



QUESTION TIME
OF THE
LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
FOR THE
AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY

HANSARD

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Thursday, 29 November 2018

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Questions without notice
Calvary Hospital—plumbing

MR COE: My question is to the Minister for Health and Wellbeing. Minister, are you aware of any instances where wards or even whole floors at Calvary Public Hospital have been without hot water?

MS FITZHARRIS: No, I am not.

MR COE: Minister, have patients been transferred out of any wards due to a lack of hot water at Calvary at any point in the past couple of months?

MS FITZHARRIS: I will see what I can find out for Mr Coe.

MRS DUNNE: Minister, have there been any other plumbing-related problems at Calvary Public Hospital?

MS FITZHARRIS: I note the opposition's ongoing interest in maintenance at our very busy public hospitals. What I do know about our very busy public hospitals is that staff right across Calvary and also at Canberra Hospital, the Centenary hospital and the Canberra Region Cancer Centre certainly do need to move patients from time to time for a variety of reasons in a 24-hour a day, seven-day a week operating environment. I will take the specific question on notice.

Municipal services—bike parking

MS LE COUTEUR: My question is to the Chief Minister as the minister responsible for the oversight of the City Renewal Authority. When bike parking is removed from the city for development is there a requirement for the same amount of parking to be replaced very close by, or even at the same place?

MR BARR: As I understand the question it is: if a development is occurring that would close temporary bike parking, would new bike parking be needed?

Ms Le Couteur: No, not temporary—bike parking.

MR BARR: Just overall?

Ms Le Couteur: Yes.

MR BARR: So are we aiming to increase the total amount of bike parking in the City Renewal Authority precinct? The answer is yes.

MS LE COUTEUR: Chief Minister, as we would all be aware, the authority's recent pavement works on London Circuit in the city removed a large amount of bike parking, for example, at Bailey's Corner. Where and when is this bike parking going to be replaced?

MR BARR: At various locations around the city as part of upgrade programs.

MS CHEYNE: Chief Minister, what wider amenity improvements are underway in the city?

MR BARR: An extensive range. People can see outside the Assembly a range of projects that have either recently been completed or are currently underway. There is an unprecedented level of renewal activity occurring in the CBD, led by the ACT government, where the ACT government is a major tenant—clearly, in the block next door to us here in the Assembly—or driven by the private sector. That level of activity has not been seen in the CBD in the history of self-government, and this will continue as stage 1 of light rail is completed and as we move into the second stage of that project. Clearly, there are a number of further projects that the government is pursuing, not least of which is the new Canberra theatre precinct adjacent to where we are here today, together with improvements that are scheduled to be part of the section 63 project, including extending Edinburgh Avenue up to Vernon Circle.

The government will continue to focus on small, medium and large-scale renewal projects, delivered either by us or in partnership with commercial property owners in the city.

ACTION bus service—school services

MISS C BURCH: My question is to the Minister for Transport. Minister, with schools coming to the end of the academic year, students, parents, teachers and principals are still in the dark about when the new transport network will start. Some schools are considering changing their start and finish times to account for public transport timetables. For some schools the academic year finishes next Friday, 7 December. Minister, on what date will the new school bus routes commence and on what date will the remainder of network 19 commence?

MS FITZHARRIS: I note that we were not able to have the opportunity to discuss this matter yesterday but, as Miss Burch would be aware, I did circulate a proposed amendment to her motion which indicated that I would be in a position to make an announcement about that by next Monday and I certainly intend to do that because I am very aware of the need for schools, families and the broader community to have certainty about this matter. What I can say in principle is that the routes have been agreed and it is of the utmost importance to Transport Canberra and to me as the minister to make sure that schools and families are aware that our commitment has been and remains that kids will be able to get to school on time.

I noted another round of fairly alarming scaremongering social media discussion from Miss Burch yet again yesterday seeking to scaremonger and undermine the biggest investment we have seen in our bus network for a very long time. What we know is that this opposition is anti public transport just like they are anti public health.

Members interjecting—

MADAM SPEAKER: No encouragement, Ms Fitzharris, please.

MISS C BURCH: Minister, can you guarantee that with your update on Monday

schools will know for certain the date that the new network will commence?

MS FITZHARRIS: Yes, I absolutely can.

MS LEE: Minister, by what method are you going to be communicating this to the principals?

MS FITZHARRIS: As has been discussed in this place, there is an existing consultative committee that involves Transport Canberra and school representatives across all sectors. Also there are ongoing mechanisms for Transport Canberra to communicate with the various P and C groups, and that will take place before and when I make the public announcement. They will be well informed. We are also working incredibly closely with the Education Directorate.

ACTION bus service—network

MS LAWDER: My question is to the Minister for Transport. Minister, in recent annual reports hearings you mentioned the possibility of a staged rollout of network 19 if light rail is not ready to start operations by the beginning of school term 1 next year. What are the government's contingency plans? Are there sufficient buses and bus drivers available to provide all bus services promised in the new network while also covering the Gungahlin to the city route in the place of light rail?

MS FITZHARRIS: There are a number of questions there but, in short, I refer Ms Lawder to my previous answer, that I will be making announcements about these matters. I will not make those announcements now, because that would—

MADAM SPEAKER: Breach standing orders.

MS FITZHARRIS: breach standing orders. Our commitment is to roll out network 19, the biggest ever investment in our bus network in recent memory, as well as get light rail stage 1 underway, because what we also know is that this opposition has never once supported light rail. This side of the house looks forward very much to the start of light rail and to the start of network 19, and to reminding the Canberra community of the opposition's relentless negativity on light rail and their outright opposition to it, from which I do not think they can ever recover.

Mr Hanson interjecting—

MADAM SPEAKER: Mr Hanson, please! Ms Lawder.

MS LAWDER: Minister, what has been calculated in your contingency plans for overtime required for bus drivers to provide all bus services promised in the new network while covering the Gungahlin to the city route in place of light rail?

MS FITZHARRIS: The opposition can be assured that we will look after our bus drivers. They do a great job and they have been working very closely with Transport Canberra on the design and implementation of the new network. I know for sure that they welcome this massive investment in Canberra's bus network.

MISS C BURCH: Minister, have contingency timetables been prepared for the eventuality that buses will be required on the Gungahlin to city route after the beginning of school term 1?

MS FITZHARRIS: All contingency planning is underway.

Multicultural affairs—summit

MS ORR: My question is to the Minister for Multicultural Affairs. Minister, can you please update us on the multicultural summit held last week.

MR STEEL: I thank Ms Orr for her question. I am very pleased to report to the Assembly on the multicultural summit which was held last Friday, another important step in building Canberra as an inclusive and multicultural city.

Convening the summit is an important part of our parliamentary agreement, which also included establishing a multicultural advisory body. The Multicultural Advisory Council played a significant role in organising and facilitating the summit and also facilitating a series of six roundtables in the lead-up to the summit to maximise the participation of the multicultural community.

Mr Coe interjecting—

MR STEEL: Canberra's multicultural community is diverse, and the purpose of the summit was to strive for a connected community where everyone is respected, included and valued. Delegates to the summit included 150 community leaders, service providers and government officials. It was a rare opportunity to bring such a broad range of multicultural communities in Canberra together to engage in discussions about how we can create a more inclusive city. The summit will inform a second multicultural action plan for 2019-20, which will meet the aspirations of the multicultural framework.

From the learnings of the roundtables and the your say survey that took place before the summit—which everyone was invited to, Mr Coe—and from the agreed outcomes of the summit, the ACT government will work with the ACT Multicultural Advisory Council and the multicultural community to develop a second multicultural action plan and build an even more inclusive Canberra.

Opposition members interjecting—

MADAM SPEAKER: Members, the noise from my left is quite distracting. Can you please keep it down.

MS ORR: Minister, what were the key themes discussed at the summit?

MR STEEL: As I outlined earlier this week in the Assembly, the first multicultural action plan has delivered some real outcomes. The second action plan needs to continue this work and progress the aspirations of the multicultural framework over the next two years.

With this in mind, four things were established before the summit to assist in actively ensuring that the participants were able to address the multicultural framework objectives. These themes were “Canberra—A city where diversity is valued”, “Canberra—A city where everyone belongs”, “Canberra—A healthy and accessible city” and “Canberra’s future”. Together with these themes, participants were asked to ensure that there was a more general focus on social cohesion.

A keynote speaker at the summit was Anthea Hancocks, the CEO of the Scanlon Foundation, who set the scene on how we can work together to build a welcoming, prosperous and cohesive nation.

All summit participants then worked towards achieving outcomes in their workshops throughout the day for each of the themes. I would like to put on record my thanks to all delegates to and participants in the summit and the round tables for their work.

MR PETTERSSON: Minister, why are large events like the summit important to building a more inclusive Canberra?

MR STEEL: I thank Mr Pettersson for his supplementary. The ACT government is continually working on new ways to consult with Canberrans. We have done a lot of work using deliberative democracy processes to ensure that all Canberrans have the opportunity to have their voices heard and valued.

Discussions at the summit utilised deliberative democracy methods to help guide the discussion on ensuring that Canberra remains a city where diversity is valued and where everyone belongs, and that we have a city that is healthy and accessible now and into the future.

To deliver a strong and workable second multicultural action plan, we once again need contributions from within government but, more importantly, from the community. In the coming months the office of multicultural affairs will take the outcomes that have been identified at the summit and turn them into a draft action plan addressing the three objectives in the framework.

Once we have a draft action plan, we will take it back out to the Multicultural Advisory Council and, following their input, put it out for consultation with the broader community. The action plan will make sure that Canberra remains the most inclusive and welcoming city in Australia.

Sport—night-time events

MR MILLIGAN: My question is to the Minister for Sport and Recreation. On 22 September the National Capital Motor Sports Club conducted a trial night-time event at Fairbairn Park. After months of preparation upgrading the circuit, building dirt mounds and containers for noise mitigation and installing light towers, the response was very positive with nearly 2,000 people turning out for the event. Minister, where to now for this popular sport in Canberra?

MS BERRY: I thank Mr Milligan for the question. I cannot recall having had any recent—or at least in the past couple of months or little while—contact from anybody

from the association. I cannot really provide any response to you because I have not spoken to the association at all; they have not contacted my office. I am aware of it. I think I saw a story across social media or maybe it was in the paper, but I have not spoken with anyone from that association.

MR MILLIGAN: Minister, can you explain why the ACT government gives itself exemptions from noise restrictions for projects like the light rail but is trying to hold back the National Capital Motorsports Club from hosting eight night events a year?

MS BERRY: Noise exemptions are not within my portfolio responsibility but—

Mr Coe interjecting—

MADAM SPEAKER: I would not respond to interjections, Ms Berry.

MS BERRY: I cannot provide a response on actual noise restrictions but I can provide some information about the noise restrictions that I understand were put in place or alleviated as part of this trial for this night race that occurred for that motor racing event.

MR WALL: Minister, to what extent do noise restrictions inhibit motorsport from occurring in the ACT?

MS BERRY: I will have to take that question on notice.

Crime—offences while on bail

MR HANSON: My question is to the Attorney-General. Attorney, recently Australia has witnessed yet another tragic attack where an innocent person was killed. The accused killer was free on bail at the time of the attack. In the ACT, there have been other incidents of crimes committed by people free on bail, yet the legal system here in the ACT and your government are still not capable of tracking that data. Attorney-General, will you now commit to a review of our bail system as a matter of urgency?

MR RAMSAY: I thank the shadow Attorney-General for the question and the actual gap in logic between the first part of his sentence and the second. In terms of the review, which actually is the question but not the premise of the question, I said before that we will continue to work with the directorate and across the government to look at the best ways of ensuring that our bail laws are serving the needs of our community. We believe that they do. We believe that the appropriate way of working—

Mr Hanson: Madam Speaker—

MADAM SPEAKER: Minister, resume your seat. Stop the clock.

Mr Hanson: There was a lot of waffle there, but in terms of being directly relevant, the question was about whether there will be a review of bail. I would ask the Attorney-General to be directly relevant and answer that question as to whether he

will conduct a review into our bail system.

MADAM SPEAKER: I think he was talking about a review across government. Attorney-General.

MR RAMSAY: In fact, I was halfway through the sentence, saying that we believe the best way of going is continual improvement. I have answered that question many times in this place before, and it is the same answer today.

MR HANSON: Attorney-General, will you commit to delivering a system to track crimes committed by those on bail before a tragedy occurs in the ACT and, if so, when will this government be able to track what crimes are committed by people on bail?

MR RAMSAY: I thank the shadow attorney-general for his question in this area, which has been covered a number of times in annual reports hearings and estimates hearings. Again, the ongoing work in terms of the implementation for the ICMS and the court process is something that we are committed to and we will roll it out when it is ready.

MRS JONES: Minister, how can the community feel safe when the government has promised to address the problem for over six years but to date has not done so in their tracking system?

MR RAMSAY: I thank Mrs Jones for the question. Again, the connection between the first part of the question and the second part is, I think, problematic. The assumption in the question is that Canberra is unsafe. Let me say that that is clearly not true. I think it is important to repeat that Canberra is a safe place to live and we do not believe in the politics of fear and scaring that clearly is the case for those members opposite and those members in other jurisdictions with the same flavour as our Canberra Liberals.

We will continue to roll out improvements to the criminal justice system. We will continue to improve, as we have invested significantly already. What we will do is reaffirm that Canberra is a safe place and we will continue to work on improving the justice system.

Emergency services—minimum crewing

MRS JONES: My question is to the Minister for Police and Emergency Services. I refer to the circumstances where ACT firefighters responded to 201 medical assists in the 2015 calendar year, and 368 for the 2017-18 financial year, an increase of 83 per cent with no increase in crewing. This week you told the Assembly that you have done away with existing minimum crewing levels for ACT ambulances. Minister, what calculations have you made for the additional firefighting staff which will be required to make up for the lack of ambulance officers, given that the firies have had to respond to a growing number of ambulance calls when the ambulances are not available?

MR GENTLEMAN: There is no lack of ambulance officers in the ACT. In fact we

have recruited 23 more, and we have more ambulance vehicles coming on the road as well. We find front-line services to be very important. That is why this government has resourced them. We have resourced firefighters, paramedics and police across our budget years. Of course, the Canberra Liberals voted against the budget which provided resourcing for our front-line services, so I note the hypocrisy in the question. We will continue, of course, to resource our front-line services, unlike those opposite.

MRS JONES: What consultation have you undertaken with the fire services or their representatives about the additional work they will have to undertake?

MR GENTLEMAN: I have met with the firefighters union and the individual firefighters as I have been visiting stations to discuss their operations. But I do not involve myself in their operations. I stay back on the policy and resource side and let their operational staff do that work for them.

MR PARTON: Minister, what allowance have you made for additional firefighters to respond to ambulance calls when an ambulance is not available and firefighters will have to be the first responders?

MR GENTLEMAN: As members will recall, I announced just the other day a new recruit college for firefighters. That will start just after Christmas. In the meantime we are doing a lateral recruitment drive to ensure that our firefighter numbers are up to the level required. Indeed, we will continue to recruit firefighters and resource them, unlike those opposite.

Mental health—staff safety

MRS DUNNE: My question is to the Minister for Mental Health. I refer to a letter from the ACT Secretary of the Australian Nursing and Midwifery Federation about assaults in mental health facilities. It states:

Nurses injured or witness to reported assaults state that post-incident follow-up and care has been inadequate.

Nurses state that they face the decision to either physically withdraw from the area, which leaves other consumers vulnerable to assault, or remain to protect consumers and other staff and risk being assaulted.

Has the post-incident follow-up and care provided to nursing staff in mental health been inadequate, and if so, why?

MR RATTENBURY: As I have said before in this place, no-one should be assaulted at work, and it distresses me every time one of our staff is assaulted. In terms of post-incident follow-up, protocols are in place. There is, of course, the immediate response of staff seeking medical treatment and they are given the opportunity to attend the emergency department if necessary or other options. Staff may go home as a result of an injury and staff will be offered leave for the period it takes them to recover from an injury.

At the end of that process staff are then offered a choice. Some staff will not want to come back to working in the particular facility in which they were assaulted and staff

are given that choice. They can be re-allocated to another part of ACT Health either for a temporary period or permanently. I cannot give an answer for every case, but of the cases that I have been briefed on in recent times I think every staff member I have read about has opted to return to the location in which they were working.

In saying that I do not back away from the fact that these are serious issues being raised by the Nursing and Midwifery Federation. On that basis the new CEO of Canberra Health Services is meeting with the secretary of the Nursing and Midwifery Federation at least once a fortnight as we work through some of these issues.

MRS DUNNE: Minister, what have you done to ensure the security of staff, patients and other people in the mental health facility since this issue was raised by the ANMF?

MR RATTENBURY: Mrs Dunne has asked me this question in various forms on a number of occasions now, and I have outlined to her the steps that I have taken. That has included work that is being done on the nurse safety strategy, being led by the Chief Nurse. I have previously told this chamber that I have specifically asked the Chief Nurse to focus on issues that are unique to the mental health space, to recognise the particular issues that afflict mental health staff; the particular risks that are there for mental health staff. We have an occupational violence strategy being developed, which I spoke about in my ministerial statement this morning.

As I said in my previous answer, the CEO of Canberra Health Services is now meeting with the nurse and midwifery union at least once a fortnight to discuss these matters on an ongoing basis and ensure that there is a clear line of communication, in addition to the lines of communication that are taking place at executive director level, as well as at team leader level on the ground.

MRS JONES: Minister, what are the circumstances unique to mental health staff that we need to deal with?

MR RATTENBURY: Mrs Jones, we face in caring for people with mental health disorders and mental health disturbances people whose behaviour can be extremely challenging at times. They exhibit behaviours that most of us would find deeply confronting on occasion. Sometimes that can be even worse. People will do unexpected things.

Those are the challenges that mental health nurses face. They use their clinical skills to manage people and they seek to pre-empt the possibility of violence but on occasions violence does occur. That is a constant learning process. It is often a constant learning process with a particular individual, let alone in a systems-wide approach. So it is incredibly challenging.

I respect the work that staff do. I acknowledge the particular risks that they face. That is why we need to make sure that we are constantly striving to ensure we have the best practices, we are learning from other jurisdictions and that we are learning from our own lived experience.

WorkSafe ACT—holiday season activity

MR PETTERSSON: My question is to the Minister for Employment and Workplace Safety. Minister, are we expecting to see any targeted engagement in workplaces in the lead-up to summer and the holiday season from WorkSafe ACT?

MS STEPHEN-SMITH: I thank Mr Pettersson for his interest in workplace safety over the holiday season. The ACT government's message to employers this holiday season is clear. If you rush and cut corners on safety, you will be penalised. We want to ensure that all workers get home safely this summer.

We know that summer is a time when the number of risks increase, particularly when workers feel pressured to rush to complete work before sites shut down for the year. In addition, heat, fatigue and potentially the influence of alcohol around the festive season can impact people's judgement and therefore their safety.

Meeting a deadline is not worth an injury to a worker. Safety must remain the highest priority on all sites and workplaces at all times. So WorkSafe ACT inspectors will be continuing their workplace visits over these periods, including continuing their important audit work into young worker safety.

WorkSafe ACT will be providing reminders to workers and employers about the importance of managing the effects of heat on workers, particularly for those working outside or in hot environments, such as in the hospitality industry.

WorkSafe will be working with employers to ensure that work sites are left safe and secure over any shutdown periods and that sites are checked for safety before work resumes after a break.

MR PETTERSSON: Minister, is WorkSafe ACT undertaking any activity to take into account the increased retail activity over the holiday season?

MS STEPHEN-SMITH: I thank Mr Pettersson for his supplementary. In 2017, a survey undertaken by the SDA found that 90 per cent of ACT fast food and retail workers surveyed reported being verbally abused by a customer in the previous 12 months. This was higher than the national average. Further, more than one in five workers reported being physically abused. Madam Speaker, this is simply unacceptable. There is no excuse for someone to experience physical or verbal abuse for simply doing their job.

This holiday season, the ACT government is partnering with the SDA to get the message out to our community that no-one deserves a serve. Access Canberra will be providing information to workers that such behaviour is not acceptable and will provide information on where workers can find support if they experience such behaviour.

We also acknowledge that Canberra's workforce is diverse. This is why we will be providing information in simplified Chinese, Hindi and Vietnamese, three of the most common languages other than English spoken by workers in the retail and fast food sectors in the ACT. This will support the accessibility of this information to workers across these sectors.

Importantly, Access Canberra will be providing industry with material they can display to remind people to check their behaviour before they get to the check-out or engage with workers in such industries. While the focus for this campaign is retail and fast food industries, the message extends to all industries. We know that Christmas can be a stressful time but this is no excuse for verbally, let alone physically, abusing a worker in the service sector. All workers deserve to be treated with respect, be it around their safety, their rights, secure work or the behaviours they experience from customers every day.

MS CHEYNE: Minister, with the holiday and barbecue season almost upon us—or, for some of us, upon us—could you please outline WorkSafe ACT’s activities in relation to gas safety?

MS STEPHEN-SMITH: I thank Ms Cheyne for her interest in gas safety, which is an important issue as people spend more time outside with their barbecues. Every worker has the right to go home safely each day, and every family should safely enjoy their holiday. Unfortunately, this year we have already seen one tragic fatality and a number of instances where members of the community and workers have been injured as a result of the incorrect transportation or handling of flammable gases.

These devastating incidents have highlighted the importance of remaining vigilant when storing, transporting and using gas bottles and appliances. As part of their focus on gas safety in the lead-up to the holiday season, a time when we know that people move and use gas bottles a lot, Access Canberra and WorkSafe ACT will be providing information to the community and industry over the warmer months. A video on gas safety will be posted on social media, and important information will be provided through the Access Canberra website.

The ACT government urges all Canberrans to take a moment to ensure that they are being safe this holiday season and over summer, particularly when it comes to storing, transporting and using gas.

Mental health—duress alarms

MR WALL: My question is to the Minister for Mental Health. Minister, audits of both the adult mental health unit and the mental health short-stay unit have revealed that personal duress alarms are missing. Minister, what actions have been taken to investigate and recover missing duress alarms in the adult mental health unit and the mental health short-stay unit and do all staff currently working in these units have duress alarms?

MR RATTENBURY: I will check that for Mr Wall and let him know as soon as I can.

MR WALL: Minister, what actions have you taken to ensure that all security systems at the adult mental health unit and the mental health short stay unit are working properly and are fit for purpose?

MR RATTENBURY: Madam Speaker, I have not been advised of any concerns in

that area but, as I said, I will check for Mr Wall whether there are problems.

MRS DUNNE: Minister, how often are you briefed on security of staff in the adult mental health unit and the mental health short-stay unit?

MR RATTENBURY: I meet formally with ACT Health every week, and often more than that in a given week depending on what is going on. Staff security is frequently on the agenda of those meetings because of the challenges I spoke about in my earlier answers.

Government—swimming pool safety

MR PARTON: My question is to the Minister for Building Quality Improvement. Minister, according to the *Canberra Times*, Royal Life Saving ACT has made multiple recommendations to government on the safety of backyard swimming pool legislation, including for a central pools registry. The same *Canberra Times* report said that the coroner recommended a database two years ago. Minister, what is the status of the government's policy development on pool fencing following the matters raised by Royal Life Saving ACT and the coroner?

MR RAMSAY: I thank Mr Parton for the question. The first point is to clarify that the coroner did not make a recommendation that there be an ACT register as reported in the *Canberra Times*. That was an error. There has been no coronial recommendation for that. Certainly some key announcements were made in March this year, by Minister Gentleman in the portfolio for which he had responsibility at that stage, that we were taking steps over the coming years to make sure that every backyard pool in the territory meets modern standards.

Those steps have included working with industry over the past months; the EPSDD commenced that in June this year. The next step is consultation with pool owners. We will be launching safety matters over summer, in the very near future. As part of that, we will be having broader consultation with pool owners over the summer through a broad range of communications to make sure that people are aware of their responsibilities and to make sure that people are able to attend to the safety of their pools. We will also be exploring further ways of being able to ensure that we have the appropriate levels of information in the ACT government.

MR PARTON: Minister, is a pools register a part of the equation on the way forward on this? How will pool owners be communicated with in regards to their responsibilities in this area?

MR RAMSAY: I thank Mr Parton for the supplementary question. We are looking at ways of gathering the information. There is no policy decision that we would have a single register, but I am speaking with the directorate as to the most appropriate way forward.

In terms of communication with pool owners there is a broad range of ways: media, social media, direct contact. There are a number of ways to make sure that people are aware of their responsibilities and that we are able to gather information to ensure that all Canberrans are safe, especially over summer with children swimming in pools. I

encourage those people with pools or those who are visiting places with pools to attend to safety. That is obviously the highest priority over the summer time.

MS LAWDER: Minister, when will the government's position on this be made publicly available?

MR RAMSAY: It is always dangerous to assume, but I assume that the question from Ms Lawder means the government's position about a register?

MS LAWDER: About the pool policy relating to the recommendations from Royal Life Saving and the coroner's recommendations.

MR RAMSAY: I will refer back to my previous answer: that the recommendation from Life Saving is not the same thing as what came through from the coroner. We will be continuing the work, and we will have more to say in the first part of 2019.

Education—enrolment policy

MRS KIKKERT: My question is to the Minister for Education and Early Childhood Development. Minister, a Macgregor parent has a son in year 6 who wishes to study at either Lyneham high in the LEAP stream or Canberra High School. However he was denied both because, among other reasons, he is out of the priority enrolment area for both schools. The directorate website policy states clearly that if a school has a capacity it may offer enrolment to a student from outside the PEA. Freedom of information documents reveal that both schools have the capacity. Why was this child denied enrolment?

MS BERRY: The directorate has been corresponding with that family and I understand that that family's address was not in the priority enrolment area of the school that they wanted the child to attend, and that was the reason why the child was denied enrolment at that school.

Ms Lee: On a point of order, Madam Speaker, Mrs Kikkert's specific question was that the directorate's website policy states that if it has capacity a student is allowed from outside the PEA. The question specifically was: if this was the case why was this child denied enrolment as he was living outside the PEA?

MADAM SPEAKER: Minister, you have another minute to answer.

MS BERRY: I will have to get some advice on that because I am not aware of the reasons why.

MRS KIKKERT: Minister, are there other children being told that schools do not have capacity when in fact they do?

MS BERRY: I will take that question on notice.

MS LEE: Minister, why is this student being forced to attend a school that does not deliver the languages and music he wishes to study?

MS BERRY: I will have to take that question on notice.

Schools—injuries

MS LEE: My question is to the Minister for Education and Early Childhood Development. Minister, in question on notice 1930 I asked six questions: how many students had reported an injury received at school, how many schools did those reports come from, what was the nature of the injury, what grades were the students in, whether the students were in a learning support unit, and how many resulted in time off school? Your answer told us how many injuries and how many schools but, for each of the other four questions, there was a stock standard cut and paste answer: “This type of information is captured at the school level.” Minister, if information such as grade, nature of injury and class status are not known at the directorate level, how can you be sure that you are meeting the requirements of the WorkSafe enforceable undertaking or, indeed, your own policies?

MS BERRY: I will get some advice on that question. I recall the question; I recall signing it. However, information is collected at the school level, as is often the case with regards to individuals at schools. All the advice that I have on the implementation of the undertaking is that it is being implemented, and we will continue to do that.

MS LEE: Minister, how can you develop the alternative pathways apparently available for students with challenging behaviours if you or your directorate have no idea of the who, the what, the where and the when of school injuries?

MS BERRY: The issue is how the data is collected and whether it can be formatted in such a way as to provide the information that Ms Lee is after. With regard to how the directorate works with schools, the directorate and I consider the professional assessments that the teachers in the schools make around those particular students and their particular needs, how they can be met and how the undertaking is being implemented as a result of that process. I have every respect and value for teachers in our schools in being able to make those assessments.

MISS C BURCH: Minister, why did it take the directorate three hours to pull together two lots of reportable data off their records but answer only a third of the questions?

MS BERRY: I have not spent a lot of time with the individual who was providing the responses to that particular question on notice, but I expect that there would have been at least three hours work involved in pulling together that information to provide a response to Ms Lee.

Government—priorities

MS CHEYNE: My question is to the Chief Minister. Chief Minister, can you outline to the Assembly why the government is so busy at this time of year?

Opposition members interjecting—

MADAM SPEAKER: Members on my left, the Chief Minister has the call.

MR BARR: Thank you, Madam Speaker. Obviously, there has been a big and busy agenda of work throughout the year, and particularly through this week. I want to take the opportunity to thank members across the chamber for their tripartisan commitment to deal with a significant number of pieces of legislation through this sitting week, and indeed through the year. Most business that is transacted in this parliament is agreed by all parties. It does not get much media attention. I think that we are all aware that conflict tends to be what is focused on in terms of the reporting of this place. I thought that with this, the final question of the year, I would take a moment to thank all members.

Opposition members interjecting—

MR BARR: Clearly, my generosity of spirit has been so well received by those opposite; I should try this tactic in question time more often, Madam Speaker.

Mrs Jones: We welcome your niceness anytime.

MR BARR: I welcome those very kind interjections from the opposition. Clearly, every minister has been very busy through this year, and particularly in this final sitting week. I particularly want to acknowledge the breadth of new legislation that was introduced this morning that will clearly see a very busy first quarter of 2019 for this place. It does, of course, stand in marked contrast to the lack of busyness that we see in another parliamentary chamber elsewhere in this city. *(Time expired.)*

MS CHEYNE: Chief Minister, how else has the government progressed its positive and progressive agenda for Canberra through the Legislative Assembly this year?

MR BARR: Thank you. It certainly is an excellent question; thank you very much for raising it. The legislation that we have brought forward this year clearly demonstrates the government's values and priorities. In 2018, this Assembly has dealt with more than 40 pieces of legislation, including to protect and promote the highest ethical standards in our labour market and to ensure that more local jobs are good, well-paid ones, through the secure local jobs package.

We sought to reduce problem gambling harm and provide a pathway to reduce the number of gaming machines in the territory from 5,000 to 4,000 by 2020. We sought to better protect vulnerable renters through improvements to the Residential Tenancies Act; to improve work health and safety standards for construction workers; and to ensure safety and accessibility for the light rail network, in readiness for stage 1, commencing early in 2019. Importantly, we sought to expand the reportable conduct scheme to ensure that our community takes collective responsibility for keeping children safe. We have given ACT Policing increased powers to target bikie gangs. And we have levelled the playing field for first home buyers by placing a foreign investor surcharge on property purchases.

I particularly want to acknowledge, on this final sitting day, the hard work of ACT public servants and staff, who have done the important policy work that has helped shape this legislative program, and the staff who have engaged with the

community and stakeholders to ensure that these reforms are effective.

MS ORR: Chief Minister, what progress has the government made against the parliamentary agreement this year in the Assembly and more broadly?

MR BARR: The government places a very high priority on delivering our parliamentary agreement items because they represent a shared reform vision to make a difference for vulnerable Canberrans and the wider community.

During this year we have made very strong progress against the parliamentary agreement, and next week Minister Rattenbury and I will release an update on our progress. Recent achievements include the release of the ACT housing strategy, the opening of the Gungahlin walk-in centre, the establishment of the office for mental health, and the ACT's continued progress towards our 100 per cent renewable electricity target by 2020.

I particularly acknowledge both of our Greens parliamentary colleagues for their shared commitment to delivering on the parliamentary agreement and for the constructive and principled approach they take to other issues that come before this chamber.

In this place we do not always agree on the best means to achieve an outcome and respective priorities can lead us to focus on different issues. But I consider this is always within the broader framework of the shared commitment to make Canberra fairer, more inclusive, more sustainable and more resilient. We see that through our parliamentary agreement and occasionally we even see that in a tripartisan way in this chamber.

On that happy note, I ask that all further questions be placed on the notice paper.