projects that will be funded from the appropriation receivable:

(i) 2009-10 accommodation project – the appropriation receivable will be used to fund fitout costs associated with providing new office accommodation for staff currently located in the ACT; and

(ii) Program management improvement project – the appropriation receivable will be used to fund the development of a grants management system that will provide a common basis for the management and administration of program funding across the Department.

Cancer Australia
There are no other items that have been identified for funding via an appropriation receivable balance.

National Blood Authority
Other items that have been identified for funding from the appropriation receivable balance in 2007-08 include: IT development – Integrated Data Management System $1.5m, other IT development $1.0m, expenses $0.6m and July 2007 States and Territories contributions $0.2m.

National Health and Medical Research Council
Departmental costs for the Australia Fellowship Scheme will be funded from appropriation receivable balance over the next eight years.

Professional Services Review Scheme (PSR)
PSR’s need to fund items from the appropriation receivable balance will depend on the quantum of the anticipated increased workload into the out years.

Portfolio agencies for which this question is not applicable:

- Aged Care Standards and Accreditation Agency Limited
- Australian Institute of Health and Welfare
- Food Standards Australia New Zealand
- General Practice and Training Limited
- Private Health Insurance Administration Council
- Private Health Insurance Ombudsman

(6) Minister for Finance and Administration to answer this question.

Human Services: Appropriations

(Question No. 3357)

Senator Sherry asked the Minister for Human Services, upon notice, on 15 June 2007:

(1) Was there any appropriation receivable included as an asset in the balance sheet at 30 June 2006.

(2) Is there an appropriation receivable included as an asset in the estimated balance sheet at 30 June 2007.

(3) What are the reasons for any movement in the appropriation receivable between 30 June 2006 and 30 June 2007.

(4) With reference to the estimated actual results and financial position for the 2006-07 financial year, what amounts have been identified, for the 2007-08 financial years and for future years, for funding employee entitlements or asset replacements from the appropriation receivable balance.

(5) For the 2007-08 financial year and future years, what other items have been identified for funding from the appropriation receivable balance.
(6) What tests are applied by the Department of Finance and Administration over access to the appropriation receivable.

Senator Ludwig—The answer to the honourable senator’s question is as follows:

**Department of Human Services** (excluding the Child Support Agency and CRS Australia)

(1) Yes.
(2) Yes.
(3) The increase in the Appropriation Receivable for the core department reflects the significant increase in Capital Appropriations for the Access Card, Employee Provisions and Supplier Payables during the year.
(4) The following items have been identified for funding from the appropriation receivable balance:
   - employee provisions - $7.621 million;
   - capital - $2.402 million;
   - suppliers payable - $11.037 million;
   - capital for access card - $34.926 million; and
   - other provisions payable - $140,000.
(5) Please see answer to part 4.
(6) The Minister for Finance and Deregulation will respond to this part of the question.

**Department of Human Services - Child Support Agency**

(1) Yes.
(2) Yes.
(3) There has been a net increase in appropriation receivable between 30 June 2006 and 30 June 2007 of $32.7 million. This consists of $23.9 million of capital appropriations and $8.8 million movement in non-cash employee provisions and depreciation, offset by asset purchases and replacements.
(4) The following items have been identified for funding from the appropriation receivable balance:
   - Employee Provisions - $22.7 million;
   - Asset Replacements - $22.6 million; and
   - Capital investment - $23.9 million.
(5) Please see answer to part 4.
(6) The Minister for Finance and Deregulation will respond to this part of the question.

**Department of Human Services - CRS Australia**

(1) No.
(2) No.
(3) Not applicable.
(4) No amounts have been identified.
(5) No items have been identified for funding from the appropriation receivable balance.
(6) The Minister for Finance and Deregulation will respond to this part of the question.

**Centrelink**

(1) Yes.
(2) Yes.
(3) Appropriation receivable outstanding as at 30 June 2006 was fully drawn in 2006-07 to fund fixed assets acquisitions. Appropriation receivable as at 30 June 2007 ($2.232 million) relates to appropriation for 2006-07 additional output (i.e. for Drought Buses Budget measure). This amount has been drawn to date (12th December 2007).

(4) The following items have been identified for funding from the appropriation receivable balance:
   • long service leave - $60,000 – this amount has been drawn to date (12th December 2007).

(5) Please see answer to part 4.

(6) The Minister for Finance and Deregulation will respond to this part of the question.

**Medicare Australia**

(1) Yes.

(2) Yes.

(3) The Appropriations Receivable represents appropriations due to Medicare Australia for expenses which have been incurred but for which the related expenditure has not yet occurred. These include increases in employee provisions, suppliers and other liabilities on hand at year end as well as amounts of depreciation funding available to replace assets.

(4) The following items have been identified for funding from the appropriation receivable balance:
   • employee provisions – $345,783;
   • suppliers – $248,725;
   • leases - $35,802; and
   • other - $25,828.

In the absence of any major asset replacement or upgrade plan, Medicare Australia anticipates that there will be no need to draw down on the Appropriation Receivable balance for asset replacements.

(5) Please see answer to part 4.

(6) The Minister for Finance and Deregulation will respond to this part of the question.

**Australian Hearing**

(1) No.

(2) No.

(3) Not applicable.

(4) No amounts have been identified.

(5) No items have been identified for funding from the appropriation receivable balance.

(6) The Minister for Finance and Deregulation will respond to this part of the question.

**Health Services Australia**

(1) No.

(2) No.

(3) Not applicable.

(4) No amounts have been identified.

(5) No items have been identified for funding from the appropriation receivable balance.

(6) The Minister for Finance and Deregulation will respond to this part of the question.
Health and Ageing: Appropriations
(Question No. 3368)

Senator Sherry asked the Minister representing the Minister for Ageing, upon notice, on 15 June 2007:

(1) Was there any appropriation receivable included as an asset in the balance sheet at 30 June 2006.
(2) Is there an appropriation receivable included as an asset in the estimated balance sheet at 30 June 2007.
(3) What are the reasons for any movement in the appropriation receivable between 30 June 2006 and 30 June 2007.
(4) With reference to the estimated actual results and financial position for the 2006-07 financial year, what amounts have been identified, for the 2007-08 financial years and for future years, for funding employee entitlements or asset replacements from the appropriation receivable balance.
(5) For the 2007-08 financial year and future years, what other items have been identified for funding from the appropriation receivable balance.
(6) What tests are applied by the Department of Finance and Administration over access to the appropriation receivable.

Senator Ellison—The Minister for Ageing has provided the following answer to the honourable senator’s question:

(1) The Department reported an appropriation receivable of $119.610m in the Balance Sheet as at 30 June 2006. Portfolio agencies that have an appropriation receivable are provided in the following table:

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</tr>
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<td>Professional Services Review Scheme</td>
<td>5.045</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Portfolio agencies that did not have an appropriation receivable as at 30 June 2006 include:

- Aged Care Standards and Accreditation Agency Limited
- Australian Institute of Health and Welfare
- Australian Radiation Protection and Nuclear Safety Bureau
- Cancer Australia
- Food Standards Australia New Zealand
- General Practice and Training Limited
- National Health and Medical Research Council
- Private Health Insurance Administration Council
- Private Health Insurance Ombudsman

(2) The Department’s estimated appropriation receivable in the Balance Sheet as at 30 June 2007 is $122.880m. Portfolio agencies that will report an appropriation receivable balance at 30 June 2007 are provided in the following table:

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PORTFOLIO AGENCIES

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Portfolio agencies that do not have an estimated appropriation receivable as at 30 June 2007 include:

Aged Care Standards and Accreditation Agency Limited
Australian Institute of Health and Welfare
Food Standards Australia New Zealand
General Practice and Training Limited
Private Health Insurance Administration Council
Private Health Insurance Ombudsman

(3) The movement in the departmental appropriation receivable balance between 30 June 2006 and 30 June 2007 can be attributed to the annual operating result, capital expenditure and balance sheet movements specifically annual changes in receivables, creditors and employee entitlements account balances.

National Blood Authority
There was a nil movement in Appropriations Receivable under an Appropriation Bill. The movement in the Appropriation Receivable Special Account between the 2005-06 balance and the estimated 2006-07 balance was a reduction of cash held in the Official Public Account of $0.192m. The reduction relation to cash drawn down to meet agency expenses during the 2006-07 financial year.

National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC)
The movement relates to the appropriation receivable balance which transferred when NHMRC was established as an entity separate from the Department plus departmental appropriation funds not drawn down in 2006-07.

Professional Services Review Scheme
The movement in the appropriation receivable balance between 30 June 2006 and 30 June 2007 can be mainly attributed to the operating surpluses accumulated over recent years as a result of delays in the processing of cases involving legal challenges in the Federal Court, and a reduction in requests for review from Medicare Australia.

Portfolio agencies for which this question is not applicable:
Aged Care Standards and Accreditation Agency Limited
Australian Institute of Health and Welfare
Cancer Australia
Food Standards Australia New Zealand
General Practice and Training Limited
Private Health Insurance Administration Council
Private Health Insurance Ombudsman
The Department manages its annual operating performance with the aim of balancing the budget or achieving small operating surpluses each financial year. In addition, the Department’s creditors and receivables have historically remained relatively constant whilst employee entitlement provisions have generally increased. As a consequence of these factors the Department’s appropriation receivable balance has gradually increased over time. However, the Department’s accommodation strategy anticipates the refurbishment or relocation to new property leasehold office space over the next five years. The Department will utilise its appropriation receivable balance to fund this capital expenditure. Similarly, the Department also anticipates utilising the appropriation receivable balance to improve the Department’s IT environment.

**Australian Radiation Protection and Nuclear Safety Bureau (ARPANSA)**

The agency manages its annual budget with the aim of achieving a balanced budget each financial year. This is not always possible due to external factors impacting on project progress, particularly those associated with international contractual obligations. Delays in the delivery and installation of scientific and IT equipment also affected the year end position. ARPANSA will be implementing a large scale IT update program including a staged desktop refresh and backup facility enhancement. The appropriation receivable balance will be applied to improve the Agency’s ICT infrastructure.

**Cancer Australia**

The estimated end of financial year appropriation receivable for the 2006-07 financial year will include accumulated depreciation relating to future asset replacements of $75,940 and provisions for employee entitlements of $137,473. Please note, an estimate of employee entitlements for prior service is not yet available and as a result this balance equates to provisions relating to employee tenure at Cancer Australia only.

**National Blood Authority**

For the 2007-08 financial year $1.1m has been identified to fund employee entitlements (2008-09: $1.2m, 2009-10: $1.3m, 2010-11: $1.4m) and $0.8m to fund asset replacements (2008-09: $0.5m, 2009-10: $1.4m, 2010-11: $0.1m).

**National Health and Medical Research Council**

$1.8m has been identified to fund asset replacements and an estimate of $2.7m to fund employee entitlements.

**Professional Services Review Scheme (PSR)**

PSR is anticipating a significant increase in the number of cases being referred by Medicare Australia which will necessitate additional staffing and other resources. PSR will closely monitor progress to determine if costs can be met from recurrent funding. Asset replacements will include IT equipment of some $500,000 over the next two financial years.

Portfolio agencies for which this question is not applicable:

- Aged Care Standards and Accreditation Agency Limited
- Australian Institute of Health and Welfare
- Food Standards Australia New Zealand
- General Practice and Training Limited
- Private Health Insurance Administration Council
- Private Health Insurance Ombudsman

The Department has identified two major projects that will be funded from the appropriation receivable:
(i) 2009-10 accommodation project – the appropriation receivable will be used to fund fitout costs associated with providing new office accommodation for staff currently located in the ACT; and

(ii) Program management improvement project – the appropriation receivable will be used to fund the development of a grants management system that will provide a common basis for the management and administration of program funding across the Department.

Cancer Australia
There are no other items that have been identified for funding via an appropriation receivable balance.

National Blood Authority
Other items that have been identified for funding from the appropriation receivable balance in 2007-08 include: IT development – Integrated Data Management System $1.5m, other IT development $1.0m, expenses $0.6m and July 2007 States and Territories contributions $0.2m.

National Health and Medical Research Council
Departmental costs for the Australia Fellowship Scheme will be funded from appropriation receivable balance over the next eight years.

Professional Services Review Scheme (PSR)
PSR’s need to fund items from the appropriation receivable balance will depend on the quantum of the anticipated increased workload into the out years.

Portfolio agencies for which this question is not applicable:
- Aged Care Standards and Accreditation Agency Limited
- Australian Institute of Health and Welfare
- Food Standards Australia New Zealand
- General Practice and Training Limited
- Private Health Insurance Administration Council
- Private Health Insurance Ombudsman

(6) Minister for Finance and Administration to answer this question.

Centrelink

Senator Wong asked the Minister for Human Services, upon notice, on 21 June 2007:

With reference to the 2007-08 Budget papers which refer to efficiency measure savings for Centrelink of $107.9 million over 4 years, corresponding to a return of savings from Centrelink clients using self-service channels, and given that, during estimates hearings of the Finance and Public Administration Committee on 24 May 2007, service efficiencies were attributed to savings of $25 million, $26.3 million, $27.6 million and $29 million respectively for each of the financial years from 2007-08 to 2010-11 (F&PA Committee Hansard, pp 109-110): (a) can further details be provided on how saving from clients using self-service channels will be achieved; and (b) what will the impact of the use of self-service channels be on staffing numbers at Centrelink.

Senator Ludwig—The answer to the honourable senator’s question is as follows:

(a) Savings will be achieved as a result of customers using self-service options to conduct transactions via electronic means that would normally be conducted through a Customer Service Advisor (CSA), interaction in a Customer Service Centre (CSC) or Call Centre. Electronic transactions may be conducted via:
• automated phone services with secure login using Touchtone technology and/or Natural Language Speech Recognition (NLSR);
• internet with secure login; and
• electronic information transfer, e.g. confirmation of customer entitlement to receive a concession with concession providers.

(b) The estimated impact of these savings on staffing numbers (Average Staffing Levels) at Centrelink will be the following reductions per year:

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Human Services
(Question No. 3389)

Senator Wong asked the Minister for Human Services, upon notice, on 21 June 2007:

With reference to the new shared services centre:

(1) What is the start date for the full functioning of the centre.
(2) What are the planned staffing numbers and classifications for: (a) the human services function; and (b) financial transaction processing.
(3) (a) Where will the centre be physically located; and (b) on what date will staff be physically accommodated there.
(4) (a) What consultations will be conducted with staff on the establishment of the centre; (b) when will the consultations take place; and (c) can a copy be provided of any consultation material when it becomes available.

Senator Ellison—The answer to the honourable senator’s question is as follows:

(1), (2) and (3) The shared services centre proposal involves the preparation of a business case to determine the implementation process. As the business case has not been finalised details regarding the start date, staffing numbers and classifications, physical location and actual occupation date have yet to be determined.

(4) Staff affected by the shared services proposal will be consulted regularly, throughout the implementation process.

Centrelink and Medicare: National Office Reductions
(Question No. 3390)

Senator Wong asked the Minister for Human Services, upon notice, on 21 June 2007:

With reference to the announced savings of $48 million over 3 years for national office reductions in Centrelink and Medicare:

(1) How are these savings to be made.
(2) What will be the impact on staffing levels.
(3) By agency and function, what are the current staffing numbers and classification levels for each Centrelink and Medicare national office in: (a) human resources; and (b) financial transaction processing.
(4) What is the time frame for implementing these staffing changes.
(5) What particular head office functions in Centrelink and Medicare will be targeted.
(6) What plans are there for staff affected by these head office staffing changes to be redeployed into the new shared services centre.
(7) In regard to improvements to work practices in Centrelink and Medicare: (a) what work has been undertaken to analyse where work practices can be improved; and (b) what consultation has taken place with staff regarding these changed work practices.

Senator Ludwig—The answer to the honourable senator’s question is as follows:

**Centrelink**

(1) Centrelink is required to deliver savings of $40.4 million over three years under the “Efficiencies in Service Delivery Agencies” budget measure. The savings commence from the 2008-09 financial year. There are two components to this measure:

- $30.6 million in savings will be derived from efficiencies in National Office operations; and
- $9.8 million in savings are expected from the establishment of a shared service centre for processing of accounts payable and payroll transactions and related systems support.

(2) At this stage the impact on staffing levels is unknown.

(3) (a) While every manager and every team has certain responsibilities for managing their own people, the Centrelink National Support Office “Human Resource” function is carried out by the People and Planning Division and currently comprises (as at 31 October 2007):

- 4 Senior Executive Service officers;
- 69 Executive Level officers; and
- 158 Australian Public Service officers.

(b) Centrelink’s accounts payable team is located in Southport, Queensland and currently comprises:

- 1 Executive Level officer; and
- 34 Australian Public Service officers.

There are no accounts payable staff located in National Support Office.

(4) The savings commence from the 2008-09 financial year.

(5) Centrelink will not target particular functions of National Support Office in the identification of possible efficiencies.

(6) It is expected any staff reductions required as a result of identifying efficiencies in National Support Office operations would be achieved through voluntary natural attrition.

(7) (a) Centrelink continuously reviews work practices to identify improvements and efficiencies and to adjust workloads and budgets for changing priorities. This activity will continue throughout the 2007-08 financial year to ensure that savings targets are met.

(b) On 7 May 2007, all staff were advised of the budget measures by the Chief Executive Officer.

**Medicare Australia**

(1) Medicare Australia is required to deliver savings of $20.3 million over three years under the “Efficiencies in Service Delivery Agencies” budget measure. The savings commence from the 2008-09 financial year. There are two components to this measure:

- $17.4 million in savings will be derived from efficiencies in National Office operations; and
- $2.9 million in savings are expected from the establishment of a shared service centre for processing of accounts payable and payroll transactions and related systems support.

(2) At this stage the impact on staffing levels is unknown.

(3) (a) Medicare Australia currently has 55 FTE staff working in Human Resources in National Office. These include:

- 1 Senior Executive Service officer;
• 24 Executive Level officers; and
• 30 Australian Public Service officers.

Five of these staff are responsible for processing payroll in National Office and another 10 support the human resource management system.

In addition, Medicare Australia has payroll teams based in Sydney and Melbourne with combined staffing of 11.

(b) Medicare Australia’s accounts payable team is located in Medicare’s NSW State Office and currently comprises 10 Australian Public Service officers.

There are no accounts payable staff located in National Office.

Support and maintenance of the Medicare financial system is provided from within National Office. The team currently comprises:
• 4 Executive Level officers; and
• 6 Australian Public Service offices.

(4) The savings commence from 2008-09.

(5) Medicare Australia will not target particular functions of National Office in the identification of possible efficiencies.

(6) It is expected any staff reductions required as a result of identifying efficiencies in National Office operations will be achieved through voluntary natural attrition.

Staff potentially impacted by the shared services arrangement are located in National Office, New South Wales and Victoria. To the extent feasible, Medicare Australia would seek to ensure that these staff are offered redeployment within the shared services provider or within other functions within Medicare Australia.

(7) (a) Medicare Australia continuously reviews work practices to identify improvements and efficiencies and to adjust workloads and budgets for changing priorities. This activity will continue throughout 2007-08 to ensure that savings targets are met.

(b) On 7 May 2007, all staff were advised of the budget measures by the Chief Executive Officer and those potentially impacted by the shared services proposals briefed by managers. Subsequent meetings have been held with staff and the Community and Public Sector Union, to discuss the measures.

Palm Oil Plantations
(Question No. 3396)

Senator Milne asked the Minister representing the Minister for the Environment and Water Resources, upon notice, on 22 June 2007:

With reference to the announcement of the Government’s intention to spend $200 million over 5 years in avoided deforestation, and in particular to Indonesia:

(1) Will any of the funding be directed to protecting the existing forest habitats of fauna such as macaques, slow loris, gibbons, probiscis monkeys, tarsiers, sun bears, the flat headed cat, leopard cat, marbled cat, clouded leopard, Asian golden cat, Sumatran tiger and Bornean bay cat.

(2) What action will the Minister take to assist the Indonesian Government to prevent the clearing of forest habitat for palm oil plantations.

(3) Will additional funds be allocated to raise public awareness, both in Indonesia and Australia, of the loss of tropical forests as a result of conversion to palm oil plantations.
(4) Will the Minister ensure that any palm oil imported to Australia for use in biofuel or any other commercial product is certified and labelled accordingly.
(5) (a) What funding is being directed to the Natural Fuels Biodiesel Facility in the Northern Territory; (b) where is the palm oil sourced; and (c) have plantations been converted to palm oil plantations for biodiesel production at this plant.

Senator Abetz—The Minister for the Environment and Water Resources has provided the following answer to the honourable senator’s question:

(1) and (2) The Australian Government’s $200 million Global Initiative on Forests and Climate aims to improve sustainable forest management, including biodiversity conservation, and reduce greenhouse gas emissions from deforestation in selected developing countries. The majority of this funding is likely to be spent on projects in the Asia Pacific region, including Indonesia. The Australian Government recently announced a $10 million package to support efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from deforestation and promote sustainable forest management in Indonesia. As initial funding for Indonesia has only recently been approved and is focused on capacity building, it is not yet possible to determine the extent to which individual species will be protected as a result of the Global Initiative on Forests and Climate.

(3) and (4) The Australian Government is aware of the potential for significant greenhouse gas emissions associated with the production of palm oil in developing countries. This is an emerging issue internationally, and the Australian Government will be considering what actions are appropriate internationally and domestically to promote the sustainable use of palm oil.

(5) (a) No funding to the Natural Fuels Biodiesel Facility in the Northern Territory has been provided by the Department of the Environment and Water Resources.

(b) and (c) The Department of the Environment and Water Resources does not track information on the importation of palm oil and therefore does not hold information on these matters.

Obesity

(Question No. 3403)

Senator Bob Brown asked the Minister representing the Minister for Health and Ageing, upon notice, on 12 July 2007:

Is fructose or sucrose the cause, or suspected cause, of obesity; if so, what action has been undertaken to:

(a) reduce fructose or sucrose in the diet of Australians; and

(b) in particular, to reduce fructose or sucrose in manufactured foods.

Senator Ellison—The Minister for Health and Ageing has provided the following answer to the honourable senator’s question:

The Dietary Guidelines for Australian Adults notes that the link between sugar intake and obesity is not clear with conflicting results from studies on this issue.

Obesity is a complex problem with multiple contributing factors. There is no single cause or solution to the problem. At its most basic level, weight gain, which may eventually lead to obesity, occurs as a result of an energy imbalance. Simply put, an excess of kilojoules (energy from carbohydrates including sugars, fats, protein and alcohol) can lead to weight gain if this intake is greater than individual energy requirements.

(a) The Commonwealth Government promotes healthy eating through a range of publications and programs. This includes the development, promotion, dissemination and review of key national public health nutrition resources such as the Dietary Guidelines for Children and Adolescents in Australia, the Dietary Guidelines for Australian Adults and the Australian Guide to Healthy Eating. These

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evidence-based resources provide advice about healthy food choices and lifestyle patterns to promote good nutrition and health.

The Australian dietary guidelines recommend Australians consume only moderate amounts of sugars such as fructose and sucrose and foods containing added sugars. The guidelines specify that the amount of sugar added to the diet of Australians should be moderate to ensure that valuable nutrients are not displaced by foods high in added sugar and with limited nutrient density. *The Australian Guide to Healthy Eating* recommends that manufactured foods such as cakes, biscuits, pastries and soft drinks which may contain sugars only be eaten occasionally.

(b) A number of food manufacturers are investing in the development of reduced energy foods, smaller portion sizes and improved labelling.

**ACV Triton**

(Question No. 3428)

Senator Bob Brown asked the Minister for Justice and Customs, upon notice, on 3 August 2007:

With reference to the report in the *West Australian* newspaper of 1 August 2007 that the ACV Triton, bought to apprehend illegal fishermen, remains empty:

(1) (a) What is the total number of prisoners that have been held on the ship since it began operation; and (b) for each prisoner, for what length of time were they held.

(2) How many people are required to staff the ship.

(3) What qualifications, if any, must the staff hold to work on the ship.

(4) What are the total operating costs of the ship, including staffing, fuel and leasing costs.

(5) For each year since 2002, how many illegal vessel sightings have there been.

Senator Johnston—The answer to the honourable senator’s question is as follows:

(1) ACV Triton is a patrol vessel and should not be confused or described as a prison. The vessel provides the capacity to safely and securely accommodate intercepted illegal fishermen during the transit back to an Australian port for further investigation.

(a) From 29 January 2007 to 31 July 2007, Triton has transported 74 apprehended alleged illegal fishers.

(b) The maximum period of time that alleged illegal fishers have been accommodated on board is three days.

(2) Triton is operated by a civilian crew of 14 and can carry up to 30 Australian government officials, including armed Customs Boarding Party officers, and up to 30 illegal foreign fishers. A contracted paramedic is also embarked.

(3) Customs Officers are required to satisfy and maintain mandatory security, medical, dental, fitness and psychometric standards as part of their conditions of employment. Customs Boarding Party Officers must also hold a current Customs Use of Force certification and staff performing the role of tender coxswains must have the appropriate marine qualifications.

(4) The total operating costs of the ship, including staffing, fuel and leasing costs were provided in answer to Question No 62 from Senator Ludwig asked at the hearing of the Senate Standing Committee on Legal and Constitutional Affairs on 13 February 2007.

(5) Border Protection Command (BPC) is unable to provide a figure for sightings of illegal foreign fishing vessels. BPC-controlled aerial surveillance assets report all sightings of foreign fishing vessels in Australia’s Exclusive Economic Zone (AEEZ). This includes reports of sightings of vessels that may legitimately fish in areas such as the Memorandum of Understanding zone and vessels le-
It is not possible to positively identify which of these vessels are fishing illegally until they are intercepted by a surface response vessel. Additionally, as many foreign fishing vessels are of very similar construction and carry no identifying markings, the same vessel may be “sighted” (counted) by successive flights on the same or subsequent days.

In the 2005-06 financial year, Australian Defence Force (ADF) and Coastwatch (CW) assets made 8,619 reports of sightings of motorised Indonesian foreign fishing vessels (FFVs) in the high threat northern waters of the AEEZ (Coastwatch Surveillance Areas 1, 6 & 7). In 2006-07, ADF and CW assets made 3,609 reports of sightings of motorised FFVs in the same area. Since the start of the 2007-08 financial year to 31 July 2007, ADF and CW assets made 79 reports of sightings of motorised FFVs in the same area.

Combined annual ADF and Coastwatch figures are not available prior to 2005-06.

Australian and New Zealand Standard Commodity Classification (Question No. 3429)

Senator Sherry asked the Minister for Finance and Administration, upon notice, on 6 August 2007:

For each of the financial years 2002-03, 2003-04, 2004-05 and 2005-06, can a spreadsheet be provided that details total procurement spending for each of the following Australian and New Zealand Standard Commodity Classification codes: (a) 731 to 734, and the total for 73; (b) 751 to 754, and the total for 75; (c) 841 to 849, and the total for 84; and (d) 861.

Senator Minchin—The answer to the honourable senator’s question is as follows:

The Department of Finance and Administration is unable to provide such a spreadsheet as the information requested in relation to spending is not available and in relation to classification codes is unreliable. Agencies subject to the Financial Management and Accountability Act 1997 (FMA Act) are required to publish details of Australian Government contracts awarded with an estimated value of $10,000 or above. The value of contracts awarded is published, not spending. The Gazette Publishing System (GaPS) utilised the Australian and New Zealand Standard Commodity Classification code, which provided unreliable data about the industry classification of contracts awarded due to coding system limitations. As individual agencies enter the data into the system, they are best placed to provide the expenditure information requested.

Changes introduced on 3 September 2007 for reporting contracts awarded on AusTender are expected to lead to improved reporting on industry classifications as it utilises the United Nations Standard Products and Services Code (UNSPSC), a modern classification system.

Belvedere Park Nursing Home (Question No. 3447)

Senator McLucas asked the Minister representing the Minister for Ageing, upon notice, on 28 August 2007:

(1) With reference to the Belvedere Park Nursing Home:

(a) since it was sanctioned three times in 2000, how many visits has it received in relation to:

(i) review audits with notice,
(ii) unannounced review audits,
(iii) support contacts with notice,
(iv) unannounced support contacts; and

(b) in relation to each visit:
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(i) what was the date of the visit, and (ii) what was the finding.

(2) Has Mr Graeme Menere been involved in the day-to-day running of the Belvedere Park Nursing Home; if so:
   (a) what is the Government’s evidence for this; and
   (b) what action did the Government take when this information was received.

(3) Since 2001, what measures has the Government taken to ensure that Mr Menere, a disqualified individual, was not involved in the day-to-day running of the nursing home.

(4) (a) How many complaints has the Government received about the nursing home; and (b) in relation to each complaint:
   (i) on what date was the complaint received,
   (ii) what was the finding; and
   (iii) what action did the Government take.

(5) When did Saitta Pty Ltd, the company that owns the nursing home, receive its Approved Provider Status.

(6) Will the Government rule out Mr Menere operating residential aged care facilities in the future.

Senator Ellison—The Minister for Ageing has provided the following answer to the honourable senator’s question:

(1) (a) 4 Accreditation Site Audits, (ii) 1 unannounced Review Audit. (iii) Up until 2006 when aged care legislation was amended to enable Agency assessors to conduct unannounced visits, the Agency did not record whether a support contact was announced or unannounced. The number of Support Contacts conducted prior to the legislative amendment and since 2000 was 14. (iv) Since the legislative amendment, the Agency has conducted 14 unannounced Support Contacts between November 2006 and 21 August 2007.

(b) (i) Accreditation Site Audit of 16-18 January 2001 - (ii) Compliant in 37 out of 44 accreditation outcomes.

(i) Accreditation Site Audit of 11-13 December 2001 – (ii) Compliant in 36 out of 44 accreditation outcomes.

(i) Support Contact visit on 27 March 2001 – (ii) required improvements still to be addressed in Outcomes 1.1, 2.1, 3.1, 2.4 & 3.7 Report states that required improvements had been addressed in Outcomes 2.8 & 2.16

(i) Support Contact visit on 21 May 2001 – (ii) Looked at progress in relation to improving/developing Continuous Improvement and indicated some continuing deficiencies in the system.

(i) Support Contact visit on 19 July 2001 – (ii) Report indicated that standard 2 & 4 were reviewed for progress – deficiencies remain.

(i) Support Contact visit on 10 October 2001- (ii) Report indicated standard 2 & 4 reviewed for progress – deficiencies remain. The report stated that the service “has made progress.

(i) Accreditation Site Audit of 26-27 November 2002 – (ii) Compliant in 44 out of 44 accreditation outcomes.

(i) 3 Support Contacts in 2002 (dates not specified) – (ii) home compliant.

(i) 2 Support Contact visits in 2003 (dates not specified) – (ii) home compliant.

(i) 2 Support Contact visits in 2004 (dates not specified) – (ii) home compliant.
(i) Accreditation Site Audit of 16-17 November 2005 – (ii) Compliant in 44 out of 44 accreditation outcomes.

(i) Unannounced Support Contact on 29 November 2006 – (ii) home compliant.

(i) Unannounced Support Contact on 3 July 2007 – (ii) home non-compliant in 6 accreditation outcomes.

(i) Unannounced Support Contact on 3 August 2007 – (ii) home non-compliant in 11 outcomes.

(i) Review Audit of 6-9 August 2007 – (ii) Compliant in 2 out of 44 accreditation outcomes.

(i) Daily Support Contact Visits between 11 and 21 August 2007 between the date the Agency called serious risk at the home and the date all residents were transferred out of the home.

(2) On the basis of evidence specified in paragraph (2)(a) below, a delegate of the Secretary of the Department of Health and Ageing concluded that Mr Graeme Menere was acting as one of Saitta Pty Ltd’s key personnel at Belvedere Park Nursing Home.

(a) On the basis of the following evidence, a delegate of the Secretary of the Department of Health and Ageing concluded on 16 August 2007 that Mr Graeme Menere was acting as one of Saitta Pty Ltd’s key personnel at Belvedere Park Nursing Home:

- On 8 August 2007 an assessor employed by the Aged Care Standards and Accreditation Agency advised a Departmental officer that the assessors who were undertaking a Review Audit at Belvedere Park Nursing Home reported that Mr Graeme Menere informed them on the morning of 8 August 2007 that, as the Care Manager was on sick leave, he would be acting in her position for the next few weeks.

- On 11 August 2007 a Departmental officer spoke to Mr Russell Menere, a director of Saitta Pty Ltd, by telephone. During the course of the telephone conversation, Mr Russell Menere asked the Departmental officer to liaise with his brother, Mr Graeme Menere, on matters relating to the Service. Mr Russell Menere told the Departmental officer that he had sent a facsimile indicating that Mr Graeme Menere had his authority to act as a contact person for Saitta Pty Ltd. The Departmental officer stated that the Department had not received the facsimile and that she understood that the Aged Care Standards and Accreditation Agency had received such a facsimile. The Departmental officer explained to Mr Russell Menere that the Agency was a separate body to the Department and she outlined their respective roles.

- On 13 August 2007 a Departmental officer spoke to Ms Joan Menere, a director of Saitta Pty Ltd, by telephone to confirm arrangements for a meeting to be held on 14 August 2007 and in the course of the conversation Ms Joan Menere stated that Mr Graeme Menere would be attending the meeting. The Departmental officer stated that it would not be appropriate for Mr Graeme Menere to attend, as he is a disqualified individual. The Departmental officer asked Ms Menere whether she was aware that Mr Graeme Menere is a disqualified individual and she responded that she was aware of this fact.

- In the course of the meeting held on 14 August 2007, Mr Russell Menere stated that he employs Mr Graeme Menere to do odd jobs at the Service. When a Departmental officer drew Mr Russell Menere’s attention to the fact that the email address for the Manager of the service given to the Department by the approved provider was gpm10@bigpond.com and that this would appear to be Mr Graeme Peter Menere’s personal email address, Mr Russell Menere stated that the approved provider would change the email address.

- In the course of the meeting Mr Russell Menere stated that the Care Manager at the service was on extended leave. When asked who was managing Belvedere Park Nursing Home while the Care Manager was on leave, Mr Russell Menere was unable to name the person who was currently managing the service.
- In the course of the meeting held on 14 August 2007, Mr Russell Menere stated that he was unaware that the Aged Care Standards and Accreditation Agency was holding an exit interview on 15 August 2007 at Belvedere Park Nursing Home. When a Departmental officer explained that, at the exit interview, the Agency assessors would discuss their detailed findings regarding non-compliance at the service and asked Mr Russell Menere whether he would be attending the exit interview, Mr Russell Menere stated that he might not be able to do so because he had booked a return flight.

In addition to the evidence specified above, the following additional evidence has been obtained by the Department:

- On 21 August 2007 a Departmental officer obtained a copy of a contact list from an internal contact directory kept at the nurses’ station at Belvedere Park Nursing Home. The contact list has a heading which prominently says “Management: Graeme Menere Proprietor” under which appear contact details for Mr Graeme Menere.

- On 21 August 2007 a Departmental officer obtained a copy of a staff roster in respect of Belvedere Park Nursing Home which indicates that it was authorised by Mr Graeme Menere.

(b) On 16 August 2007 a delegate of the Secretary of the Department of Health and Ageing imposed sanctions on Saitta Pty Ltd for, amongst other matters, its failure to comply with its responsibility under subsection 63-1A of the Aged Care Act 1997 (the Act) to take all reasonable steps specified in the Sanctions Principles to ensure that none of its key personnel is a disqualified individual. The sanctions included revocation of Saitta Pty Ltd’s approval under Part 2.1 of the Act as a provider of aged care services and revocation of all the places allocated to Saitta Pty Ltd under Part 2.2 of the Act.

(3) On 17 January 2001 the Victorian State Manager of the Department of Health and Aged Care notified Saitta Pty Ltd and its then directors, Mr Graeme Menere and Mr Russell Menere, that Mr Graeme Menere was a disqualified person for the purposes of provisions of the Aged Care Act 1997 that were to commence on 18 January 2001. Mr Graeme Menere resigned as a director of Saitta Pty Ltd with effect from 17 February 2001.

Since 2001, the Department has challenged Mr Graeme Menere on a number of occasions to explain his role in relation to Belvedere Park Nursing Home. On each occasion, Mr Graeme Menere has stated that his role is purely clerical and does not involve making decisions regarding the management of the service. Throughout this period, the Department has consistently refused to have any dealings with Mr Graeme Menere as a representative of the management of Belvedere Park Nursing Home.

(4) (a) Under the Complaints Resolution Scheme prior to 1 May 2007, the Department received 10 complaints and 9 information calls. Since 1 May 2007, the Complaints Investigation Scheme has received 3 complaints.

(b) (i) 02/06/03 (ii) Resident Transfer (iii) Departmental Site Visit conducted and complaint not accepted.

(i) 12/06/2003 (ii) Physical Environment, Health and Personal Care, Medication Management (iii) Departmental site visit conducted before complaint withdrawn.

(i) 05/09/2003 (ii) Choice and Dignity (iii) Departmental site visit conducted and referred to the Agency.

(i) 10/09/2003 (ii) Abuse and restraint, Choice and Dignity, Physical Environment (iii) Departmental site visit conducted and referred to Agency and Police.

(i) 06/11/2003 (ii) Choice and Dignity, Physical Environment, Consultation and Communication (iii) Referred to the Agency.
CODEINE

**Question No. 3449**

**Senator Allison** asked the Minister representing the Minister for Health and Ageing, upon notice, on 30 August 2007:

1. Is the Minister aware that the Food and Drug Administration in the United States of America issued a MedWatch alert on 17 August 2007 on the use of medications containing codeine by breastfeeding mothers, after it was found that up to 28 per cent of nursing mothers rapidly metabolise codeine into morphine, resulting in infant deaths.

2. Will the Therapeutic Goods Administration issue a similar alert.
Senator Ellison—The Minister for Health and Ageing has provided the following answer to the honourable senator’s question:

(1) Yes.

(2) Not at this time. The approved Product Information (PI) document for health professionals already warns that codeine-containing drugs should be avoided in breastfeeding women. There are also extensive precautionary statements in the PI in the section “Use in Pregnancy” where it states that regular use during pregnancy may cause physical dependence in the foetus, leading to withdrawal symptoms in the neonate. Caution is also advised in regards to the administration of codeine during labour as it may cause respiratory depression in the newborn infant.

Indigenous Community Liaison Officers

(Question No. 3467)

Senator Allison asked the Minister representing the Minister for Health and Ageing, upon notice, on 12 September 2007:

With reference to comments made by Professor Jon Altman from the Australian National University on the website www.crikey.com.au on 31 August 2007:

(1) Is it the case that Indigenous Community Liaison Officers (ICLOs) are employed to assist the Child Health Check (CHC) teams and that the role of ICLOs is to introduce the CHC teams to the communities and to assist with communication and interpretation, including by providing an explanation of informed consent.

(2) Is it the case that ICLOs are required to be familiar with and understand an eight page document that provides key information on the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Child Health Check (Medicare Item 708), and that teams in Mamingrida may be required to interpret up to 13 community languages, including Ndjebenna and Kunibeidji spoken by the local traditional owners as well as speakers of Kunbarlang, Kuninjku, Kune, Balamburrngu, Djinang, Wulaki, Burrarr (in three dialects), Nakkara, Gunartpa and Gurrgoni.

(3) (a) Is it the case that ICLOs are paid $100 per day; (b) are ICLOs covered (i) by an award; if so, which award, or (ii) under Australian Workplace Agreements; (c) is the award rate for interpreters $100; and (d) in the cases described, what is the definition of ‘a day’s work’.

(4) Does the Minister agree that $100 a day is fair and reasonable compensation for the complex tasks at hand; if so, why.

Senator Ellison—The Minister for Health and Ageing has provided the following answer to the honourable senator’s question:

(1) I am advised by the Department that where a need is envisaged for an Indigenous Community Liaison Officer (ICLO), an arrangement is made with a local auspice body to provide the service. The role of the ICLO is to facilitate introductions, communication and provide interpretation services where necessary between members of the community and the Child Health Check Team.

(2) It is useful if ICLOs are familiar with the key aims of and information relating to the child health check. ICLOs would receive assistance in familiarisation with relevant documentation from the Child Health Check Team or the local health clinic. There is no requirement that the ICLOs know up to thirteen languages and the ICLOs don’t have to be qualified interpreters.

(3) (a) ICLOs are engaged by the auspice body and not the Department. Their remuneration and employment arrangements are therefore a matter for the auspice body. Auspice bodies have flexibility to manage the number of ICLOs they engage and their hours. The Department proposed an amount of $100 per ICLO per day; however, the auspice body is best placed to decide on
how it wishes to provide the service. There is also provision for additional resources to be negotiated on a community by community basis.

(b) (i) No, interpreter services set their own rates, as guided by their professional body, the National Accreditation Authority for Translators and Interpreters. (ii) As stated above the employment arrangements of ICLOs are a matter for the auspice body, as the employer.

(c) According to the National Accreditation Authority for Translators and Interpreters there is no specific award rate for interpreters.

(d) Please see response to 3(a).

(4) The Department is seeking the assistance of auspice bodies to provide a community liaison service when the Child Health Check teams are in their community. The assistance provided by the ICLOs will vary depending on the particular community. As the employer, the auspice body is best placed to determine remuneration and other arrangements for ICLOs.

Parliament House: Lobbyist Passes
(Question No. 3470)

Senator Bob Brown asked the President of the Senate, upon notice, on 18 September 2007:

(1) Has a Mr Warwick John been issued a lobbyist pass for Parliament House; if so, who sponsored his application for the pass.

(2) Have any members of the Exclusive Brethren sect been issued with lobbyist passes for Parliament House; if so: (a) what are their names; and (b) for each of these people, who sponsored their application.

The President—The answer to the honourable senator’s question is as follows:

(1) Mr Warwick John holds a Parliament House photographic pass in the category of Lobbyist. The sponsors for his application were The Hon. D. S. Vale, MP, and Mr M. D. Ferguson, MP.

(2) Applicants for Parliament House photographic passes are not required to provide their religious denomination, and introduction of such a requirement would not receive my support as President.

Multiple Chemical Sensitivity
(Question No. 3476)

Senator Allison asked the Minister representing the Minister for Health and Ageing, upon notice, on 21 September 2007:

(1) Has the National Industrial Chemicals Notification and Assessment Scheme (NICNAS) Community Engagement Forum undertaken to conduct a community consultation on Multiple Chemical Sensitivity (MCS); if so, when will the consultation be conducted.

(2) Given the complex disability access issues for people with MCS, how will the NICNAS forum ensure that people with MCS are adequately consulted.

(3) When will the Office of Chemical Safety publicly release the results of the MCS clinical review conducted in Sydney.

Senator Ellison—The Minister for Health and Ageing has provided the following answer to the honourable senator’s question:

(1) The MCS Review is a joint project between the Office of Chemical Safety (OCS) and NICNAS. Both OCS and NICNAS are working towards finalising a technical report on MCS. The MCS Review was discussed at the NICNAS Community Engagement Forum (CEF) meetings of 15 May
and 28 August 2007. The CEF will consider how to assist in communicating the findings of the MCS report to the community once they have the draft report.

(2) Individuals with MCS have complex access issues. Details of the form and timing of the community consultative process have yet to be finalised but will be tailored to the needs of the MCS community. A briefing to key MCS community representatives at a location of suitable low environmental chemical impact is being considered.

(3) The results of the MCS clinical review including the workshop held in Sydney will be incorporated into the MCS report and so will be released as part of this report.