



Debates

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Legislative Assembly for the ACT

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Thursday, 1 December 2022

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Thursday, 1 December 2022

MADAM SPEAKER (Ms Burch) (10.01): Members:

Dhawura nguna, dhawura Ngunnawal.
Yanggu ngalawiri, dhunimanyin Ngunnawalwari dhawurawari.
Nginggada Dindi dhawura Ngunnaawalbun yindjumaralidjinyin.

The words I have just spoken are in the language of the traditional custodians and translate to:

This is Ngunnawal Country.
Today we are gathering on Ngunnawal country.
We always pay respect to Elders, female and male, and Ngunnawal country.

Members, I ask you to stand in silence and pray or reflect on our responsibilities to the people of the Australian Capital Territory.

Privileges 2022—Select Committee Report

MR HANSON (Murrumbidgee) (10.02): I present the following report:

Privileges 2022—Select Committee—Report—Imposition of a prohibition notice by WorkSafe ACT, dated 28 November 2022, together with a copy of the minutes of proceedings.

I move:

That the report be adopted.

On 15 August this year the committee was established by this Assembly to enquire into the circumstances relating to the prohibition notices placed on this Assembly. The terms of reference were then amended on 21 September to also enquire into the conduct of a minister. Specifically, the terms of reference were to examine whether there had been a breach of privilege relating to the actions of the Work Health and Safety Commissioner and any other person, and whether they have improperly interfered with the free exercise of the authority of the Select Committee on Estimates, or breached any other privileges of the Assembly. The committee was then also asked to examine the alleged breach of privilege raised by the Select Committee on Estimates in relation to a possible interference by a minister in the work of the committee.

The matters of privilege that have been engaged by these incidents are incredibly important and, to a large extent, underpin the democratic freedoms of any parliament. They are also, as I am sure the other committee members would agree, quite complex, particularly in the context of work health and safety laws and the need to keep people safe during the pandemic. The committee has worked hard to deliver a unanimous report and make findings and recommendations that are focused on education and finding remedies to the events that occurred, rather than seeking any sort of retribution against individuals.

We sought to make findings and recommendations that uphold the very important privileges that are essential for any parliament to work, whilst also recognising the important responsibilities that all MLAs have under the Work Health and Safety Act. We would hope that a greater understanding of privileges can be gained by reading this report and that that will be useful to anyone who has dealings with the Assembly.

I also believe that by adopting the recommendations in this report, the sorts of issues that led to what the committee has, indeed, found to be a breach of privilege, do not occur again. With regard to the specific findings, the committee made four findings. The committee found that the first WorkSafe ACT prohibition notice improperly interfered with the free exercise of the Assembly and its committees, and therefore was a breach of privileges of the Assembly by WorkSafe ACT.

The committee found that the second WorkSafe ACT prohibition notice may have improperly interfered with the free exercise of the Assembly or committee of its authority but, as a breach of privileges had been found in the first prohibition notice, the committee did not consider it necessary to make a further finding with regard to that prohibition notice.

The committee found that the phone call and email from the minister's office for advice, which WorkSafe ACT considered to be a complaint, was open to the perception of intentionally influencing WorkSafe's actions. However, it did not, of itself, interfere with a committee, and therefore is not a breach of privilege.

In its last finding, the committee noted with concern the estimates committee's reports of the ongoing actions of the minister in the possible interference of that committee, but found that it did not meet the standard of breaching privilege.

The committee has made 10 recommendations, and I will go through them. The committee recommended:

The Committee recommends that WorkSafe ACT develop a memorandum of understanding with the Assembly on how it will exercise its regulatory functions within the Assembly precincts, acknowledging the parliamentary privilege issues engaged.

Recommendation 2 states:

The Committee recommends that no further action be taken with WorkSafe ACT.

Recommendation 3 states:

The Committee recommends that the Work Health and Safety Act 2011 be amended to:

- (1) provide clarity that the Assembly is a workplace; and
- (2) provide that nothing in the Act:
 - (a) abrogates or derogates from the powers, privileges and immunities of the Legislative Assembly, its committees or its members; or

- (b) gives an inspector or any other person the power to prohibit the proceedings of the Assembly or its committees.

I note that amendments have been moved by the Chief Minister and that the Speaker has moved amendments to those. That is an ongoing body of work.

Recommendation 4 states:

The Committee recommends that the Government draws the matters raised in this report in particular, to the attention of regulatory bodies in the ACT who potentially may have cause to interact with the Legislative Assembly in future and, more broadly, to the wider ACT Public Service.

Recommendation 5 states:

The Committee recommends that all Ministers take care in their interactions with independent regulators, so they are not open to the perception of improperly influencing or directing a particular investigation or regulatory action.

Recommendation 6 states:

The Committee recommends that all Ministers ensure that they and their offices keep appropriate written records of significant matters.

Recommendation 7 states:

The Committee recommends that Ministers should take care to provide accurate information to the media and the public, particularly on key matters that could risk the reputation of the Assembly or the Government.

Recommendation 8 states:

The Committee recommends that in the next review of the Latimer House principles, the Speaker refer:

- (1) for assessment the Executive's compliance with the objectives enunciated in the principles, particularly in its relationship with the Legislative Assembly; and
- (2) to the Standing Committee on Administration and Procedure whether Continuing Resolution 8A requires amendment or re-affirmation to accentuate the independence of the legislature from Executive interference, in terms similar to the motion passed by the Senate.

Recommendation 9 states:

The Committee recommends that Continuing Resolution 5 relating to the code of conduct for all Members of the Legislative Assembly for the Australian Capital Territory be amended to make clear that Members, in carrying out their responsibilities, have a duty to act in a way that does not unreasonably place the health, safety and wellbeing of others at risk.

The final recommendation states:

The Committee recommends that the powers of a committee of the Assembly to compel:

- (1) documents pertaining to that committee or a member of that committee; and
- (2) the identity of a person whose identity is otherwise protected under law; be considered as part of the ongoing review into standing orders.

I would like to thank the other members of the committee, Michael Pettersson and Jo Clay. I think that it is the case that we have all endeavoured to work as parliamentarians through this process, not as politicians, and I thank them for their contributions, which have been useful, considered and balanced, in my view.

I would like to thank the secretary, Max Kiermaier. He had been called back, from wherever Max was, to do this, and I commend him for his work. He has been very useful to the committee. He has worked diligently and provided outstanding advice to the committee. I would like to thank all of those who have submitted and appeared as witnesses. We received a number of very comprehensive and informative submissions. Indeed, the witnesses that appeared provided evidence that was of great use, as well.

I have been a parliamentarian in this place now for 14 years. I have to say that I have learned quite a bit through this process; there is no doubt about it. I would encourage other members to read the report, which is written in a way to try to provide an amount of information and education, as is said in the recommendation, to the executive and regulatory bodies. But I also think it would be useful to members to read to gain—and refresh themselves on—an understanding of what are pretty complex matters. I commend the report to the Assembly.

MS CLAY (Ginninderra) (10.10): I was a member of this committee, but I am now speaking in my own capacity about the report as it is tabled, and the evidence, which is all online. A lot disturbs me about this inquiry. I will note two matters in particular. The committee asked for complete records of all interactions between the Workplace Health and Safety Commissioner and the minister, from both the Workplace Health and Safety Commissioner and the minister. In particular, the committee asked for notes of all phone calls made between these two people.

The committee also asked for a record from the minister of the comments made by senior public servants which sparked this entire episode—the comments in which the minister said senior public servants told him they were scared because face-to-face estimates meant they would have 40 witnesses crammed into a room.

The committee received a written chronology and full records from the Workplace Health and Safety Commissioner, but the records received from the minister were incomplete. The minister did not provide a written submission before the hearing. The minister provided a written chronology after the hearing, and his office advised that all the emails were already in evidence. But the minister did not provide any notes of the phone calls that took place with the Workplace Health and Safety Commissioner, or notes of the comments made by the senior public servants who had complained

about their safety. The minister's office has advised that no records were provided because none was kept—no file note, no diary note, no email.

These were extremely significant events. The minister said that he had life-and-death fears reported to him, and he took these fears seriously and he actioned them, but no-one made any note of it. When a minister contacts a regulator within his chain of command and seeks advice on a life-and-death matter that starts a chain of events that breaches parliamentary privilege, please make a note of it. These decisions matter, and so do the records.

The minister also gave an interview to the media while a prohibition order was in place. This was a highly contentious matter. There was a lot of public and media interest in the story. I have heard that there was global interest in this matter. The reputation of the Legislative Assembly and the process of parliament were at risk. The minister repeated information in that interview that was not correct. He said senior public servants had told him they were scared to come to face-to-face hearings because they were worried about having 40 people crammed into a room.

He knew this is not how we conduct hearings during the pandemic, but he repeated this concern on air. The committee asked the minister about why he made those comments to the media. The committee explained that, while a public servant might well hold this fear, the minister attended hearings regularly and knew the Assembly's COVID-safe plan and knew the room limits posted on the doors and knew that none of the rooms in which hearings might be held would hold 40 people.

The committee asked the minister why he repeated that comment to the media and the public instead of correcting it with the person or people who had made it to him. He said he was simply relaying the concerns that were put to his office. We are in a pandemic. We are going through a lot of disasters. It is really important that our leaders act calmly and provide correct information, particularly to the media and to members of the public, and particularly about matters of safety. If a mistake is made—and we all make mistakes—please correct it. It is easy to do, and it can change outcomes very quickly.

The subject of this inquiry is serious. Prohibition notices like this could have stopped a sitting. They actually did result in a one-week delay to the budget estimates. Madam Speaker, you yourself have said that you considered taking action in the Supreme Court to have the prohibition notices set aside. The separation of powers has been discussed at length, and the committee has found one breach of privilege; so, the consequences of these actions were severe.

Ministers are in positions of great responsibility. You are the custodians of our democracy. Please take care with it. Keep records. Make careful decisions. Be precise with your words, particularly when speaking to the media or to the public, and particularly when speaking about a matter with serious consequences. And if you make a mistake, please correct it.

MR PETTERSSON (Yerrabi) (10.15): I will speak very briefly. I, too, would like to thank my fellow committee members. Privileges committees are never fun, but when you can work in a productive way with members of all political parties in this place,

I believe you can serve this chamber well. I also would like to thank Max Kiermaier, our committee secretary. I have no doubt that Max was not expecting to be on a privileges committee in the back half of 2022; but he was, and he did a wonderful job.

I would like to endorse this report. It is a good report, and it was considered thoroughly by all members. The issues engaged in this inquiry are of great importance. It goes to this Assembly, its privileges, and the work and safety of the people that come into it.

In particular, I would like to highlight recommendations 9 and 10. Recommendation 9 calls on this Assembly to be explicit in the obligation of members to look after the health, safety and wellbeing of others. I think this is important. Recommendation 10 calls for the powers of the committee to compel documents to be considered once again. There are grave concerns about protections for whistleblowers, enlivened by the actions of this time. I think it is important for this Assembly to reflect upon the appropriate use of those powers.

Question resolved in the affirmative.

Petition

The following petition was lodged for presentation:

Amaroo shops—playground—petition 35-22

By Mr Pettersson, from 202 residents:

To the Speaker and Members of the Legislative Assembly for the Australian Capital Territory

Reason for this Petition

The following residents of the ACT draw the attention of the Assembly that there is a lack of child related entertainment at the Amaroo shops.

This petition is to request a playground be included at the Amaroo shops to connect the community and create a happy, healthy environment for children. With the new medical centre (soon to be under construction), shops, restaurants and school nearby, this location is ideal for local families. We notice a lot of children play around the rocks and big trees already present. Including an appropriate playground would make a safer facility that could be entertaining for all ages.

Requested Actions

Your petitioners, therefore, request the Assembly call upon the Government to install a playground in the green space between Armada Street and Aberfoyle Street, Amaroo.

The Clerk having announced that the terms of the petition would be recorded in Hansard and a copy referred to the appropriate minister for response pursuant to standing order 100, the petition was received.

Motion to take note of petition

MADAM SPEAKER: Pursuant to standing order 98A, I propose the question:

That the petition so lodged be noted.

MR PETTERSSON (Yerrabi) (10.17): I would like to start by thanking Leigh and Tanya from the Stone House pub. It is a wonderful little pub at Amaroo shops, and if any members, or those listening, are in the area, make sure you stop by. Amaroo shops is a wonderful shopping complex in the north of Canberra. Just a little tip for those listening: it is the best place to do grocery shopping in Gungahlin. It has great little cafes and a wonderful pub. And right next to the shops is, of course, a wonderful green space with large, beautiful trees.

In that large space there is no playground. I have heard from Gungahlin residents for a long time that they would like to see a playground at Amaroo shops. I thank all of the people who have signed this petition—over 200—for their support and their shared commitment to improving Amaroo shops. I commend their petition to the Assembly.

Question resolved in the affirmative.

Economy—ministerial delegation to Singapore

Ministerial statement

MR BARR (Kurrajong—Chief Minister, Treasurer, Minister for Climate Action, Minister for Economic Development and Minister for Tourism) (10.18): I am pleased to update the Assembly on the government's trade mission to Singapore in August of this year. As members are aware, Singapore is identified in our international engagement strategy as one of the territory's key markets. Consistent with the strategy, the purpose of our mission this time was to renew existing relationships; to start some new ones; to reconnect government-to-government relations; to support two-way trade and tourism; to re-establish aviation links; to attract investment into the territory; and to further partnerships in education and health.

The Minister for Health also travelled to Singapore at this time, with a delegation of senior officials and others in the health area, which she will touch on, I am sure, in her presentation shortly. This allowed for us to undertake joint activities, including visiting health facilities, particularly in the context of the challenges and opportunities facing the territory's health system, including the ongoing modernisation of Canberra Hospital and the commitment to deliver a new north side hospital.

As is tradition, we commenced the mission with a meeting with the Australian High Commissioner, His Excellency the Honourable Will Hodgman. I would like to thank Will for his and his team's assistance in making the mission a success. The High Commissioner provided a briefing on the state of the relationship, discussed the planned program, and gave his insights into current opportunities. It set a very useful context for the mission, particularly the meetings I had with Singapore's transport minister and the Second Minister for National Development. In the tourism portfolio, Minister Iswaran, the Singaporean Minister for Transport, was instrumental in maintaining flights between Australia and Singapore during the pandemic. These

flights repatriated Australians, including Canberrans, and also delivered vital vaccines to Australia and to Canberra.

Our discussions covered many subjects, ranging from the response to COVID-19, to the restoration of flights between Singapore and Canberra, food security and supply chain issues, climate change and sustainability, and skills shortages. We also discussed the future of transport, including the use of hydrogen and electric vehicles and the provision of environmentally friendly public transport and the phasing-out of internal combustion engines.

My discussions with Minister Rajah focused on the Australia-Singapore relationship, the provision of infrastructure, sustainability and climate change, managing native fauna within a civic context, and the expansion of the partnership between the Singapore National Botanic Gardens and Canberra's National Arboretum.

Whilst in Singapore, I was pleased to be able to witness an export breakthrough for a Canberra firm, AgriGate Global, which signed a contract with Quality Meat Singapore. AgriGate has been working for close to a decade to facilitate exports of primary produce into Asia. This contract provides for the delivery of meat to Singapore for processing into cuts appropriate to the region's cooking style and cuisine. We were hosted on a tour of the boning plant, and it was great to hear about the potential that this arrangement brings to both partners. I wish both firms well, and look forward to further announcements from AgriGate.

I was also pleased to celebrate Canberra tech firm archTIS signing new contracts with Singapore business i-Sprint. archTIS specialises in information security software, particularly for cooperation with and between government. i-Sprint provides a distribution and supply and support network into Singapore and into the wider ASEAN market. The Deputy Director-General of Economic Development and the Commissioner for International Engagement also met with i-Sprint to discuss further opportunities for cooperation.

Space was another focus area for the trade mission, following up on leads generated by a successful online space industry forum in 2021. During this mission senior ACT government officials met with Singapore Space and Technology Limited, and we look forward to closer cooperation in the future.

As we emerge from the pandemic, re-establishing Canberra as a globally connected city is a priority. Aviation connectivity provides focus and opportunity to realise a range of benefits for Canberra across trade, tourism, business, education and investment. So it was a pleasure to catch up again with the CEO of Singapore Airlines, Mr Goh, about re-establishing a direct connection between Canberra and Singapore. Connection through a global hub like Singapore clearly provides access to an extensive global aviation network through Asia, the subcontinent, the Middle East and Europe.

Importantly, the work that was done across all aspects of the mission helped to demonstrate commitment to the Singapore market and the growing demand for activity that will support two-way flows of passengers between Singapore and Canberra. To this end, I met with the CEO of the Singapore Tourism Board, Mr Tan.

The meeting provided an opportunity to share insights on the post COVID-19 recovery of tourism destinations and the work that the Singapore Tourism Board is doing to reposition Singapore within the global marketplace. We discussed the shared challenges faced by our tourism sectors, including the labour shortages. We also discussed future opportunities to collaborate on attracting visitors from Europe via Singapore to Canberra, and the opportunity for the Singapore Tourism Board to deliver their own destination campaign activity in the Canberra region that would support air services.

Relationship-building and commitment to genuine partnerships is an important part of international engagement. This is relevant to all activities delivered on a trade mission. However, it is reinforced when we are looking to grow product knowledge amongst those who sell Canberra to key markets as a place to visit. So whilst in Singapore, I was delighted that VisitCanberra was able to collaborate with Tourism Australia to deliver an event that brings together key distribution partners, including travel agents and wholesalers. The event allowed us to share information to help our partners sell Canberra to their customers. As a direct result of this activity, a tour group from Singapore visited Floriade, and further activities are planned for 2023.

Investment attraction was another focus of the mission, and we hosted a roundtable to discuss some of the upcoming sites that we will be delivering to the market, including build-to-rent residential, mixed-use development and hotel and accommodation sites. I want to thank Mr Chris Cheah, a Singapore investor who is well known to Canberra, for bringing this group together. The event was hosted by our Deputy High Commissioner, and I thank them both for their assistance in the successful delivery of this event.

There are several long-standing arrangements between education institutions in Canberra and Singapore. The CIT has a relationship with the Tamasek Polytechnic, where we toured their Cyber Security Training School. Given the forthcoming rebuild of CIT's Woden campus, and the importance of training the coming generations of cyber security experts, it was timely in both instances. The training school operates in a specially designed facility, and is largely run by the students to give them practical experience in real-life time-sensitive cyber security situations.

For me, the final event of the trade mission was the signing of a memorandum of understanding between the National Arboretum Canberra, the Singapore Botanic Gardens and the Wellington Botanic Gardens. Our arboretum already had bilateral MOUs with each of the other institutions, but all parties agreed that a tripartite agreement would further strengthen our relationships and drive greater collaboration and knowledge, and staff exchange. Activities will include exchanges of information and staff, joint training and research activities, sharing environmental knowledge—especially in sustainability and renewable energy projects—and supporting each institution to realise their tourism potential. I would like to thank Minister Rajah and the Honourable Jo Tyrell, the New Zealand High Commissioner to Singapore, for joining me in the signing of this MOU with the heads of each of those institutions. We look forward to working together to deliver outcomes for all three institutions.

This, of course, was the first trade mission to Singapore since international travel resumed. It was fitting that we visited one of our key strategic partners. Whilst it was

a short mission—over only a handful of days—it was a successful one, and we are following up on the many leads and opportunities that it generated. It again strengthened our relationship with Singapore, and I am delighted that this morning other ministers will report on their engagements with the Singapore community and market, which is very significant for Canberra.

We promoted our city as a place to invest and to do business, and we demonstrated our ongoing commitment to our international engagement strategy.

I present the following paper:

Chief Ministerial Trade Mission to Singapore—August 2022—Ministerial statement, 1 December 2022.

I move:

That the Assembly take note of the paper.

Question resolved in the affirmative.

Health—ministerial delegation to Singapore

Ministerial statement

MS STEPHEN-SMITH (Kurrajong—Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs, Minister for Families and Community Services and Minister for Health) (10.28): Staying with the subject of Singapore, I am pleased to report to the Assembly about a trade mission I led to Singapore in August, accompanied by the Director-General of the ACT Health Directorate, the CEO of Canberra Health Services and members of the ACT Health and Wellbeing Partnership Board. The purpose of the mission was to observe and learn from Singapore’s innovations in their health system, including the application of technology and architecture to deliver person-centred clinical services.

This trade mission coincided with the Chief Minister’s trade mission to Singapore, which allowed us to participate in components of the program that aligned with the ACT government’s economic development priorities, as outlined in *CBR Switched On*. These include knowledge-based economic growth through health and life sciences investment, digital mindset and community wellbeing. By aligning these missions, we were also able to examine these economic opportunities for Canberra through a health system lens.

Singapore is identified in Canberra’s International Engagement Strategy as one of our five priority markets, with health and sports sciences listed as a key capability area where the ACT can learn from the Singapore experience.

Like Australia and the ACT, Singapore has faced many challenges across its health system, including responding to the COVID-19 pandemic, increased demand from health services with an ageing population and high out-of-pocket payments for consumers. Like the ACT, Singapore has had to respond to a rising prevalence of

chronic diseases, limitations in primary care and non-acute sectors, and barriers to the integration of care across the system.

The Singapore Ministry of Health has responded to these challenges by implementing a suite of innovative reforms under its Healthier SG healthcare system transformation, Healthcare 2020 Masterplan and Three Beyonds Strategy, with a vision to move beyond health care to health, beyond hospital to community and beyond quality to value. The ACT government shares this ambition for the ACT health system. This trade mission provided me, the heads of our health organisations and our territory partners with the opportunity to gain insights into how we could learn from some of Singapore's successes in the ACT.

As is now a tradition for ACT government trade missions, the first meeting for the delegation was with the Deputy Australian High Commissioner to Singapore, Ms Angela Robinson. The Deputy High Commissioner and her team provided useful insights into Singapore's health system, which helped to enrich our experience throughout the trade mission and strengthen our bilateral relationship.

We visited Ng Teng Fong General Hospital, a major acute hospital in the western health region of Singapore that has been designed from the ground up to ensure patient-centred services are delivered in a seamless and integrated way. This relatively new hospital was the first in Singapore to implement the Epic Digital Health Record software—the same system that went live across ACT public hospitals on 12 November 2022. This visit served the dual purpose of viewing Epic software in operation and observing innovative hospital design and its application to integrated patient-centred health services.

The Ng Teng Fong General Hospital is part of an integrated health precinct, adjacent to a smaller sub-acute and rehabilitation hospital, with access to public transport and amenities. Within the hospital itself, cleverly designed clinical spaces promote enhanced patient experiences, and a strong focus on digital technology supports efficient and effective care. Hospital executives spoke about technology not replacing care but supporting “one queue, one view, one patient experience”, and medical and nursing staff showcased how end-user devices such as computers on wheels and hand-held devices promote better patient care on their ward.

During the broader tour of the hospital, clinical areas for outpatients, critical care, pharmacy, pathology and other support services were seen and the innovative links to the broader hospital were highlighted. This included the use of clinical and supporting technologies in the design of infrastructure to support patient flow throughout the hospital, treatment and care, as well as ensuring meaningful work for their health workforce.

On the second day of the trade mission, we were hosted by a Health Tech Centre of Excellence that uses medical technology to drive health system innovation. We learned about how technology and big data are driving a sharper focus on quality and safety and will play a critical role in future health systems. This includes the role of automation, patient-centric design and digital transformation opportunities, thinking beyond bricks and mortar and traditional ways of working to take health into the community.

We then visited Bukit Canberra, a health and wellbeing precinct that integrates a range of community facilities, including health services and a senior care centre, hawker markets, community farms and green space, as well as indoor and outdoor sporting facilities, including two swimming pools. The site is named after Canberra House, which sits at the top of the hill, or Bukit, which in turn is named in honour of the visit of the first the original *HMAS Canberra* to Singapore in September 1937.

The precinct is an example of a whole-of-government approach to delivering integrated community facilities and is intended to represent one of the Beyonds; namely, beyond healthcare to health. For example, the onsite health services enable wellbeing, connection and exercise to be integrated into the prescriptions issued by healthcare workers—a unique approach to social prescribing.

Later that day we visited a public polyclinic operated by National University Polyclinics. Polyclinics are an innovative model of care in Singapore that provide comprehensive health care, including medical, allied health, dental, diagnostic, pharmacy and financial counselling services. Like all Australian jurisdictions, the ACT is facing increased pressures on our primary care sector and acute care sectors. This site visit provided insights into designs for future community health services and opportunities to continue to align the ACT's health services with our vision in *Accessible, accountable, sustainable: a framework for the ACT public health system 2020-2030* in managing treatment and care across the community.

On the third and final day of the trade mission, the ACT delegation visited the Centre for Healthcare Innovation in Tan Tock Seng Hospital. The hospital is one of the largest in Singapore and is known as a healthcare leader in population health, systems innovation, health technologies and workforce transformation. The hospital had just gone live with its Epic Digital Health Record software in the week prior. This provided us with an opportunity to learn about its experience, to anticipate and manage its implementation for the ACT go-live.

We also visited a Centre for Healthcare Innovation on the hospital campus to observe the application of technology to deliver integrated patient-centred health services. This centre takes a genuinely multidisciplinary approach that engages staff across the hospital in thinking creatively about how to improve care in the hospital setting and, critically, going beyond the hospital to the community.

Our trade mission concluded with a visit to the SingHealth Duke-NUS Academic Medical Centre. This academic medical centre is a strategic partnership between SingHealth and the Duke-NUS Medical School that integrates clinical care, education and research to deliver improved healthcare and patient outcomes. One executive spoke of a philosophy at the centre: “We don't just want to practice medicine; we want to improve it.”

The centre gives rise to a student population where they begin a journey of academic medical practice that continues right throughout a clinician's career. The academic medical program has been instrumental in creating a desire for healthcare workers to join and remain in the public health system. SingHealth officials told us they have no challenges in recruiting or retaining their workforce. This is an enviable position to be

in as we grapple with a health workforce crisis across Australia and seek to build new models to address it. The attractiveness of research opportunities and career pathways for clinician scientists was a particular lesson from the visit and is informing the implementation of the *Better together: ACT health research strategic plan for 2022-2030* announced this year.

During the visit, the partnership board and I also joined the Chief Minister at an official reception that he hosted for Singapore officials and special guests. This was an opportunity to bring together all participants of the two trade missions, along with key Singapore stakeholders and business leaders, to strengthen relationships and build on the mission's objectives.

I would like to thank Australia's Deputy High Commissioner to Singapore, Ms Angela Robinson, and her staff at the High Commission in Singapore. To all of the Singapore officials we had the opportunity to meet, thank you very much for your generosity in hosting our delegation at your facilities and for helping to make this such a valuable visit.

I would also like to thank Mr Brendan Smyth, the ACT's Commissioner for International Engagement; Professor Russell Gruen, Dean of the ANU College of Health and Medicine, who has a strong connection with Singapore and was very instrumental in organising some of our most important meetings; and the teams in the Chief Minister, Treasury and Economic Development and ACT Health Directorates for their enthusiasm and assistance in executing this highly successful trade mission.

Prior to embarking on this trade mission we had heard and read about Singapore's reputation as a leader in health system innovation and its ability to respond to complex challenges to deliver excellence in health care. Along with the Health and Wellbeing Partnership Board, I look forward to drawing on these lessons to drive improvements across the ACT health system in the years to come.

I present the following paper:

Minister for Health Trade Mission to Singapore—9-14 August 2022—
Ministerial statement, 1 December 2022.

I move:

That the Assembly take note of the paper.

Question resolved in the affirmative.

Energy—ministerial delegation to Singapore

Ministerial statement

MR RATTENBURY (Kurrajong—Attorney-General, Minister for Consumer Affairs, Minister for Gaming and Minister for Water, Energy and Emissions Reduction) (10.38): I would like to report to the Assembly on the delegation that I led to Singapore between 25 and 27 October this year. The mission coincided with the Singapore International Energy Week 2022, which is a key international event in the

clean energy and energy storage sector and drew representatives from around the world.

The mission to Singapore was highly focused, with the objective to showcase the ACT's climate action leadership and policy expertise; showcase the territory's renewable energy sector capability and industry solutions in the solar, battery and grid integration space; strengthen government-to-government dialogue in climate action collaboration; and promote higher education partnerships in areas of strategic mutual priorities on climate tech research and development.

The ACT-Singapore relationship is a valuable asset and facilitates trade, investment, research and cultural flows between our jurisdictions. This delegation builds on the connections made through previous missions and reinforces the importance of this relationship into the future. The value of this initiative was strengthened through the participation of seven ACT delegates from five ACT organisations. These organisations included businesses, research and peak bodies in the services, renewable energy and energy storage sectors. Their participation in the delegation underscored that Singapore is a key market in Asia.

Stepping back and looking at Australia's relationship with Singapore, it was clear from the discussions on the trip that our future as a renewable energy exporting powerhouse is there if we can step up and realise it. The Sun Cable project, a proposed regional green grid connection between Darwin and Singapore via a high-voltage direct current transmission system, was repeatedly discussed and promoted as a central pillar to Singapore's access to clean and secure energy in a low-carbon world. Australia has world-leading renewable energy resources, especially in wind and solar. I am proud that the ACT continues to lead the way within Australia in the pathway to the electrification of our energy systems, after achieving 100 per cent renewable electricity in 2020, and proud of everyday Canberrans as the uptake of electric appliances continues to grow.

I would also like to thank the Australian High Commissioner, the Hon Will Hodgman, for his participation in welcoming the ACT delegation, as well as his team's support in the preparations for it. Mr Hodgman has had a distinguished career, including in the Tasmanian parliament and as the inaugural chair of the Australian Business Growth Fund. The experience and insights he shared with the delegation were much appreciated.

The delegation's activities commenced on Tuesday 25 October. In the morning I attended several Singapore International Energy Week conference sessions. It was notable how much the importance of emissions reductions and addressing climate change featured throughout the presentations. Again and again these topics came up and were interlaced in a wide variety of themes such as green infrastructure; electrification and storage; regional grid connections; energy innovation; and green financing. It reiterated that decarbonisation is a key agenda in our region and touches all aspects of our lives and the urgency with which we must act.

I then joined a "meet and greet" conference networking session hosted by TotalEnergies. TotalEnergies is a significant energy producer and aims to be net zero emissions from its operations by 2050. Engaging with large multinationals will be

critical in affecting large-scale systemic changes. Bringing to bear their resources in the transition to renewable energy will greatly speed up the transition.

At the Singapore International Energy Agency Ministerial Roundtable, the topic for discussion was “Energy Security in a Low-Carbon World”. I shared the ACT’s decarbonisation targets; our experiences in achieving 100 per cent renewable electricity in 2020; how we have begun our transition to electrification, including the natural gas transition; zero emissions vehicles transition; and our Canberra Big Battery energy storage integration.

In turn, speakers from around the world—including Singapore, the International Energy Agency, Indonesia, Cambodia, Vietnam, Japan, the United States, the United Nations and many more—shared their own experience in building a resilient and zero emissions energy future. I also had the opportunity to meet with the Deputy Prime Minister of Singapore, Mr Lawrence Wong, and exchanged our similarities and differences as city states to decarbonise our economies.

Following the morning conference sessions, the ACT business delegates completed a site visit to the Solar Energy Research Institute of Singapore, at the National University of Singapore. The delegates toured the facilities and discussed the ongoing research program at the institute. Just like in the ACT, Singapore recognises the importance of research and innovation in creating new business breakthroughs and has a great many exciting streams of research underway.

Tuesday concluded with an ACT delegation networking reception. Representatives from the Singapore business, research and government organisations attended this event. Our ACT delegates provided a two-minute pitch of their organisations to the attendees and then networked with the attendees. This event provided the opportunity to make connections and establish follow-up meetings. I would also like to thank the Australian High Commissioner to Singapore for attending, welcoming the ACT contingent and addressing the gathered attendees.

On Wednesday 26 October I completed two live interviews—one with Channel News Asia, the national broadcaster, and another with Singapore International Energy Week Live Interview. I spoke about the importance of working together and sharing lessons learned with our regional partners to build energy resilience through diversifying our energy system, and to tackle associated health and social issues in the just transition to a net zero future. I met with the Australian High Commissioner and, as I have previously mentioned, the commissioner generously shared his insights into Singapore and ways to strengthen trade and cooperation.

The last event on Wednesday, the ACT-Singapore Climate Roundtable, explored the various pathways to electrification. We heard from participants on a range of issues, including the key challenges being faced today, along with key opportunities between Singapore and Australia that participants thought had significant potential. The wide variety of views expressed by participants and our ACT delegates demonstrated that this energy transition will be multifaceted and will require the integration of many new technologies and specialist skills in solar, wind, battery storage, hydrogen and renewable gases, and energy demand management.

On the morning of the final day of the delegation, I visited the ACT delegation conference booth at the Asian Clean Energy Summit. The delegates spent most of their time at the booth when not participating in other delegation events. I have had feedback from the delegates that this was of significant value and facilitated the making of connections with the summit attendees beyond the ACT delegation networking opportunities.

Following this meeting, I met with Mr Ngiam Shih Chun, CEO of the Singapore Energy Market Authority. The Energy Market Authority's responsibilities include ensuring a reliable and secure energy supply, promoting effective competition in the energy market and developing a dynamic energy sector in Singapore. This was a productive and timely discussion, with a focus on energy demand management and implications for the grids of electric vehicle uptake, and well reflects the ACT's own transition challenges and the significant change underway in the National Electricity Market here in Australia.

The delegation completed a site visit to the Energy Research Institute at the Nanyang Technological University. We were fortunate to tour the EcoLabs Centre of Innovation for Energy and gained an overview of the research underway at the institute. We were greeted by the Senior Vice President for Research and the management team at the institute. The tour concluded with a discussion on collaboration opportunities, which I understand was particularly valuable to our ANU delegate representatives.

In the afternoon I met with Dr Amy Khor, who is the Senior Minister of State for Environmental and Water Resources and Health of the Republic of Singapore. In this meeting I reiterated the already established strong working relationship in the areas of climate change, the environment, trade and tourism between our jurisdictions. We also discussed how reducing emissions is only half of the story, and that we need to be prepared for climate impacts already locked into our climate system by building the resilience and adaptive capacity of our city and region.

The discussion was productive and was in the context of the landmark bilateral Singapore-Australia Green Economy Agreement, signed the previous week with the commonwealth government. This will support Australian businesses to seize economic opportunities presented by the global clean energy transformation.

The delegation concluded with my meeting with representatives from Temasek, the global investment company. Temasek has significant assets under management and, as a long-term investor, has a strong interest in the sustainability and resilience of its portfolio.

In closing, I am pleased that Canberra was part of this regional energy transition dialogue in Singapore with many government and business leaders in Singapore and our region. Through the ACT delegation activities, we have shared the lessons learned in our own journey of energy transition and have heard from others looking at decarbonisation challenges in their perspectives.

The delegation to Singapore has presented ACT businesses and researchers with opportunities to form meaningful future partnerships, to create economic opportunities for Canberrans, and to build a resilient and zero emissions energy future together. Thank you to all those involved in making this energy delegation to Singapore a successful one.

I present the following paper:

ACT Energy Delegation to Singapore—Ministerial statement, 1 December 2022.

I move:

That the Assembly take note of the paper.

Question resolved in the affirmative.

Climate change—minister's annual report Ministerial statement

MR RATTENBURY (Kurrajong—Attorney-General, Minister for Consumer Affairs, Minister for Gaming and Minister for Water, Energy and Emissions Reduction) (10.48): I am pleased to table the 2021-22 Minister's Annual Report under section 15 of the Climate Change and Greenhouse Gas Reduction Act 2010. As required by that legislation, the report sets out the following three things. Firstly, the actions taken in 2021-22 by the responsible minister under the act; secondly, the effectiveness of government actions taken to reduce greenhouse gas emissions; and finally, a cost-benefit analysis of government policies and programs implemented to meet the climate change targets in the act.

The ACT is a leader on climate change action. We are recognised nationally and internationally for our climate leadership, and 2021-22 was yet another good year in our climate leadership journey. For the third year in a row the ACT was powered by 100 per cent renewable electricity, supplied by 11 large feed-in tariff-supported projects. We will continue to maintain our 100 per cent renewable electricity supply into the future.

As the next steps, the ACT is preparing to electrify our city and transition away from the use of fossil fuel gas by 2045. We are doing this because an all-electric Canberra will allow us to power our city, homes, businesses and transport more efficiently and with zero emissions. Our biggest challenge at this point is to reduce emissions from transport and gas, which together account for around 80 per cent of the ACT's emissions.

In 2021-22 we made significant progress in a range of areas, and I would like to briefly mention a few key achievements that show the diversity of our climate response measures. The annual report covers the 2021-22 financial year and we have made further progress on many measures since, which, while not included in the report, I will include here for greater context.

Let me turn, firstly, to zero emissions vehicles. We continued our leadership in promoting the uptake of zero emissions vehicles. This included conducting research and analysis to inform the development of a new zero emissions vehicles strategy for the ACT. The strategy was released in July 2022 and sends a clear signal about the future of transport and includes nation-leading initiatives such as the 80 to 90 per cent zero emissions vehicles sales target for 2030 and plans to phase out light internal combustion engine vehicles by 2035.

Also, 100 per cent of newly leased passenger vehicles entering the ACT government fleet were zero emissions vehicles, where a fit-for-purpose model was available. This is a great achievement and one that makes ours one of the largest zero emissions vehicle fleets in the country. To enable this transition, we installed more than 150 electric vehicle chargers at ACT government sites, with another 200 coming online soon.

In 2021 the ACT won the Cities Power Partnership Sustainable Transport Achievement Award and in 2022 we were finalists for the clean technology category at the Banksia Foundation Awards, in recognition of this work on our government vehicle fleet.

With regard to gas transmission, we also made good progress in our work to reduce emissions from gas. In the reporting period we undertook extensive research and analysis to identify the most appropriate gas transition pathway for the ACT, including the consideration of energy consumer needs, challenges and opportunities.

In August 2022 we built on this work by announcing the ACT's pathway to electrification, providing clear direction to the community that electrification offers the more efficient and effective option for achieving zero emissions.

The Sustainable Household Scheme was launched in September 2021 and is supporting the community to shift off gas, install solar and batteries and purchase electric vehicles. Through to 30 June 2022, over 6,400 households applied for loans and a total of \$62 million was approved in loans. Over 75 per cent of this has gone back into the local industry and economy. The scheme won the Future Cities Award at the 2022 National Banksia Sustainability Awards, recognising the scheme as a nation-leading initiative.

With regard to minimum energy efficiency standards for rental properties, considerable work was conducted during 2021-22 to prepare for the introduction of minimum energy performance standards for rental properties. This included research, analysis, a regulatory impact statement and consultation with stakeholders. In November 2022 we announced the new minimum standards, which will come into effect from April 2023 with a phase-in period to 2026. This is an important achievement and one that will make a real and lasting difference to many renters.

Too many people are living in homes that are too hot in summer and too cold in winter, making their homes unhealthy and expensive to heat and cool. The new standards will raise the bar for rental properties, affecting only the lowest performing 40 per cent of properties that do not currently comply.

In its 10th year of operation, the Climate Change and Greenhouse Gas Reduction Act 2010 was reviewed. The review found that the act had been highly effective in allowing the ACT government to set the groundwork for action, develop policy and successfully meet emissions reduction and renewable energy targets.

The review provided recommendations for the act to continue to drive effective action to meet the government's climate objectives and promote greater transparency, accountability and evidence-based policy decisions. This led to the formulation of the Climate Change and Greenhouse Gas Reduction Act Amendment Bill 2022, which was presented to the Assembly in June this year and passed through the Assembly yesterday.

The report includes our annual reporting of progress in implementing the Zero Emissions Government Framework. The framework commits the government to achieving zero emissions in its own operations by 2040, five years earlier than the community as a whole, and to reducing emissions by 33 per cent from 2020 levels by 2025.

In 2021-22 we have focused on reducing emissions from gas and transport in order for agencies to transition to zero emissions operations. The government completed a large gas asset audit of government facilities. This audit provided asset condition data and recommendations for all electric replacement options. We ensured that the 74 new passenger vehicle leases, where there is a fit-for-purpose vehicle, were 100 per cent zero emissions vehicles; we provided zero-interest loans to ACT government agencies to support emissions reductions projects; and made funding available through the Social Cost of Carbon Fund for emissions reductions projects.

I will now turn to the effectiveness of government actions, as required by the act. The ACT Greenhouse Gas Inventory showcases the impact of our actions. It shows that, in 2021-22, the ACT emitted 1,647 kilotonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent. This was 47 per cent lower than our 1990 baseline level of emissions. Per capita emissions were 3.6 tonnes of CO₂ equivalent in 2021-22, representing a 62 per cent reduction from 1989-90 levels.

The COVID lockdown period in August 2021 is likely to have reduced transport emissions, and it is worth noting that emissions could increase in 2022-23 as travel returns to normal.

Emissions from the ACT government's own operations were 63,850 tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent.

The ACT government committed to deliver 100 per cent renewable electricity for the territory from 2020 under the Climate Change and Greenhouse Gas Reduction Act 2010. For the third financial year, the ACT government successfully met its target to source 100 per cent of the territory's electricity from renewable sources. This means voluntarily surrendering 2,224,349 large-scale generation certificates, or LGCs, to the Clean Energy Regulator on behalf of all ACT electricity users.

As required by the act and reflecting community interest, I now turn to the cost-of-living impact statement in the report. The Energy Efficiency Improvement

Scheme and the large-scale feed-in tariff scheme have impacts on the cost of living through their effects on electricity prices. Together, these schemes contributed approximately \$358 to the annual electricity bill of a representative ACT household in 2021-22.

The government recognises that the cost of climate change measures can have a disproportionate impact on low-income households. Specific government policies and programs are in place to help those vulnerable households facing financial hardship and to address the cost of climate change measures on lower income households. These include programs for low income households, utility concessions and requirements on energy retailers to assist consumers suffering financial hardship.

The annual report showcases the significant achievements made by the ACT government and the ACT community in tackling climate change in 2021-22. It also demonstrates our commitment to transparency and accountability for the work we do to reduce emissions in a cost-effective manner. In 2021-22 we brought our emissions down to 47 per cent below 1990 levels. We should all be proud of these achievements, but we must be ready to work even harder to do our share to address this global problem.

The report I am tabling today shows that the ACT continues to be a leader in responding to climate change. It is an exciting time for Canberra as we prepare to electrify our city, transition away from the use of fossil fuel gas by 2045 and accelerate the uptake of zero emissions vehicles. I look forward to future reports setting out how our community is successfully making the transition to a zero emissions city.

I commend to the Assembly the 2021-22 Minister's Annual Report under the Climate Change and Greenhouse Gas Reduction Act 2010. I present the following papers:

Climate Change and Greenhouse Gas Reduction Act, pursuant to subsection 15(3)—Minister's Annual Report 2021-2022—

Report.

Ministerial statement, 1 December 2022.

I move:

That the Assembly take note of the ministerial statement.

Question resolved in the affirmative.

Asbestos—task force closure report Ministerial statement

MS VASSAROTTI (Kurrajong—Minister for the Environment, Minister for Heritage, Minister for Homelessness and Housing Services and Minister for Sustainable Building and Construction) (10.59): I am pleased today to table the Asbestos Response Taskforce closure report in the ACT Legislative Assembly. The task force closure report details how the ACT government listened, led, responded

and worked in a community-focused manner to address the dangerous legacy left by Mr Fluffy loose-fill asbestos insulation.

The Asbestos Response Taskforce commenced on 25 June 2014 and provided a coordinated, compassionate and enduring response to the presence of loose-fill asbestos insulation in Canberra homes. Following extensive discussions with experts, asbestos assessors and home owners, the ACT government determined that the demolition of each affected house was the only enduring solution to the health risk, as well as the social, practical and financial consequences being faced by owners of affected properties.

After receiving a \$1 billion loan from the Australian government, the ACT government responded in October 2014 through the buyback and demolition program of the Loose Fill Asbestos Insulation Eradication Scheme. The scheme was a significant and unprecedented undertaking by the ACT government. 1,029 affected properties across 56 suburbs required removal and site remediation to eradicate the risk from loose-fill asbestos insulation.

Over its eight years of operation, the task force administered the scheme and made significant progress to realise the ACT government's goal of eradicating the ongoing exposure risks from loose-fill asbestos insulation in our community. At the task force's closure, 97.76 per cent of all known affected properties in the ACT had been removed and appropriately remediated. The loss of each affected home has been an impact that has been felt by both home owners and tenants that once resided within them, as well as by the neighbours that have surrounded them.

Through the task force's delivery of the scheme, 1,125 relocation assistant grants that supported the transition of people to safer living arrangements have been paid, to the value of \$12.7 million. 991 properties—that is, 975 affected and 16 impacted properties—have been purchased, at a total cost of \$714.2 million. 1,020 properties—that is, 1,006 affected and 14 impacted—have been demolished, either through the scheme or privately. 1,006 blocks have been remediated and removed from the affected residential premises register. And 969 blocks have been sold through the task force sales program, returning a total value of \$653.2 million to the territory.

The task force closed on 30 June 2022. I commend the many ACT public servants who worked on the task force for their efforts and their dedication. I also acknowledge the process of recovery for those impacted by loose-fill asbestos insulation and the consequent actions that needed to be taken to remove this risk from our community that is deeply personal and ongoing.

The ACT government's response was and still is not simply about bricks and mortar but is one that recognises the impact that this dangerous substance had on the lives of residents, home owners, tradespeople, neighbours and the broader community.

The ACT government continues to work towards addressing the ongoing legacy impacts that are a part of our city's history through learning the lessons and documenting knowledge, tracking ongoing health impacts, supporting families now and in the future, recording stories and personal experiences, establishing a place of reflection, and supporting education and research.

From 1 July 2022 the remaining functions of the task force are now being delivered by the Loose Fill Asbestos Coordination Team within the Environment, Planning and Sustainable Development Directorate. This team continues the work, including administering the ongoing work of the scheme and the voluntary buyback program, providing ongoing support for the remaining home owners who are progressing through the buyback scheme and for those who are choosing to manage their properties privately.

The team is progressing the demolition program and resolving the challenges associated with complex properties within the scheme. It is supporting the renewal of affected neighbourhoods and contributing to a safer, more livable city through the delivery of an effective sales program that provides first right of refusal offers to former home owners and the sale of remediated blocks to the public. It will provide support, information and avenues for home owners if other properties affected by Mr Fluffy loose-fill asbestos insulation are identified in the future.

It is also finalising the delivery of key legacy projects. I was really pleased to recently announce that we are moving forward on a significant one of these, with the announcement that we have commenced work to establish a place of reflection at the Arboretum.

As evidenced by the above work, the closure of the task force does not mean that the impact of Mr Fluffy loose-fill asbestos will not continue to be felt at an individual, household or community level. It does, however, mark a milestone for the response and demonstrates what can happen when the government and community come together to respond to issues that are difficult and challenging. Thank you to all who have been involved in the task force. Be assured that the ACT government will continue to respond to the ongoing issues and support community members impacted by the issue.

I present the following papers:

Asbestos Response Taskforce Closure Report—

Report—Key delivery outcomes, insights and lessons learnt, dated November 2022.

Ministerial statement, 1 December 2022.

I move:

That the Assembly take note of the ministerial statement.

Question resolved in the affirmative.

Revenue Legislation Amendment Bill 2022

Mr Barr, pursuant to notice, presented the bill, its explanatory statement and a Human Rights Act compatibility statement.

Title read by Clerk.

MR BARR (Kurrajong—Chief Minister, Treasurer, Minister for Climate Action, Minister for Economic Development and Minister for Tourism) (11.07): I move:

That this bill be agreed to in principle.

This bill continues the ACT government’s efforts to improve and promote the operation of our tax laws, as part of a series of revenue legislation amendment bills. Principally, this bill introduces amendments to update landholder duty provisions and the Duties Act 1999. Other minor and technical amendments are also included in the bill.

The bill includes amendments as part of the first stage of clarifying and modernising landholder duty provisions under chapter 3 of the Duties Act. The landholder duty provisions support the integrity of the Duties Act by addressing the circumstances where parties may acquire indirect interests in dutiable property. Specifically, the bill will clarify and simplify how duty is imposed on a relevant acquisition by a landholder, being an entity with an interest in ACT land, and allow for regulations to prescribe circumstances where the requirement for an acquisition statement is unnecessary.

Amendments in the bill affirm that an agreement for the sale of land under the meaning of landholding includes the grant of Crown lease. To further support integrity and debt recovery arrangements, the bill will amend the application of the liability for landholder duty to include the landholder and trustee for a private unit trust scheme, to align the ACT with other jurisdictions. The constructive ownership provisions of linked bodies are redrafted to align with the updated provisions of other jurisdictions. The definition of an “associated person” is proposed to be amended to reduce the potential to use interposed entities to reduce tax against the intent of the provisions.

The bill also provides some minor amendments to the Duties Act, the Land Tax Act 2004 and consequential amendments to the Civil Law (Sale of Residential Property) Act 2003. It is important that the integrity of the tax system is maintained through bills such as this. In doing so, we give effect to the functioning of government and the provision of services, to the benefit of all Canberrans. I commend the bill to the Assembly.

Debate (on motion by **Ms Lee**) adjourned to the next sitting.

Gaming Machine (Club Refuge) Amendment Bill 2022

Mr Rattenbury, pursuant to notice, presented the bill, its explanatory statement and a Human Rights Act compatibility statement.

Title read by Clerk.

MR RATTENBURY (Kurrajong-Attorney-General, Minister for Consumer Affairs, Minister for Gaming and Minister for Water, Energy and Emissions Reduction) (11.11): I move:

That this bill be agreed to in principle.

As we are all aware, the bushfire smoke of 2019-20 was both severe and long lasting. For many people it was impossible to keep smoke out of their homes. The University of Canberra living well survey found that 67 per cent of survey respondents had a lot of smoke in their homes and 36 per cent also experienced a lot of smoke in the workplace. The Gaming Machine (Club Refuge) Amendment Bill recognises the impact that emergencies and other hazards have on our community by providing the legislative framework to support clubs to become refuges during such events.

The bill inserts a new section into the Gaming Machine Act 2004 to provide that clubs can be activated by ministerial declaration to facilitate their use as a refuge during an emergency or other hazard. In declaring certain clubs to be refuges under the act, I must consider any advice of the Emergency Services Commissioner in making the declaration.

The requirement to consider the advice of the commissioner is an important safeguard in the legislation. It ensures that any action taken is consistent with the ACT Emergencies (Emergency Plan) 2014 (No 1). It also ensures that the lead response agency for the hazard has the opportunity to provide advice to me, through the commissioner, before I decide whether to make a club refuge declaration in response to the hazard.

I consider ACT clubs to be well placed for use, as many club venues provide our community with access to heating, ventilation and air conditioning, or HVAC, systems that people do not ordinarily have in their homes. In recognition of this, the bill amends the sign-in and temporary membership requirements under the act to allow local guests to enter the club without obtaining membership while a club refuge declaration is in force. This supports the accessibility of club venues by the wider Canberra community during an extreme weather event.

Clubs will be assessed by a panel of relevant ACT government areas to determine whether a venue is appropriate to operate as a refuge. This will include ensuring that the club has a designated area away from electronic gaming machines and alcohol services where people can congregate. The assessment is an important policy safeguard which will inform my decision to declare certain clubs to be refuges.

To recognise clubs for their contribution to the community during an emergency or other hazard, the bill amends the act to allow clubs to claim the expenses associated with lost membership fees and the provision of free non-alcoholic drinks to people seeking refuge as part of their mandatory community contributions under the act. As clubs are not being paid or reimbursed for providing their venues for use as a refuge during an emergency or other hazard, I consider this to be a small but important gesture to recognise the important role that these venues will play once the ministerial declaration is in force.

As I mentioned, this bill has been drafted in accordance with the ACT government's existing emergency response strategies. For example, the ACT Extreme Heat Plan is

activated during extreme heat events which are of such a nature that a coordinated whole-of-ACT-government response is required. The purpose of the ACT Extreme Heat Plan is to protect the community by promoting individual and community resilience and adaptation to extreme heat conditions through the delivery of a planned, managed and effective whole-of-government response.

The central focus of the Extreme Heat Plan is to enable and enhance resilience to extreme heat events for at-risk populations, the broader ACT community and organisations, through the implementation of adaptive strategies. Exposure to prolonged heat stress can exacerbate existing health conditions and the risk of death, particularly amongst vulnerable cohorts. This may be mitigated through individuals seeking respite from the heat in clubs if their own homes are not able to be appropriately cooled. Many clubs have longer than usual operating hours which support their ability to provide a space for community members to attend for respite.

While this bill focuses on the declaration of clubs as refuges during an emergency or other hazard, it is important to recognise that other venue options are available to the community during extreme weather events. Community clubs are only one option from a range of other community facilities which include libraries, child and family centres and community centres. Club refuges will form part of the other ACT government supports already provided to community members during extended exposure to hazardous smoke and extreme heat.

In recent years where heatwaves and/or smoke have been present, a range of different support measures have been in place. For example, within the Community Services Directorate, Housing ACT conducts heatwave checks with vulnerable residents. Additionally, I note that our community recovery partners, such as Anglicare, Red Cross, Salvation Army and St Vincent de Paul, play an important social role in passing on public messaging to rough sleepers during such weather events.

This bill makes improvements which are compatible with and promote human rights by including clubs as a place of respite for community members, which may reduce health risks if such an event were to occur. In particular, the amendments support the right to life by seeking to enhance the availability of basic needs such as shelter and water by allowing clubs to be accessible by the ACT community during a potentially life-threatening emergency.

Heatwaves kill more Australians than any other natural disaster. In fact, heat stress can exacerbate existing health conditions, including diabetes, kidney disease and heart disease. This bill makes important amendments to enable the use of clubs as refuges by the community during an emergency or other hazard, as part of a range of measures undertaken by the government to mitigate risk. The bill increases the availability of safe spaces for the community to access during extreme heat and smoke events in the ACT. I commend the bill to the Assembly.

Debate (on motion by **Mr Parton**) adjourned to the next sitting.

Professional Engineers Bill 2022

Ms Vassarotti, pursuant to notice, presented the bill, its explanatory statement and a Human Rights Act compatibility statement.

Title read by Clerk.

MS VASSAROTTI (Kurrajong—Minister for the Environment, Minister for Heritage, Minister for Homelessness and Housing Services and Minister for Sustainable Building and Construction) (11.18): I move:

That this bill be agreed to in principle.

I am pleased to present the Professional Engineers Bill 2022 to the Assembly. This bill establishes a registration scheme requiring certain professional engineers to be registered to provide professional engineering services in the ACT or for a project or purpose in the ACT. It imposes obligations on registered professional engineers, provides appropriate compliance and enforcement provisions, and establishes a public register.

This bill delivers on commitments in the Parliamentary and Governing Agreement for the Tenth Assembly; recommendations in the national *Building Confidence Report* that there be a nationally consistent approach to the registration of certain categories of building practitioners, including engineers; recommendations made in the 2012 *Getting Home Safely* report; and aligns the ACT with regulatory arrangements in other jurisdictions.

Engineering services are purchased by governments, large and small businesses and individual consumers. In the absence of any statutory requirements for licensing or registration, consumers are limited in their ability to measure the competency of an engineer that they are seeking to engage.

There are potentially significant risks to the health, safety and economic wellbeing of individuals and the broader community resulting from the provision of engineering services where the individual providing the services does so without adequate qualifications, experiences and competencies. These impacts can manifest through poorly designed or “sick” buildings; the structural failure of whole or parts of buildings and other structures; the failure of hazardous services, such as gas, electricity or mechanical works; and financial costs, such as design and construction costs, litigation costs and rectification costs.

This bill attempts to mitigate these risks through the objectives of protecting the public by ensuring that professional engineering services are carried out by professional engineers or under the direction and oversight of a professional engineer; maintaining public confidence in the standard of services provided by professional engineers in the ACT; and upholding standards of practice for professional engineers in the ACT.

The scheme will initially apply to the following five prescribed areas of engineering: civil, structural, mechanical, electrical and fire safety. The scheme applies to engineers who are providing professional engineering services, as opposed to those who are carrying out work in accordance with prescribed standards or under the direct supervision of a registered professional engineer. To be eligible for registration, applicants must be an individual; have the required qualifications, experience and competencies related to each area of engineering for which the applicant has applied to be registered; meet suitability requirements; and not be subject to the disqualification or cancellation of registration as a professional engineer under the bill or a corresponding law.

Applications for registration will include a report from an approved assessment entity about the applicant's qualifications, experience and competencies that relate to each area of engineering for which the applicant has applied for registration. Additional eligibility requirements are proposed for engineers providing professional engineering services in the building and construction industry to support the government's commitment to improving the quality of buildings in the ACT.

The bill provides that I, as the relevant minister, will set the qualification, experience and competency requirements for each area of engineering, through a disallowable instrument. This instrument will be developed in consultation with key industry stakeholders. This instrument will also include alternative pathways for those who do not meet all the stated qualifications, experience and competency requirements but may be assessed by an assessment entity as having the skills, knowledge and competency to provide professional engineering services in the area or areas of engineering for which registration is sought. The inclusion of an alternative pathway is in recognition of those who have taken a non-traditional university pathway to becoming an engineer or who have taken time out from the workforce. It is designed to support those already working in the industry to continue to do so.

This bill was developed in consultation with industry and the community. Peak industry bodies have been extensively involved in the development of the scheme and will play a key role in the successful implementation of the scheme. To support the object of the bill to uphold standards in the industry, registered professional engineers will need to satisfy the prescribed continuing professional development requirements in order to renew their registration and continue to provide professional engineering services under the bill.

The bill also establishes the role of the professional engineer registrar, who will be a public servant appointed by the Director-General of the Environment, Planning and Sustainable Development Directorate, responsible for administering the legislation. The functions of the registrar include determining applications for registration and renewal; monitoring compliance with, and investigating and prosecuting alleged contraventions of, the legislation; referring registered professional engineers to the ACT Civil and Administrative Tribunal for regulatory action; acting on complaints made about registered professional engineers; and keeping registers required under the bill.

The bill establishes a public register of professional engineers that are, or were, registered under the scheme. The register will enable consumers to check the details of the registered professional engineer, including conditions on the registration, as well as details of disciplinary action. The information included on the public register is limited to the minimum information required to enable consumers to make informed decisions about whether to engage a particular professional engineer. Information on the register in relation to former registered professional engineers will be removed 10 years after the day the former registered professional engineer's registration ends.

The bill also sets up the compliance and enforcement framework, including disciplinary action that can be taken. Disciplinary sanctions for engineers under the bill are similar to those available under other licensing and/or registration schemes, with an acknowledgement of the importance of mobility of labour across the country and the smaller scale of this registration scheme compared to other occupational registration schemes operating in the ACT.

The bill takes a streamlined approach to regulation enforcement and compliance, with administrative powers assigned to the registrar designed with public safety at the forefront. The bill allows for regulatory action to be taken against engineers who fail to comply with professional obligations, who carry out engineering services without the requisite registration, who contravene the bill or a relevant law, and who give out false or misleading information about a service carried out. Offence provisions are included to deter conduct of this nature. This creates a legal and administrative framework to protect the community by ensuring that infrastructure and buildings are engineered safely and by competent, skilled and qualified people.

Throughout the bill there are a number of procedural fairness and personal information protections. These include suitability. Information required to be disclosed is limited to that which is necessary for the registrar to determine whether someone is eligible to be registered as a professional engineer. The registrar has a level of discretion in determining whether suitability information makes an applicant not suitable for registration. An individual whose application for registration or renewal is refused may seek to have this decision reviewed internally and then seek an ACAT review of the registrar's decision. The public register will not include details of a professional or former professional engineer where their inclusion would or could reasonably be expected to endanger the life or physical safety of any person, or jeopardise national security.

The ACT government is committed to having in place a robust and proportionate regulatory framework for professional engineers that contains offences and penalties that support the objects of the bill. The registration scheme established by this bill will set the standards of practice for professional engineers; promotes ongoing professional development within the engineering profession; reduces the risk of loss and harm to the public from engineering services; and gives consumers more confidence in engaging the services of a registered professional engineer. I commend the bill to the Assembly.

Debate (on motion by **Mr Cain**) adjourned to the next sitting.

Legislative Assembly—online parliament portal for questions on notice

MS BURCH (Brindabella) (11.30): I move:

That, from 1 January 2023, standing orders be amended as follows:

(1) Standing Order 113(a)

Omit all words after “with the Clerk,”, substitute “through the Parliament Portal, by 12 noon of a sitting day.”.

(2) Standing Order 120

Omit all words after “shall be given”, substitute “through the Parliament Portal within such time as, in the opinion of the Speaker, will enable the question to be published. The question shall be authorised by the Member.”.

(3) Standing Order 254D(a)

After “the Committee”, insert “, through the questions module on the Parliament Portal.”.

Members, this is a fairly straightforward change to standing orders. It is time critical, with the introduction for the portal for submitting questions on notice, or QoNs, coming into effect from 1 January next year. There are consequential amendments to standing order 113(a), standing order 120 and standing order 254D(a) as a consequence of moving to the online portal.

These changes cannot wait to the overall review of standing orders, as I said, because it is time critical. It will accommodate changes to the way QoNs are submitted. The portal has been a request from many an MLA, and the OLA has been working on this for some time. I want to tip my hat to those in the OLA that have worked on the development of this.

It will be a great improvement to the way QoNs are submitted and provides more easy access to QoNs over time, so you do not have to keep on asking the same QoN. It is my understanding that OLA will provide an information session on the new portal in the near future. I commend the motion to members.

Question resolved in the affirmative.

Standing orders—suspension

Motion (by **Mr Cain**) agreed to, with the concurrence of an absolute majority:

That so much of the standing orders be suspended as would prevent Notice No 3, Assembly business, being called on and debated forthwith.

Justice and Community Safety—Standing Committee Reporting date—amendment

MR CAIN (Ginninderra) (11.32): I move:

That, notwithstanding the provisions of the resolution of the Assembly of 2 December 2020, as amended, that established general purpose standing committees, the Standing Committee on Justice and Community Safety shall present its reports on the Road Safety Legislation Amendment Bill 2022 and the Crimes Legislation Amendment Bill 2022 by 24 February 2023.

In accordance with the Assembly resolution establishing general purpose standing committees, the Road Safety Legislation Amendment Bill 2022 and the Crimes Legislation Amendment Bill 2022 were referred to the Standing Committee on Justice and Community Safety on 23 November 2022.

At a private meeting on 28 November, the committee resolved to undertake an enquiry into both bills. In respect of the Crimes Legislation Amendment Bill 2022, the committee will only be enquiring into the aspect concerning a new offence of unauthorised entry to a motor vehicle. The committee called for public submissions on 29 November.

The resolution of establishment for standing committees states that all bills presented to the Assembly stand referred to the relevant standing committee for enquiry and report within two months from the presentation of the bill. The reference to the Road Safety Legislation Amendment Bill 2022 and the Crimes Legislation Amendment Bill 2022 under this resolution means that the reporting date for these bills is 23 January 2023.

My motion asks for the reporting date for both these bills be extended further to allow sufficient time to conduct the report on the findings on these two bills. The committee asks that the reporting date be extended to 24 February 2023.

Question resolved in the affirmative.

Leave of absence

Motion (by **Mr Gentleman**) agreed to:

That leave of absence from 2 December 2022 to 6 February 2023 be given to all Members.

Sitting suspended from 11.35 am to 2.00 pm.

Questions without notice Housing—affordability

MS LEE: My question is to the Minister for Planning and Land Management. Minister, this year's rental affordability index has rated the ACT as the worst region

for rental affordability across eight of 10 low income household groups Overall, Canberra remains the most expensive capital city in Australia to rent in. Minister, why won't you release more land to help make housing more affordable in Canberra?

MR GENTLEMAN: I thank Ms Lee for the question. It is important that we look at these aspects in the future, when we look at our ILRP. The 2022-23 budget delivers a range of important housing initiatives, including the government's Indicative Land Release Program. That program plays a strategic role in catering for our population growth, building a compact, livable city, attracting investment in the land market and strengthening our economic advantage in the ACT region.

We look at that program to continue to provide a diverse mix of housing types and choices, including dedicating at least 15 per cent of the annual residential land releases for affordable community and public housing dwellings. When we look at those land release opportunities, we look at population growth in the territory and ensure that the land release program at least has enough—

Ms Lee: Point of order, Madam Speaker. The minister is now well past halfway and he still has not answered the actual question, which was: why won't you release more land?

MADAM SPEAKER: He is in order. He is talking about the land release program. Mr Gentleman.

MR GENTLEMAN: That is right, Madam Speaker. As I was saying, we look at population growth to ensure that we have enough land released to meet population growth and some more. That is why we do all that extra work in the land release program. In this program there are releases to support 4,743 single residential dwellings and 11,674 multi-unit dwellings. That will mean that we have enough land released, well above population growth.

MS LEE: Minister, what do you say to pensioners that are forced to sacrifice up to 70 per cent of their income to afford a place to rent in Canberra?

MR GENTLEMAN: We know that it is difficult to rent in Canberra. The government have policies that we can work with to try and relieve that wherever we can. That is why we are moving across our system to look at rental as a strategic base for housing in the territory into the future. The Build-to-Rent scheme will assist in that case by providing more opportunity for rentals and hopefully will alleviate a little of the pressure for renters at the low end of the rental scheme.

MR PARTON: Minister, what do you say to single parents working part time who are forced to sacrifice up to 69 per cent of their income to afford a place to rent in Canberra?

MR GENTLEMAN: Our housing policies are aimed at looking at, particularly through my directorate and the land release program, ensuring that at least 15 per cent is affordable into the future. We would like to do the best we can to alleviate that housing stress. The government is working on policies to do that.

Jabanungga Avenue—groundwater flooding

MS CASTLEY: Madam Speaker, my question is to the Minister for City Services. Minister, residents have contacted me saying that groundwater on Jabanungga Avenue, Ngunnawal, is appearing down the road from where the rectification works are currently being carried out. Have you received a briefing from the directorate about this issue, and can you provide an update to the Assembly?

MR STEEL: I thank the member for her question. As she is aware, the works are happening at Jabanungga Avenue and at another street in Ngunnawal to address the issues that have been raised by residents, after extensive investigation works. I am happy to take that on notice and provide an update.

MS CASTLEY: Will you confirm for the Assembly whether both spots on Jabanungga, in front of the roundabout and near Ngunnawal, will be fixed by late January 2023?

MR STEEL: I will take that on notice. Obviously, that is subject to ongoing La Nina weather conditions, which do impact on the construction of all construction projects.

MR MILLIGAN: Minister, have you explained to residents why there is new groundwater, and the impact this will have on the roadworks?

MR STEEL: We think that there is the presence of a natural source of water in the area. With the current wet conditions there is a presence of water in that area. The purpose of this work is not only to repair the work but also to try and manage the stormwater and this natural source of water under the pavement. That is the purpose of the project, and we will see whether we can address that through the works that are under way.

Housing ACT—vacant land

MS LAWDER: My question is to the Minister for Housing and Suburban Development. Minister, previously in this place over a number of years we have discussed the public housing block opposite Wanniasa shops, at the corner of Langdon Avenue and Longmire Crescent, which was empty for some time and has now been demolished. Early in 2022 in a question without notice we discussed in this place that the house had been demolished over a year before while awaiting a new housing development. In your answer you said you would provide further information about the property. Minister, nearly a year after that QWON this block is still empty. Meanwhile the waiting list for public housing is growing. Minister, when will this block be built on to provide more public housing for Canberra families?

MS BERRY: I will have to take on notice the exact detail of the response Ms Lawder is after with regard to that particular block. However, I have also discussed at length in this place the program of growth and renewal in the ACT with regard to public housing; how some housing is demolished, some homes are sold and new homes are purchased off the market to ensure that we grow our public housing by over 400 homes as per the Parliamentary and Governing Agreement and renew

1,000 properties. So the properties we demolish we either rebuild or sell and replace with new properties that are more sustainable and meet the needs of people who live in public housing all across the city. With regard to that Wanniasa site I will have to take it on notice. However, I have spoken in this place last week around some of the challenges Housing ACT has been facing with regards to supply. Like every other construction project in the ACT, private and government, as a result of COVID, as a result of bank interest rates and as a result of the war in the Ukraine. This means there has been a restriction in supply and it has meant there are delays in construction projects all across the country and the ACT is not immune to that. As well as the La Nina weather pattern which has also meant delays in construction across the ACT and, again, public housing is not immune to that.

MS LAWDER: Minister, how many blocks throughout Canberra are standing empty awaiting new public housing developments?

MS BERRY: I can get that detail for you Ms Lawder. I just do not have it at my fingertips right at the moment. As you would know that is a fluid number so I can get you the information for the last week or the last month, however it changes as construction continues and homes are built across the suburbs. I will get the latest information I have and provide it to the Assembly.

MR PARTON: Minister, how many dwellings for desperate Canberrans could be built on those empty blocks?

MS BERRY: Again, Madam Speaker, I will refer the member to my previous answer.

Women—ACT Women’s Plan 2016-2026

DR PATERSON: My question is to the Minister for Women. Minister, can you please provide an update on the progress of the ACT Women’s Plan 2016-2026?

MS BERRY: I thank Dr Paterson for her question. As member’s will know, the women’s plan was released in 2016, and it guides our work as we work together towards greater gender equality in the ACT. The women’s plan aims to remove barriers and enable women, girls and gender diverse people to reach their potential and participate fully in our community.

Many here may have asked, “Why isn’t there a men’s plan?” The statistics that are published by Our Watch are sobering, and that is why we have a women’s plan and why we need to address the issues around gender inequality in our community. Australia’s full-time gender pay gap is 14.8 per cent, with women earning on average \$261.50 per week less than men. On average, women spend nearly 32 hours a week on household labour and caring, compared with 19 hours for men.

On average, one woman a week is murdered by her current or former partner. One in three women has experienced physical violence since the age of 15. One in five women has experienced sexual violence since the age of 15. One in four women has experienced physical or sexual violence by a former or current partner since the age of 15. One in four women has experienced emotional abuse by a current or former partner since the age of 15. One in two women has experienced sexual harassment in

their lifetime. Women are nearly three times more likely than men to experience violence from an intimate partner. As I said, the data is sobering, and that is why we have a women's plan in the ACT.

DR PATERSON: Minister, I note that you launched the consultation on the third action plan 2023-2025 earlier this year. What are the priority areas for the upcoming plan?

MS BERRY: I was excited to be able to meet with women stakeholders in the ACT to launch the consultation around the third action plan. The renewed focus in that plan is around health and wellbeing, safety and inclusion, leadership and workforce participation, housing and homelessness, and appropriate and accessible services.

Many women continue to be disproportionately affected by lengthy wait times for health services, which takes a toll on their physical and mental health. Housing insecurity and homelessness continue to be gendered issues in the ACT, which are further impacted by the gender pay gap as well as domestic and family violence,

Additionally, these barriers are compounded for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women, who experience violence, poverty, disability and discrimination at higher rates than the general population.

MS ORR: Minister, how can members of the community participate in the consultation and development of the third action plan?

MS BERRY: I thank Ms Orr for her interest in this important conversation, and I really encourage members of the Assembly to encourage other women in the ACT to participate in the consultation on the development of the third action plan.

The consultation process recognises that gender equality is everybody's business. When women, girls and gender diverse people can fully participate in all aspects of our society, our whole community is stronger for it.

The third action plan is reflective of the diversity of our city. It includes tangible steps to support those we are encouraging, and we are encouraging organisations and individuals to contribute.

It is important that we encourage people who would not normally get a chance to have their say on issues like this. They can do that via the online survey, which is available on YourSay. Members of the community can hold conversations with their networks and respond to the online survey for groups and by making a submission of their own. Consultation closes on 28 February 2023, which is ahead of the third action plan commencing in July 2023.

Justice—juvenile sex offender assessment protocol

MRS KIKKERT: My question is to Assistant Minister for Families and Community Services. Minister, according to ACT government documents, the Juvenile Sex Offender Assessment Protocol, or J-SOAP, "is generally used in preparing a pre-sentence report" but may also limit a young man's access to restorative justice.

Minister, are you aware that research conducted by academics at Griffith University and published earlier this year found that, “The J-SOAP may not be valid for the prediction of sexual recidivism for culturally diverse youth,” and “especially for Indigenous youth”? If not, why not?

MS DAVIDSON: I thank Mrs Kikkert for her interest in youth justice and making sure that we are taking into account all of the most recent academic research out there. The most appropriate way to provide rehabilitative services to young people in Bimberi is something that is constantly being looked at by the staff there and by the policy areas within CSD. I am confident that they are always looking at new research that is coming out.

MRS KIKKERT: Minister, what is your government doing to help make sure that the use of the J-SOAP does not disadvantage Aboriginal boys in the youth justice system?

MS DAVIDSON: Given your very specific interest in that particular piece of work, it might be appropriate for us to arrange a briefing for you and talk about how we do that particular piece of work.

MR CAIN: Minister, what else is this tool used for in a youth justice context?

MS DAVIDSON: Thank you, Mr Cain. You might like to join a briefing with Mrs Kikkert.

Planning—location of residential areas

MS CLAY: My question is to the minister for planning. Minister, I can see that there are a number of dwelling and employment predictions by district included in the district strategies. But when I run the figures, I see that in 2063, most new dwellings—73 per cent—will be outside central Canberra and most jobs—59 per cent—will be in central Canberra. The IPCC has advised cities to co-locate new housing with employment to reduce emissions. This is particularly important in Canberra because most of our tracked emissions are coming from transport. If almost three-quarters of housing is outside the centre of the city, and almost three out of every five jobs are in the centre, how will this co-locate new housing with employment?

MR GENTLEMAN: I thank Ms Clay for the question. Of course, we are building Canberra’s future as we make these planning changes. Through our changes to the planning system, we are planning for a sustainable and resilient city. Ms Clay is right; the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change in 2022 said the following about future planning:

Rapidly growing cities can avoid future emissions by co-locating jobs and housing to achieve compact urban form, and by leapfrogging or transitioning to low-emissions technologies. New and emerging cities will have significant infrastructure development needs to achieve high quality of life, which can be met through energy efficient infrastructures and services, and people-centred urban design ...

That is exactly what we are doing through the new planning system. By doing this, we are leading the nation. Canberra is a rapidly growing city, and we need to consider where people will live, work and recreate now and into the future.

The planning reforms build on Canberra's future, too. Those draft district strategies set out a city that is well connected and sustainable. For the first time we are mapping our city across several different metrics, including employment opportunities. This is done through marking out areas under economic access for equity. We are thinking about current and future employment as we build Canberra's future, and the district strategies are nation leading.

MS CLAY: Minister, would the government consider delivering more of Canberra's new housing stock closer to existing and future employment centres, in line with the IPCC's recommendations?

MR GENTLEMAN: We work across government to ensure that we can provide housing as close as possible to work and transport corridors. We learnt this through our interactions with young people back in 2018, when I first did the statement of planning intent workshops across the ACT. Young people said to us that they were happy to live in a denser city, as long as they were close to employment, close to good transport corridors and close to good urban open space.

MR BRADDOCK: Minister, how will the new Territory Plan and district strategies encourage more employment in those areas that have low employment to population ratios, like Gungahlin?

MR GENTLEMAN: That is a good question, Mr Braddock. Of course, we have been looking particularly at Gungahlin, and the challenge there, where we have not seen the big employment opportunities from the federal government that we see in other parts of the city. The district strategies look at that. We want to hear from Canberrans as to where they would like to see changes in their areas for both employment and housing.

Canberra Hospital—Adult Mental Health Unit

MR COCKS: My question is to the Minister for Mental Health. Minister, last week you said categorically that you were unaware of any safety concerns for patients and staff at the Adult Mental Health Unit. Yesterday you confirmed that you had inquired about safety issues regarding the Adult Mental Health Unit when briefed on problems at Dhulwa. Yesterday you also resolutely refused, despite the Speaker's direction, to answer a question on your awareness of incidents at the Adult Mental Health Unit and whether you had subsequently inquired about safety concerns. Minister, this question is purely, and to the exclusion of all other matters, about your statements and your awareness of safety issues. Given that there were 170 incidents, why didn't you know?

MS DAVIDSON: Thank you for the question. Given that our mental health services are working with people in their care whose behaviour can sometimes include some things that are quite risky or harmful for themselves or others, there is a constant need for awareness of staff around the risks involved and being able to assess those risks

and manage them appropriately. This is why there are regular conversations about how to manage risks and how to manage safety for staff at those workplaces.

Ms Lee: Point of order, Madam Speaker.

MADAM SPEAKER: Point of order. Resume your seat, Ms Davidson.

Ms Lee: Mr Cocks's question was very, very straightforward: why didn't you know? It is not about the knowledge of the staff and it is not about the processes. The question specifically is: why didn't you know? I ask that you direct the minister to be directly relevant.

MADAM SPEAKER: In the time you have left, go to that area of the question, Ms Davidson, please.

MS DAVIDSON: Thank you. Given that there have in recent months been some conversations about the number of incidents at a range of different mental health facilities across the ACT, including Dhulwa, I understand why it is so important and you are wondering about this. We do receive regular briefs about incidents that might require attention. I could not tell you, off the top of my head, exactly how many incidents I have been notified about and on what dates. If you would like me to, I can take it on notice to provide you with the dates on which I was notified and how many incidents.

MR COCKS: Yes, please. Minister, how can the public have faith in you, as minister, when you were unaware of safety concerns with those 170 incidents?

MS DAVIDSON: We have regular conversations about safety in those facilities because there is a risk to staff if they are not able to appropriately assess and manage risks. That is why we have regular conversations about what training programs and supports are in place to help them in being able to do that work safely and provide the best possible care for the people who are in those facilities receiving therapeutic care.

About specific incidents, that is a different matter. I have just said that I will take on notice the question of on what dates I was notified about how many incidents. But we do have regular conversations about workplace health and safety in that context.

MS CASTLEY: Minister, what changes will you make in your directorate to ensure that you are informed of all incidents?

MS DAVIDSON: As I was just saying, we already have regular conversations about how we manage this and how we provide the right training and support to staff. That is an important thing to continue doing, even if there were no incidents, because the risk still needs to be managed.

ACT Policing—domestic and family violence

MS ORR: My question is to the Minister for Police and Emergency Services. Minister, what work has ACT Policing been undertaking to respond to family and domestic violence?

MR GENTLEMAN: I thank Ms Orr for the question, and for her interest in safety for Canberrans. Considerable effort has been made across government to tackle family and domestic violence. In particular, I want to acknowledge and thank the Deputy Chief Minister for her nation-leading work. ACT police are working in partnership with a range of agencies and partners across government. These include Child and Youth Protection Services, Domestic Violence Crisis Service and Victim Support ACT. This partnership encompasses daily collaboration and regular meetings. All of this has helped better support victims-survivors, as well as develop strategies to hold perpetrators to account.

ACT Policing informs me that in relation to family violence incidents, they take a pro-charge, pro-arrest stance, and presumption against bail where evidence exists that a criminal offence has been committed. In addition to this stance, ACT Policing's family violence orders liaison officers play an important role in supporting victims-survivors of family violence. This includes assisting victims-survivors to obtain court orders when they do not wish to be supported by another agency in applying for the order; providing a link between the police response and the application for court-initiated family violence orders; and representing the ACT police for court-initiated family violence orders.

MS ORR: Minister, what else does ACT Policing have in place to support victims-survivors?

MR GENTLEMAN: In addition to the initiatives I described in my previous answer, ACT Policing, also has a family violence unit. The FVU reviews all ACT family violence incidents, and triages accordingly. The FVU coordinates a response, where appropriate, to support a victim-survivor, and any further action required for the victim's safety after the initial crisis response by police. The FVU prioritises family violence incidents through a risk assessment, repeat calls for service, and the professional opinion of police officers. As well as this, the FVU participates as a key partner in the family violence safety action program, chaired by Victim Support ACT. The program enables agencies to meet regularly, share information, and develop strategies to support high-risk, high-needs victims-survivors, and hold perpetrators to account.

I am also informed that the FVU has worked with ACT Policing intelligence to develop a family violence intelligence profile to assist front-line members in understanding the complex contextual issues surrounding certain victims-survivors. The operational response by ACT police to family violence ensures that the victim-survivor and perpetrator-focused family violence model is employed through the family violence early intervention program. Last financial year, this intervention program made 303 referrals to support agencies.

So I do want to thank ACT Policing for its efforts and the ongoing work to tackle this important issue, along with their collaboration with partners across government and non-government sectors.

MR PETTERSSON: Minister, what other programs and initiatives does ACT Policing have to support Canberrans?

MR GENTLEMAN: I thank Mr Pettersson for the question. ACT police come from our community, and they understand our city very well. Their dedication to keeping all of us safe is their main focus—and to do this with an understanding of Canberrans. So, supporting victims is part of ACT Policing’s core work, and this is done by each member of ACT Policing.

I do want to acknowledge the feedback that has been provided by victims. I know that ACT Policing has reflected on this, and implemented some changes. This work is ongoing, and ACT police will continue listening and working to make improvements. As well as the work of those who attend incidents, ACT Policing has an in-place victims liaison officer. VLOs provide ongoing support, and act as the first point of call for all victims of serious crime.

The VLOs make contact with victims of crime within 7 to 10 days following an incident, and provide supplementary services to the victim. They also provide assistance to victims applying for the financial assistance scheme. VLOs provide ongoing support to victims, and provide court updates, advising them when an offender is in court for a bail application or variation, to obtain their views for consideration. A total of 4,485 calls were made to victims of crime in 2021-22.

Once again, my thanks go to ACT Policing, and all first responders who support Canberrans each and every day. This being our last sitting week before the holiday season, I want to extend my thanks to all those who will be on duty, keeping us safe and keeping things going. All of us in this place respect and support your work.

Planning—district strategies

MR CAIN: My question is to the Minister for Planning and Land Management. Minister, the Canberra Liberals have spoken with the residents of the Oaks Estate community village, who have expressed to us their concerns for being included in the East Canberra District under your proposed strategy. They feel this isolates them from other communities as they would be the only residential precinct in East Canberra. In the call-back session the Canberra Liberals requested, you stated on record you had spoken with Oaks Estate representatives who have since denied to us they had been consulted in preparation for the drawing of the district boundaries. Minister, can you confirm you or your department have spoken to community leaders at Oaks Estate? And if so, how and when?

MR GENTLEMAN: I thank Mr Cain for the question. It is a question he asked during the annual report hearings and I reflected on it at that time. I personally have not spoken to the Oaks Estate residents. I understand the directorate has though. So I will get the detail and come back to the chamber. But I will say that these are draft strategies. They are open for comment and we do want to hear from the Canberra community on their views on the planning bill and the district strategies.

MR CAIN: Minister, why have you ignored Oaks Estate’s request not to be considered within the East Canberra district boundaries, even in this draft version?

MR GENTLEMAN: As I said to Mr Cain at the annual report hearings in the

question he put to me, as he did today, we do take into account all the comments put to us during this planning process. As I said, we are in the draft planning process and we are listening to those who make comments.

MS LEE: Minister, have you ruled out potential residential land use in the East Canberra district?

MR GENTLEMAN: I will just repeat: these are draft strategies at the moment so we are not ruling anything out. We are looking at the opportunity to hear from the community on what they would like to see in their area and this is a focus for the directorate and for me as well.

Access Canberra—next gen energy storage program

MS CASTLEY: My question is to the Chief Minister. Last week I met with a number of businesses in Mitchell about delays in payments for next gen batteries. One business estimated they have over 150 batteries waiting for inspection by Access Canberra. As businesses are not paid their rebate until after the inspection, this business is out of pocket by more than \$500,000.

The federal solar scheme pays business owners their rebate before an inspection. Will you amend the scheme so that businesses do not have to be out of pocket more than \$500,000 because of your delays?

MR BARR: I will have a look at the issue and respond in due course.

MS CASTLEY: Chief Minister, what is the average time that businesses have to wait to be paid by the government after installing a battery?

MR BARR: I can get that data from the Sustainable Household Scheme, which is what I presume you are referencing. I do not have it in front of me. I will look at the matter.

MR MILLIGAN: Chief Minister, how many businesses are waiting for payments from the government for the batteries?

MR BARR: I would not imagine that there would be too many, as the total number of eligible suppliers is not a large number. It is not like it is thousands. I doubt that it would even be hundreds. It is likely to be less than dozens.

Retirement villages—dispute resolution

MR BRADDOCK: My question is to the Attorney-General. Attorney-General, what avenues are available for residents of retirement villages to be able to resolve disputes without having to resort to the courts?

MR RATTENBURY: There are actually a number of mechanisms available under the Retirement Villages Act. They are designed to, ideally, resolve matters informally, but there is scope for escalation if people are unable to resolve matters.

In the first instance, there is a process internal to the village. Under the act, every village must have a disputes committee that residents can use. That disputes committee will have three members—one appointed by residents, one appointed by the operator and an independent member agreed by the residents and the operator. Residents can take disputes to the committee, and the committee must act within 30 days to resolve the dispute, arrange for an external mediator or decide that it cannot be resolved at that level.

There are two other options if that mechanism does not work. One is that, if it cannot be resolved there, residents can apply to the ACT Administrative and Civil Tribunal, which is of course set up to be a lower barrier means to access that sort of formal decision-making process. ACAT will often try to resolve the disputes through mediation, but, if not, the matter can go to a hearing.

Finally, there is a mechanism where residents can make a complaint with the Human Rights Commission, under section 175 of the act. The commission will also seek to resolve a complaint by conciliation. The commission does have a range of powers, including to compel parties to attend a conciliation and to require relevant information to be provided. If conciliation is successful, the commission will provide a written record of the agreement, and that can be enforced as if it were an order of the ACT. If the Human Rights Commission cannot resolve it, then it remains for residents that they could go back to ACAT.

MR BRADDOCK: Attorney-General, is the government exploring any other avenues to be able to resolve disputes amicably between the two parties?

MR RATTENBURY: Not at this time. The new power for the Human Rights Commission was recently conferred, in 2019. It came from the review of the Retirement Villages Act that was conducted between 2015 and 2016. That review had extensive consultation with a range of stakeholders, including resident village providers, industry representatives, the legal community involved, through the older persons advisory group, as well as a range of residents. There were some pretty active residents involved in that process.

This new mechanism was designed out of that feedback. It has only been in place for a short period of time. At this stage, I have not had feedback that people are concerned by that. But I will take the opportunity to check that, now that Mr Braddock has asked me the question.

MS CLAY: Attorney, what has been the uptake of the option of going to the Human Rights Commission?

MR RATTENBURY: I do not have that figure to hand. I will take that question on notice and provide the detail to Ms Clay and Mr Braddock.

Kippax group centre—development

MRS KIKKERT: My question is to the Minister for Transport and City Services. Minister, I quote from pages 32 and 36 of the Kippax master plan, where it states that

there is a “need to provide replacement car parking” when developing “existing public car parks” and that “the existing provision of convenient and accessible car parking is considered by the community to be a major drawcard for the centre and should be retained as development and redevelopment occur”. Minister, why did your government sell off 64 public parking spaces without providing replacement car parking, as the master plan requires, and why did you suggest using some of section 89 for staff parking when this would erode a major drawcard for shoppers and further harm trade?

MR STEEL: I thank the member for her question, which does stray into the planning space. It also touches on parking policy, so I am happy to answer it. Revitalisation and growth of the Kippax group centre are being delivered, in line with the master plan and associated changes to the Territory Plan that were developed in consultation with the community.

We have longstanding planning policies around parking which will apply, including the replacement of parking. At this point I understand that this particular development is in the pre-DA consultation phase. Of course, we are yet to see a final DA, which will be put through, and which, of course, will have the input of not only the ACT planning and land authority but also Transport Canberra and City Services, in relation to any replacement parking that is proposed. Of course, that will be assessed through the usual process.

MRS KIKKERT: Minister, what other requirements in the Kippax master plan is your government planning or willing to ignore in your development of this group centre?

MR STEEL: I reject the premise of the question. I refer her to the answer to the previous question.

MR CAIN: Minister, what do you say to customers and traders at Kippax who are negatively impacted by your failure to follow the master plan’s policy of providing replacement parking whenever an existing car park is developed?

MR STEEL: We are following the master plan, as I mentioned in answer to the previous question from Mrs Kikkert. I have provided to the Assembly, in a direct response to the petition being tabled earlier in the week—

Mrs Kikkert: Are you misleading—

Mr Gentleman: A point of order, Madam Speaker.

MADAM SPEAKER: Yes.

Mr Gentleman: Mrs Kikkert just said—

MADAM SPEAKER: Mrs Kikkert, you will withdraw that comment.

Mrs Kikkert: I withdraw.

MR STEEL: I refer Mrs Kikkert and Mr Cain to the *Hansard*, where I outlined the work that Transport Canberra is doing this week to look at the provision of some long-stay car parking on section 89, Holt.

Parking—Rowland Rees Crescent

MS LAWDER: My question is to the Minister for Transport and City Services. Minister, I have written to you previously regarding parking along Rowland Rees Crescent in Greenway. Residents have told me that they have trouble getting in and out of their own street, and driveways in Avani Terraces, because of cars parked along both sides of the narrow road each day. In one instance, a car turning into Rowland Rees Crescent from Athllon Drive saw a car coming towards them, trying to leave Rowland Rees Crescent. The first car reversed out onto Athllon Drive so that the second car could get out. The first car then got hit by a car driving along Athllon Drive. In another recent instance, a garbage truck trying to drive along Rowland Rees Crescent took the side mirrors off two cars parked there, because of the lack of room to move. I am told that the garbage truck, in a separate incident on a different day, also mounted a nearby kerb and hit a tree. Residents are also concerned about access for emergency vehicles, should an emergency arise. Minister, why haven't you taken any action yet on the parking issues in Rowland Rees Crescent in Greenway?

MR STEEL: I am happy to look at those matters again. When those roads were built they were built to municipal infrastructure standards, which reflect Australian standards for road construction. I am happy to look at that particular matter and also to look at whether parking enforcement might be part of the solution there. I am not aware of the specific incidents that Ms Lawder is referring to. I am happy to look into that and come back to the Assembly.

MS LAWDER: Minister, what options for traffic measures can you put in place on Rowland Rees Crescent, and when might that happen?

MR STEEL: I am happy to have a look at that and see whether the road environment is a factor. It is not the only factor when we have issues on our roads. Driver behaviour is another factor that we will need to have a look at. There are things that we can do there. It may be that enforcement is a potential option. It is also incumbent on people to do the right thing and drive and park safely on streets around Canberra to reduce risk to other people.

MR PARTON: Minister, what do you say to the residents of Avani Terraces who are concerned that emergency vehicles will not be able to reach their residences in a time of emergency?

MR STEEL: I thank the member for his question. As I said, we will have a look at that particular issue and see whether that is a concern and a risk that can be addressed. We will look at what potential options could be implemented on that particular street.

Roads—safety

MR PETTERSSON: My question is to the Minister for Transport and City Services. Minister, what is the ACT government doing to improve road safety in Canberra?

MR STEEL: I thank Mr Pettersson for his question, and note his real commitment to road safety in Canberra. Members will be aware that I introduced the Roads Safety Legislation Amendment Bill to the Legislative Assembly last week. This bill targets dangerous driving, both by increasing penalties for certain dangerous driving offences, but also by providing practical tools for our police to take dangerous drivers' vehicles off the road, and take people off the road, through immediate driver licence suspensions.

I am also pleased to inform the Assembly that the ACT government has signed contracts to install mobile phone detection cameras on Canberra's roads next year to reduce driver distraction, which is another hazard on ACT roads. We hope that this will make it safer for all Canberrans. Research shows that taking your eyes off the road for more than two seconds doubles the risk of a crash, with mobile phones too often being the source of that distraction.

These new cameras will operate day and night in all weather conditions, and will help ensure that Canberrans understand that at any time, anywhere, when you take your eyes off the road to use a mobile phone while driving, not only are you risking your own life and the lives of other road users, but you could also get an infringement notice in the mail.

We will not be issuing those infringement notices until around October 2023. Ahead of that time we will be rolling out an education campaign across TV, digital radio and out-of-home advertising. We will initially be issuing warnings to people. We have seen the dramatic change in behaviour that has occurred with the roll-out of these cameras in other states like New South Wales, and we expect the same to happen here in the ACT.

MR PETTERSSON: Minister, where will the new mobile detection cameras be located in Canberra?

MR STEEL: I thank the member for his question. They could be anywhere at any time, because we have mobile cameras. The locations have been informed based on advice by the Centre for Automotive Safety Research at the University of Adelaide on optimal locations for maximum road safety benefits of fixed and transportable cameras.

This took into consideration a review of ACT crash data and other data sources to identify locations with a high prevalence of crashes or links to distraction, and consultations with key stakeholders to identify locations where vulnerable road users are at high risk and mobile phone use has been established, and enforcement using existing police resources has been difficult.

There are two fixed cameras, and I can give the locations for those. They are located along Hindmarsh Drive near the Monaro Highway overpass, and Gungahlin Drive near the Barton Highway overpass. But there are mobile cameras that will be installed from next year around the capital. They will be moving around to various locations to help reduce the risk of driver distraction in the territory.

DR PATERSON: Minister, do you have any advice for Canberrans on how to stay safe on our roads over the upcoming holiday period?

MR STEEL: I thank the member for her supplementary question, and for her real concern about the impact that road crashes have on families, particularly over this period. I would like to take this opportunity to remind the community that road safety is everyone's responsibility. I would like to call on all Canberrans to stay safe over the coming holiday period, particularly when driving.

We do not want our first responders to have to give any more families the devastating news that they will have an empty chair at Christmas. I know what that feels like personally, and I would not wish it on anyone. We have seen 18 lives tragically lost on ACT roads this year. It is heartbreaking to consider the cost that each of those losses has on our community, and enough is enough. When we get behind the wheel, we take responsibility for the lives of ourselves and of our passengers and other road users.

As such, I am asking Canberrans to drive so that others can survive this Christmas: allow extra travel time, be patient on our roads, take regular breaks, stick to the speed limit, drive to the conditions, leave your phone alone, and do not drive while affected by drugs or alcohol. I hope all Canberrans enjoy a safe holiday period.

Mr Barr: I ask that all further questions be placed on the notice paper.

Supplementary answers to questions without notice Planning—district strategies

MR GENTLEMAN: In regard to the question from Mr Cain, and my reference to annual report hearings, I advise the chamber that it was certainly Mr Cain's question in annual reports hearings, but it was put by Mr Parton at the time.

Canberra Hospital—Adult Mental Health Unit

MS DAVIDSON: In response to some questions that Mr Cocks was asking me today, I would like to refer back to my answers to questions from both Mr Cocks and Ms Castley on Wednesday 23 November, which started with Mr Cocks asking a question and a supplementary question about the specifics of an incident that occurred at the adult mental health unit on 13 November. Ms Castley also asked a supplementary question:

... prior to the patient death on 13 November, were you aware of any safety concerns for patients and staff at the adult mental health unit?

My answer at the time was "no", because in the context of that particular night, and that particular incident, I was not aware of any specific risks relating to that incident or for that night in question.

In subsequent questions this week, I have been asked more generally about my awareness of risks for occupational violence in mental health facilities on an ongoing

basis. My answer to that is “yes”, because as I have been talking about today, there are a series of risks related to that type of work. We do need to make sure that staff who are working in the adult mental health unit are well supported and well trained to be able to assess and manage those risks.

That includes things like the Safewards model. It includes the Canberra Health Services OV training, which includes modules on “awareness, de-escalation, protect and restraint”. It includes the dynamic ISBAR tool, which talks about “Introduction, Situation, Background, Assessment, Recommendations/Read back”, to assess risk and plan for safer care. These are the things we talk about in briefings with CHS, when we are talking about how we ensure that we are providing the right support and training to staff to be able to deliver care safely.

Papers

Madam Speaker presented the following papers:

Bills referred to Committees, pursuant to resolution of the Assembly of 2 December 2020, as amended—Corresponded—Bills—Inquiry—

Justice and Community Safety Legislation Amendment Bill 2022 (No 2)—Copy of letter to the Speaker from the Chair, Standing Committee on Justice and Community Safety, dated 28 November 2022.

Road Safety Legislation Amendment Bill 2022 and Crimes Legislation Amendment Bill 2022—Copy of letter to the Speaker from the Chair, Standing Committee on Justice and Community Safety, dated 28 November 2022.

Mr Gentleman presented the following papers:

Animal-friendly netting—Assembly resolution of 23 November 2021—Update.

Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency and the National Boards, reporting on the National Registration and Accreditation Scheme—Annual Report 2021-22, dated November 2022.

Economy and Gender and Economic Equality—Standing Committee—Report 5—*Inquiry into memorialisation through public commemoration*—Government response, dated 1 December 2022.

Education and Community Inclusion—Standing Committee—Report 5—*Inquiry into ACT Auditor-General’s Report No. 6 of 2021: Teaching Quality in ACT Public Schools*—Government response, dated 1 December 2022.

Gene Technology Act, pursuant to subsection 136(2)—Office of the Gene Technology Regulator—Annual report 2021-22, dated 13 September 2022.

Health (National Health Funding Pool and Administrator) Act, pursuant to subsection 25(4)—Annual reports 2021-22—

Administrator of the National Health Funding Pool, dated 21 September 2022.

National Health Funding Body, dated 23 September 2022.

Human Rights Act, pursuant to subsection 33(3)—Corrections Management Act—Declaration of incompatibility, dated 21 April 2022—Government response.

Inquiries Act, pursuant to section 14A—Final report—Inquiry into the Legislative, Workplace Governance and Clinical Frameworks of Dhulwa Secure Mental Health Unit, dated 11 November 2022.

Health Practitioner Regulation National Law Regulation 2018, pursuant to subsection 29(c)—National Health Practitioner Ombudsman and Privacy Commissioner—Annual report 2021-22.

Office of the National Rail Safety Regulator—Annual report 2021-2022, dated June 2022.

Urban tree canopy coverage—Assembly resolution of 31 March 2021—Government response—Second update—2022 Report to the Legislative Assembly of the Australian Capital Territory, dated November 2022.

Waste Management and Resource Recovery Act, pursuant to subsection 64U(2)—ACT Container Deposit Scheme—Annual Report 2021-2022.

Human Rights Act—declaration of incompatibility—government response

MR GENTLEMAN (Brindabella—Manager of Government Business, Minister for Corrections, Minister for Industrial Relations and Workplace Safety, Minister for Planning and Land Management and Minister for Police and Emergency Services) (2.52): Pursuant to standing order 211, I move:

That the Assembly take note of the following paper:

Human Rights Act, pursuant to subsection 33(3)—Corrections Management Act—Declaration of incompatibility, dated 21 April 2022—Government response.

MR RATTENBURY (Kurrajong—Attorney-General, Minister for Consumer Affairs, Minister for Gaming and Minister for Water, Energy and Emissions Reduction) (2.52): I speak in relation to the declaration of incompatibility made by Her Honour, Justice Loukas-Karlsson on 21 April 2022 in the matter of Davidson v Director-General, Justice and Community Safety Directorate.

Justice Loukas-Karlsson made the declaration in relation to clause 4.3 of the Corrections Management (Separate Confinement) Operating Procedure 2019. The proceedings related to the use of the rear courtyards of the management unit in the Alexander Maconochie Centre to provide detainees in solitary or separate confinement with access to open air and exercise, in compliance with the Corrections Management Act.

The declaration stated that clause 4.3 was incompatible with the right to be treated with humanity and with respect for the inherent dignity of the human person while deprived of liberty.

On 9 June this year, I tabled the declaration of incompatibility in the Assembly, in accordance with section 33(2) of the Human Rights Act. Today, pursuant to section 33(3) of that Human Rights Act, I present the government's response to the declaration.

The government is committed to fostering a positive human rights culture in the territory and acknowledges that fulfilling this commitment includes embracing opportunities to identify areas for improvement. The Supreme Court's declaration provides such an opportunity to engage in human rights dialogue and to ensure that our legislation processes and decision-making adequately consider the relevant human rights at play.

We recognise that the deprivation of liberty may be necessary to protect the community where a person has committed a serious offence but that such deprivation does not negate a detainee's other human rights. Further, we know that respect for the human rights of detainees, staff, and visitors is an integral part of the effective and safe management of correctional centres.

As outlined in the government response, ACT Corrective Services has acted swiftly to make operational changes to the way in which detainees in the management unit are given access to open air and exercise. Following the June 2021 decision that clause 4.3 was inconsistent and invalid with the Corrections Management Act, the use of the rear yards was discontinued.

Detainees in the management unit are now provided with one hour of open air and exercise in the larger common recreational areas, in addition to their access to the external courtyard to their cells throughout the day. Daily logs have also been introduced to support the ongoing review and accountability of these processes. I can also advise that the operating procedure was revoked earlier this year and replaced by an updated procedure which does not include clause 4.3.

The Human Rights Act states that public authorities are obliged to act consistently with human rights and give proper consideration to human rights in decision-making. To ensure that policies and procedures support this consideration, Corrective Services is using a human rights lens in their incremental review of policies and procedures and has implemented targeted training on natural justice and good decision-making for both new recruits and existing staff.

It is also important to note that this is only the second time that a declaration of incompatibility has been made by the Supreme Court since the commencement of the Human Rights Act 18 years ago. This is a testament to the effectiveness of our current human rights scrutiny process and the continuous dedication across government to embedding human rights in all our work.

In closing, Madam Speaker, the government has carefully considered the issues raised by the declaration and has put in place measures to ensure that the territory remains a place which protects and promotes human rights. I commend the government response to the Assembly.

Question resolved in the affirmative.

Animals—animal-friendly netting—update

Mr Gentleman presented the following paper:

Animal-friendly netting—Assembly resolution of 23 November 2021—Update.

MS CLAY (Ginninderra) (2.57): I would like today to speak to Minister Vassarotti's statement on the government response to my motion last November to protect our native wildlife by banning the sale and use of inappropriate garden netting in the ACT.

Specifically my motion called on the ACT government to do these things by 1 January; consult with local businesses and other stakeholders, including ACT Wildlife and to develop, introduce and if possible, pass legislation equivalent to that in Victoria which allows only the sale and use of animal friendly netting with the mesh size of 5 mm by 5 mm or less at a full stretch. Also to develop an educational program for the ACT community on the dangers and risks of inappropriately gauged netting on our wildlife, develop a program to help residents replace old netting with animal friendly netting and report back on these measures by the end of the year.

I was really honoured to move this particular motion. In working with stakeholders and community members to develop it, I heard many stories and saw many really awful photos of the injuries the wrong type of netting is causing to our wildlife. Animals get caught in this netting if the gauge of the netting is too wide. Animal-friendly netting is small enough that their limbs are not caught. It is 5 mm by 5 mm or less at a full stretch.

The largest number of victims of netting are our grey-headed flying foxes. Grey-headed flying foxes play an important role in our environment. They feed on flowering trees and fleshy fruit trees, they scatter seeds and they pollinate our bush. Because they like their fruit, people want to protect their household crops. This is perfectly understandable but there is a harmless way to do it and there is a really harmful way to do it. The harmful way leads to entanglement and terrible injuries that take a long, long, time to heal.

Our grey-headed flying foxes are a threatened species in the ACT, New South Wales and Australia-wide because of a loss of habitat by development and most recently coastal bushfires. Ongoing development and sprawl as well as climate change are making it hard for these creatures to survive. We need to take more care with our wildlife. We need to do this if we want to protect these animals so they are still here for our children and for our grandchildren, and we need to do it for their own sakes, because they are amazing creatures. Like all creatures, they deserve a place in this world. Climate change and urban sprawl are really big challenges. I will not speak about those in this motion, but we Greens are taking a lot of actions to address both of these. But there are some smaller problems that this motion addresses. Grey-headed flying foxes and other wildlife also suffer injuries and death as a result of conflict with people, electrocution and entanglement. I thank Minister Vassarotti for her hard work on this motion. She is a champion.

This program will improve the safety of netting in the ACT and it will have a direct positive impact on the species. It will help curb the loss of numbers and it will help deliver the community education and the ongoing conversation we need to take better care of our wildlife. I am pleased to add this initiative to the work the Greens have lobbied for and achieved in the animal welfare space here in the ACT. We have ended battery cage hens and sow stall farming. We have regulated puppy and kitten farms. We have banned greyhound racing. We have given people the right to have pets in rentals. We have legislated to have written definitions of cage, barn laid and free

range eggs displayed in retail outlets. We have acknowledged the sentience of animals and I thank Minister Steel for his work on that legislation. We can now add to this list the protection of native animals through government commitment to regulate animal friendly netting here in the ACT like they do in Victoria. I am really, really pleased to hear that Minister Vassarotti is exploring options to bring into effect this motion and to eliminate the netting. It is important we do it properly and we look at all the options.

I am extremely pleased that the Environment, Planning and Sustainable Development Directorate is working with ACT Wildlife to develop, sponsor and implement a program that will allow non-wildlife friendly netting to be replaced free of charge if it is needed. A lot of people have spoken to me about netting. Many of these are people with well-established gardens who have looked after them for many years. Not everyone is in a financial position to be able to go out and buy new netting. I would really, really welcome a free program that assists. There is a huge amount of goodwill and Canberrans really want to do the right thing, so I think it is great that we can help them to do the right thing wherever we can.

I am excited that there will be a public education program coordinated through ACT Parks and Conservation with ACT Wildlife on the dangers of inappropriate netting. A few months ago I shared on my Facebook page a link to ACT Wildlife's new fact sheet on animal friendly netting. It is a great start to the education. I would invite all members here to take a look, stay informed and share it with members of the public when this comes up.

I would also like to talk about the netting itself. Quite a lot of people have asked me if the netting will be recycled. I am a really strong advocate for the circular economy and I come from the recycling industry, so I looked into this. The nets are made from polyethylene. This is a fossil fuel-based plastic. It is recyclable but it cannot be recycled in our yellow topped bins or through our household materials recovery facility. I have been chatting to a few contacts in the recycling sector about how it could be recycled. I am really pleased to say I have already found one operator who is interested in recycling the nets. Candice Addicoat is a local designer and recycler who works with polyethylene plastic. She has a number of initiatives in train, including workshops, a record for the Guinness Book of World Records and an exhibit at Questacon. She might be placed to recycle these nets. I am in discussion with my colleagues in government about what we need to do operationally to make sure that this, or some other suitable recycling arrangement is in place.

I think it is really important with every program and initiative that we think through the implications for our climate and for our circular economy. It does not matter whether the program is about recycling or about climate action, all programs should be done ethically and sustainably. The solutions are usually out there and I am pleased to say this looks like a problem we can solve.

So once again, I would like to thank and acknowledge Minister Vassarotti and the directorate for their work on this motion. It has really made a positive difference to animal protection here in the ACT and I look forward to seeing the legislation in due course.

Question resolved in the affirmative.

Children and young people—mental health services

MR PETTERSSON (Yerrabi) (3.03): I move:

That this Assembly:

(1) notes that:

- (a) mental ill health in childhood and adolescence can have substantial impacts on wellbeing and productivity. These impacts are exacerbated for young people in high-risk groups such as those affected by violence, abuse, maltreatment, or poverty;
- (b) the Australian Bureau of Statistics' National Study of Mental Health and Wellbeing found that almost two in five people (39.6 percent) aged 16-24 years had a 12-month mental disorder in 2020-21. Split by gender, almost half (46.6 percent) of females aged 16-24 years and almost one third (31.2 percent) of males aged 16-24 years had a 12-month mental disorder;
- (c) as reported in the 2021 Census, 35.3 percent of Gungahlin's population are young people below 24 years of age; and
- (d) supported by strong prevention and early intervention measures, young people can be empowered to manage their mental health and lead a psychologically healthy life;

(2) further notes:

- (a) headspace provides services to young people aged 12-25 years at two locations in the ACT, namely Tuggeranong and Canberra city;
- (b) at headspace, young people can access mental health services, sexual health services, work and study services, alcohol and drug services, and general practitioner doctor services; and
- (c) young people located in the ACT's northern-most suburbs face significant barriers if they need to access headspace's services at the Canberra city location;

(3) acknowledges:

- (a) the ACT Government is committed to supporting people living with a mental illness or mental disorder, and their families, friends, carers, and service providers;
- (b) the ACT Government's rollout of the online youth navigation portal, Mind Map, that supports young people find the care they need across the mental health system;
- (c) the 2022-23 Budget includes an additional \$70 million over four years for mental health and community health care support, building on over \$40 million already provided to support mental health since May 2020, including new funding for youth measures:
 - (i) \$8.1 million over four years to expand mental health supports for youth and young adults to address priority needs of young people who are experiencing or are at risk of mental health concerns and/or suicide and self-harm;
 - (ii) expanding the Childhood Early Intervention Team to Gungahlin Child and Family Centre;

- (iii) the impending inauguration of the adolescent mental health ward at Canberra Hospital;
 - (iv) grants for initiatives to support vulnerable or disadvantaged children to participate in sport and recreational activities that improve their physical wellbeing, health, and social skills;
 - (v) ongoing redevelopment of the Watson Health Precinct that will deliver a new purpose built facility for Catholic Care's STEPS voluntary mental health residential program for 13-18 years old; and
 - (vi) establishing new eating disorder programs and services, including STRIDE, a parent support program, and clinical hub for eating disorder services, as well as progressing work towards establishing an early intervention service for eating disorders and construction of the ACT's first eating disorder residential centre; and
- (d) the ACT Government's investment in Orygen's digital mental health care platform MOST, which provides young people aged 12-25 with access to online therapy, tools, and programs; and
- (4) calls on the ACT Government to:
- (a) provide an update on the timeline for implementation of Orygen's MOST platform in the ACT;
 - (b) advocate for the Federal Government to fund a headspace located in Gungahlin;
 - (c) provide an analysis of how the ACT Mental Health Workforce Strategy aligns with the National Mental Health Workforce Strategy and compares to other jurisdictions, including intended outcomes for peer support workers;
 - (d) provide an update to the Assembly on the implementation of the Position Statement on Youth Mental Health Recovery from COVID-19 and advise how youth mental health in this post-lockdown period is responding;
 - (e) provide suitable social and recreational spaces for young people in Gungahlin where they can develop their physical, social, emotional, and cognitive abilities;
 - (f) provide an update on mental health supports being considered for young Canberrans that could contribute to reduced wait lists and duration of treatment for mild to moderate mental health conditions and the Missing Middle; and
 - (g) report back to the Assembly no later than the first sitting week of May 2023.

I rise today to speak about youth mental health, an issue of vital importance to my many young constituents. Being young can be tough. As kids transition from childhood to teenagerhood and later to adulthood they begin to experience life's most challenging circumstances more consciously; death, making friends, relationship breakdowns, education, financial stresses, the list goes on. The fact is some young people will cope well with the tumult of growing up but others will not. Some young people will have access to support from their family, friends, or school but others will not. Some young people will find this support sufficient but others will not.

Some young people might not be able to pinpoint a particular thing in life that is getting them down, they might just be feeling blue.

Members, we should do everything in our power to support young people who need our help. The Australian Bureau of Statistics *National study of mental health and wellbeing* found that almost two in five people aged 16 to 24 years had a 12-month mental disorder in the previous year. Split by gender, almost half of females aged 16 to 24 years and almost one third of males aged 16 to 24 years had a 12-month mental disorder.

In my electorate of Yerrabi, this is a significant issue. As reported in the 2021 Census, 35.3 per cent of Gungahlin's population are young people below 24 years of age. This number is still likely to grow in the coming years in the booming suburbs of Gungahlin. Given the ABS statistics on the prevalence of mental disorders in young people, we can safely assume that a large portion of Gungahlin's kids are doing it tough. We know these mental health problems have been exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic. That is why, among other things, the motion I am moving today seeks an update on the implementation of the position statement on youth mental health recovery from COVID-19. Minister Davidson has done fantastic work in designing this statement and I am keen to hear from her on how it is adapting as we continue to recover from the pandemic.

I would also like to acknowledge the ACT government has invested in several great measures to support young people, their families, friends, carers and service providers. The 2022-23 budget includes an additional \$70 million over four years for mental health and community health care support. This builds on over \$40 million already provided to support mental health since May 2020, including new funding for youth measures such as \$8.1 million over four years to expand mental health supports for youth and young adults to address priority needs of young people who are experiencing or are at risk of mental health concerns and/or suicide and self-harm. It also includes the expansion of the Childhood Early Intervention Team to the Gungahlin Child and Family Centre, the impending inauguration of the adolescent mental health ward at Canberra Hospital, a number of grants and initiatives to support vulnerable or disadvantaged children to participate in sport and recreational activities that improve their physical wellbeing, health and social skills, the ongoing redevelopment of the Watson Health Precinct that will deliver a new purpose built facility for CatholicCare's STEPS voluntary mental health residential program for kids 13 to 18 years old and establishing new eating disorder programs and services, including STRIDE, a parent support program and the services of the ACT Eating Disorders Clinical Hub, as well as progressing work towards establishing an early intervention service for eating disorders and the construction of the ACT's first eating disorder residential centre.

These investments are great news for young people across the ACT. The ACT government also knows that figuring out where to get help for mental illnesses can be confusing for young people. To address this, the online youth navigation portal MindMap has just been rolled out, aiming to support young people to find the care they need across the mental health system. The ACT government has also funded the Orygen digital mental health care platform MOST through which young people aged 12 to 25 can access online therapy, tools and programs. Although MindMap and

MOST remove barriers for young people who feel comfortable getting help online, I think we can do more for young people who prefer to talking to a person in real life.

This is where headspace comes in. At headspace the health of young people can be addressed holistically. This is because a range of services are offered in one place; mental health, sexual health, work, study, alcohol, drug and general practitioner doctor services. It is a one-stop-shop to help young people get on top of the things in their lives which might be exacerbating their poor mental health. Unfortunately, here in the ACT there are only two headspace locations, one in the city and one in Tuggeranong. I have heard from many young people in my electorate who cannot get the help they need because they must travel so far to access headspace's services. For those who do not have a drivers license, money for public transport, or a guardian to drive them around, this is a massive barrier.

The non-headspace services that do exist in Gungahlin suffer from waitlists, which is an issue that has been compounded by the national shortage of mental health practitioners. Even if you are not a young person, you will probably struggle to get an appointment with a mental health specialist within a couple of months. I have heard from many constituents who complain they travel all the way to Sydney or regional New South Wales to get the help they desperately need. This is where the *ACT mental health workforce strategy* comes in, attempting to support a highly skilled and diverse mental health workforce that can meet the needs of the community. Given the complexity of this issue in the ACT, I would like to see an analysis of how our strategy interplays with the *National mental health workforce strategy* and compares to other jurisdictions. Both Victoria and New South Wales have similar strategies to address mental health practitioner workforce shortages but they seem to be more substantial compared to the ACT's version. To solve this problem we need a comprehensive strategy that is accompanied by appropriate funding and resourcing. Although our strategy has noble intentions I think there is an opportunity here to develop it further so we can see a tangible increase in practitioner numbers in the ACT.

We know there is a high prevalence of mental illnesses in Gungahlin's young people. They are struggling to access the help they need. This is not good enough and we need to make a concerted effort to fill this missing middle. That is why today I am calling on the ACT government to advocate for the federal government to fund a headspace located in Gungahlin. Bringing these services directly to young people is a sensible measure. I have no doubt we all experienced tough times when we were young.

In closing I implore each of you, all members of this place, to imagine the world of difference that the supports offered by headspace could have made for you when you were growing up. Whether you were just struggling with your homework or schoolwork or had a diagnosed mental illness you would have been supported. The young people in my electorate are desperate for help. Today, let us take action to give them what they need. Let us get a headspace in Gungahlin. In closing, I would like to thank in advance all members for contributing to this debate.

MS DAVIDSON (Murrumbidgee—Assistant Minister for Families and Community Services, Minister for Disability, Minister for Justice Health, Minister for Mental Health and Minister for Veterans and Seniors) (3.11): I thank Mr Petterson for

this motion. I will be more than happy to provide all of the updates and report back on the advocacy that is called for in his motion today.

Canberra is a kind, connected and caring community, and we want our young people to have access to the mental health and wellbeing services that support their needs. Mental health conditions are diverse, which is why ACT government supports a diversity of community mental health services to provide the right treatment at the right time. That includes, among many other services that are listed in Mr Pettersson's motion, the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service run by Canberra Health Services, CatholicCare Marymead's youth programs, the Step Up, Step Down residential treatment programs for young people, and the Youth Aware of Mental Health program delivered to year 9 students by MIEACT which has now reached more than 7,000 year 9 students since it began in 2020.

Young people are experiencing increased pressures and worries about the impacts of COVID, worries about their future in education, employment and housing affordability, and the fact that we are in a climate crisis. At the same time social isolation during 2020 and 2021 made it harder for young people to stay connected to their friends and family.

Our Office for Mental Health and Wellbeing and ACT mental health policy team work hard to ensure that the additional \$38 million of mental health funding was delivered in the bilateral agreement with the commonwealth, signed in March this year. It was driven by years of ACT research and advocacy of Canberrans with lived experience, rather than just repeating the same investments made by other jurisdictions without understanding the specifics of the ACT mental health sector, including our hardworking NGOs.

Many more headspace centres would be appreciated, and digital apps may be useful, but all of the evidence tells us that we need a diversity of mental health services for young people with different conditions at different points in their mental health journey, and for young people dealing with additional complex circumstances in their life.

We know from the McArthur report in August 2021 on service system and implementation requirements for raising the minimum age of criminal responsibility in the ACT that 66 per cent of 10 to 13-year-olds in the youth justice system have at least moderate mental health concerns, 33 per cent have experienced sexual abuse or exploitation, 90 per cent have a family violence history, and 38 per cent have experienced suicidal ideation or attempts.

These are 10- to 13-year-old children that we are talking about. We know that if we do not provide the right support to young people experiencing trauma, abuse, violence and mental health concerns when they are young, it does not fix itself. We will see those young people needing support in adult mental health services, drug and alcohol services, the justice system, disability care, homelessness services and crisis support for people experiencing domestic and family violence.

There is no single solution, no single clinical model of care or app that will work for all young people. We need to be careful about how we apply solutions that might

work well in other jurisdictions but may need to be rolled out differently in the ACT. That is why I am so happy that this government makes funding decisions for a range of services for young people based on the analysis of our Office for Mental Health and Wellbeing as to where that investment could be most helpful and how best to roll it out.

Under the terms of the \$38 million bilateral, we are expanding existing services that are helping young people in need, establishing new services where we know that there are gaps, and building on that through successive ACT government budgets.

I would like to focus for a moment on the work to establish a youth at risk program for young people experiencing trauma. It is a good example of the evidence-based decision-making processes for how best to invest limited resources to support young people's mental health.

The *2020 Review of children and young people in the ACT*, the children and young people in the "missing middle" report of 2022, the Standing Committee on Education, Employment and Youth Affairs inquiry into youth mental health in the ACT in 2020, and the *McArthur Review of the service system and implementation requirements for raising the minimum age of criminal responsibility in the ACT* final report of 2021 detail the importance of earlier support, the need to make services more accessible and integrated, and the current gaps in services for the 12 to 18-year-old age group in the ACT.

A six-month scoping project undertaken in 2021 provided detailed advice on an evidence-based response to meet the needs of young people identified in these reports. This scoping work included an environmental scan, evidence review and broad consultation across more than 70 ACT agencies.

In response, ACT government will develop a youth at risk program to deliver a territory-wide multidisciplinary response to trauma and fully coordinated responses to young people at risk of developing enduring mental illness. The service will support young people facing different challenges within our community as early as possible to ensure they are provided with the skills, care and support required to enable them to grow, learn and lead a meaningful and fulfilling life.

A key element of this program is an evidence-guided therapeutic approach that delivers integrated care through a new adolescent trauma service. The service will build sector partnerships and enhance flexible outreach. It will be delivered by multidisciplinary clinicians and engagement teams in both government and non-government agencies in partnership with young people, carers and families.

I spoke last week in response to Ms Castley's motion on men's health about the expansion of the Way Back suicide prevention and aftercare service provided in the ACT by Woden Community Service. This will make a real difference for young men and women experiencing suicidal crisis.

As I said last week, this investment is in addition to the ACT government's investment in establishing a culturally appropriate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander suicide prevention program to deliver community-based suicide

prevention, intervention, postvention and aftercare for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Canberrans.

This service is now being established by Thirrili, an Aboriginal community-controlled organisation, working with Woden Community Service and our local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community, and will be designed and delivered by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. This new service is supported by evidence analysed by the ACT Office for Mental Health and Wellbeing and recommendations from the ACT Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Suicide Prevention and Mental Health Working Group.

I was also pleased to speak in this place over the last two weeks about the success of the Stride Garran Step Up, Step Down mental health service, which opened in 2021 and provides residential therapeutic care to people aged 18 years and older. Of the five residential mental health Step Up, Step Down services in the ACT, three are suitable for people up to 25 years old.

There is the five-bed service in Watson for young people 13 to 17 years old, the six-bed service in Kambah for young people 18 to 25 years old, and the six-bed service in Garran for people 18 to 64 years old. These services empower people in the community to step up from community-based mental health programs when they need additional support or step down from a hospital inpatient stay as part of their transition home. I note that, with respect to one-third of participants in the Stride Garran service in 2021-22 who were stepping up from community care, of those 78 per cent said they would have presented at the emergency department if the Step Up, Step Down service had not been available.

Finding the right mental health supports is challenging at any age, but for young people there are additional barriers, in that this may be their first experience of having to navigate complex health and social services systems of any kind. The MindMap online service, which Mr Pettersson referred to earlier, launched in October 2021 and has provided information and resources for young people, their families and carers on a range of mental health conditions, where to get help and youth navigators available by webchat or phone to support young people in connecting to the right service for them. I have spoken about this service in this place several times over the last year.

The ACT government has increased investment in prevention and early intervention services and support to navigate mental health services, and we continue to progress increased access to acute care services as well. This has been possible because of the years of research, policy development and relationships built across directorates, clinical services and NGOs by the Office for Mental Health and Wellbeing.

In acknowledging the work of the Office for Mental Health and Wellbeing, I would also like to acknowledge the foresight of my colleague Minister Rattenbury, as the former Minister for Mental Health, in establishing the office. We can see now how important that decision was. The research and policy development crucially and consistently included the voices of people with lived experience, making sure that we have a deeper understanding of how the decisions we make about service funding will impact on people's lives, and that includes young people with lived experience. There

is still much more work to do in supporting people's mental health and wellbeing and continuing the focus on early intervention and prevention.

I also note Mr Pettersson's recognition of the social determinants of mental health and wellbeing in his call for social and recreational spaces for young people in Gungahlin, where they can develop their physical, social, emotional and cognitive abilities. Access to spaces for programs to deliver sports and recreation, arts and cultural activities is important in fostering a sense of belonging and social connection, and opportunities to focus on some of the things that give meaning to our lives or help us make sense of our life experiences.

To be able to practice a physical skill and do something you did not think you could do, to express your creativity and passions through music, dance, theatre or art, to be able to continue cultural traditions with people who share your experience, are all important for mental health and wellbeing—and not just for young people in Gungahlin. I know that young people in Coombs and Wright, across Weston Creek, and in the suburbs around Woden town centre, in my electorate of Murrumbidgee, are also in dire need of more indoor multi-use sports courts and community spaces. I look forward to continuing my discussion with Mr Pettersson in 2023 about the need for more skate-friendly infrastructure on the streets and in our playgrounds, and upgrades to skate parks across Canberra.

Focusing on mental health services for young people and where the work needs to be done in 2023, we continue to increase the range of eating disorder services in the ACT, from early intervention through to residential treatment, and integrating the services through the Eating Disorders Clinical Hub that has been so successful in reducing wait times to access programs since it started in January this year.

We will continue with the work to establish the youth at risk trauma service that I was talking about earlier. From my years of social research and women's health advocacy work, I know how important trauma-informed care is in every aspect of health care, and it would be right to see more of our health services incorporate trauma-informed care into their models of care. But there is a known gap for services that can specifically provide therapeutic care for young people who have experienced trauma, even if they do not have any other mental health diagnosis at that point in time.

The expansion of the childhood early intervention team to Gungahlin Child and Family Centre, announced in this year's budget, has already commenced. Recognising the high concentration of young families in Gungahlin, and that so many young people with enduring mental health conditions experience their symptoms for the first time as children and young people, I expect that the evidence will show a need for an ongoing expansion of a range of youth mental health services in Gungahlin.

I expect the evidence will also show that we need to do more of what we know is working well. I refer to Safe Haven services on the south side—having seen the success of Safe Haven Belconnen, which has been open since November 2021, to support people aged 16 years and over who are experiencing distress in a warm, welcoming environment that feels more like a cafe or a friend's living room than a clinical environment—and more Step Up, Step Down services, so that more people

are able to “step up” to residential therapeutic care without having to wait until their symptoms are so acute that they need a hospital inpatient stay.

I look forward to continuing to work on all of these things and more, and to be able to provide those updates that Mr Pettersson is calling for today. I am very much looking forward to being able to do that using the evidence base, the analysis and the research provided by our Office for Mental Health and Wellbeing. I commend this motion.

MR COCKS (Murrumbidgee) (3.24), by leave: I move:

(1) Omit paragraph (4)(b), substitute:

“(b) advocate for the Federal Government to fund a headspace centre located in Gungahlin and increase funding for all ACT headspace centres to enable them to attract and retain staff”;

(2) Insert after paragraph (4)(f):

“(f) provide an update on the implementation status of all recommendations of the August 2020 report: Youth Mental health in the ACT;”.

At the outset I would like to thank Mr Pettersson for bringing forward this motion, and I would like to note his longstanding interest in mental health, and particularly the mental health of young people. The Canberra Liberals will be supporting this motion, with two minor amendments.

As I have said on many occasions, mental health impacts all of us. If you do not experience a mental health issue yourself, someone close to you has, or will. You may be a carer for someone contending with a mental health issue. It may be your child, it may be a teenage family member, a loved one, a significant other or a good mate. Whether we are aware of it or not, the statistics show that we probably know multiple people dealing with mental health issues at any point in time.

No matter your age, gender or race, no matter what school you go to, no matter your income or what your house looks like, no matter, as I have said before, whether you are team red, team green or team blue, mental health touches everyone. That is why I chose to spend a large part of my government career working in mental health, where I was privileged to work on several significant reforms across much of the former coalition government’s mental health agenda, including working closely with stakeholders from across the country to improve the mental health system and make it work better for everyone.

I am proud to say that the former federal coalition government was instrumental in funding and driving many mental health investments across Australia, including here in the ACT. It did this not by trying to run roughshod over any jurisdiction but by working with jurisdictions to understand what it is that they need.

In particular, today I would like to acknowledge the commonwealth’s investments to enhance headspace centres, including here in the ACT, where it invested to increase access to multidisciplinary youth mental health services in the ACT and establish a multidisciplinary early intervention service to support young people at risk of developing mental health concerns.

During its time in government, the federal coalition oversaw the expansion of headspace services to reach more areas of the country than ever before, including the opening of the Tuggeranong headspace centre. Sadly, funding to establish new centres is not enough to guarantee the service levels that the community expects and deserves.

Building on Mr Pettersson's call at paragraph (4)(b) to advocate to the federal government for an additional centre in Gungahlin, I have moved a straightforward amendment to also call for an increase in funding for all ACT headspace centres, to enable them to attract and retain staff. This would ensure that headspace would not only be visible in the north, south and centre of the ACT but that headspace would be adequately equipped and funded.

When I met with staff from headspace earlier this year, I heard a familiar story. The big problem that they face in our city is workforce—finding good people who are willing to work for the rates headspace can afford. Headspace staff face all of the same cost-of-living pressures that every other Canberran faces. This is a more expensive city to operate in, so headspace needs adequate funding to secure the services of those amazing people who serve our community so well.

As with my first amendment, the second that I am proposing is simply a further strengthening of Mr Pettersson's already strong motion, to require the minister to report to the Assembly on the implementation status of the Standing Committee on Education, Employment and Youth Affairs August 2020 report *Youth mental health in the ACT*. That 2020 report, delivered towards the end of the Ninth Assembly, contains strong analysis of the state of young Canberrans' mental health, informed by the contributions of over 800 people.

The committee made 66 recommendations which could improve support in the ACT. That report still has relevance now. Earlier this week I met with the parents of a young man who died by suicide, parents who have taken the loss of a deeply loved son and made it their mission to fight for the ACT's mental health system to be overhauled, parents who have made what seemed to be very reasonable suggestions in line with that inquiry report.

This amendment would enable the government and the minister to reflect on progress to date on mental health and consider whether and what more can be done in response to the inquiry recommendations to serve the young people of Canberra. I commend my amendments to the Assembly.

MS STEPHEN-SMITH (Kurrajong—Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs, Minister for Families and Community Services and Minister for Health) (3.29): Labor members will be supporting Mr Cocks's amendments today, but I rise to speak in support of my colleague Mr Pettersson's motion.

This motion brings together three strands of Mr Pettersson's ongoing contributions over a number of years in this place: delivering for his electorate of Yerrabi, a focus on the importance of mental health, and supporting improved services and outcomes for young Canberrans. He has an enviable track record in delivering results in this place, which this motion seeks to take further.

The health of a young person can influence how likely they are to achieve better education outcomes, make a successful transition into full-time work, develop healthy adult lifestyles and experience fewer family challenges in the long term. We also know that mental health challenges often begin during childhood or adolescence, with 50 per cent of all mental health conditions arising before the age of 14 and 75 per cent before the age of 25. If left untreated, these can lead to poor mental health outcomes into adulthood.

Adolescents are highly vulnerable to mental health experiences due to their developmental stage, social and emotional development, risk taking, peer engagement and the stigma associated with help-seeking. Globally, it is estimated that one in seven 10- to 19-year-olds experience a mental health condition which largely remains unrecognised and untreated. Of course, suicide is the leading cause of death among young Australians aged 15 to 24.

That is why youth mental health is a key priority committed to and outlined in the bilateral agreement on mental health and suicide prevention between the ACT and commonwealth governments. In early 2020, the government recognised the potential impact that COVID-19 would have on young people. We had seen early indicators of the impact of COVID on some young people and knew that significant and innovative evidence-based approaches were needed.

All of this is why ACT Labor's first formal health policy commitment in the 2020 election focused on young people's mental health—across the board but particularly for those with complex comorbidities. ACT Labor went to the election with a significant and ambitious youth mental health package to support young Canberrans, a package based on evidence, engagement and a focus on providing support to Canberrans when and where people need it.

We are committed to partnering with national leaders in youth mental health Orygen Youth Health, and to roll out its evidence-based moderated online social therapy, or MOST, platform. This is a ground-breaking platform specifically designed to empower young people in the management of their mental health and wellbeing. It is available for people between the ages of 12 and 25 and has been created over the last 10 years by a team of leading youth mental health experts and by young people with lived experience of mental ill health.

MOST connects young people with personalised, proven and effective support when they want it, wherever they are, on any device. It can provide extra support alongside face-to-face care and help young people through their journey to recovery. It offers access to self-directed therapeutic content, a safe, moderated online community, peer workers, careers counselling, and one-on-one clinical support. It offers young Australians real people to talk to, and gives them some helpful, tailored information and practical tools that they can work through in their own time and space.

The ACT government funded this commitment through the 2021-22 budget as part of an \$8.5 million package to support community mental health. This package also delivered on another element of our youth mental health package in expanding CatholicCare's Youth and Wellbeing program.

Ms Davidson spoke about the services that are being developed to support young people with trauma experiences and those who have comorbid presentations of mental health with trauma, disability and/or drug and alcohol challenges. This is something very close to my heart, because I hear far too often that the vulnerable young people who are engaged with child and youth protection experience gaps between services. I look forward to the great policy work and model development that have been done over the last two years being put into action with these new services.

The last two budgets have built on the first steps of scoping services for young Canberrans that were funded through the 2020-21 budget. The government has delivered on its commitment to roll out MindMap and fund the adolescent mobile outreach service. It is pleasing that, since MindMap was launched in October 2021, the site has been accessed by more than 25,000 people, with over 69,000 pages viewed. The youth navigators have received more than 550 telephone calls, which has progressively increased since the launch.

Subsequent to our commitment to deliver MOST, and building on Victoria's successful rollout across its services, we have seen New South Wales and Queensland follow our lead and commit to roll out this program and realise its benefits. MOST is now available across 133 different sites across Victoria, New South Wales and Queensland, helping young people up and down the eastern seaboard. We committed to MOST, as did the three largest states, because it can be integrated with existing clinical care and also support young people who are waiting to receive clinical face-to-face support. It fits in exactly with the idea that young people need a multiplicity of service responses.

Orygen, Australia's youth mental health experts, developed MOST in partnership with researchers, clinicians, computer scientists, creative writers, comic developers, experts in human computer interaction, and, most importantly, young people with lived experience of mental ill health and their families. MOST clinicians, vocational support workers and peer workers help young people and their clinicians to work towards collaboratively agreed upon goals.

MOST has a strong evidence base. In research trials, 97 per cent of young people using MOST said that it was a positive experience, 87 per cent found it helpful and 97 per cent of young people felt safe. Importantly, it meant fewer young people needed ongoing mental health support or they required less frequent support—improving access for young people to our child and adolescent mental health services and headspaces. It is really positive that the Office for Mental Health and Wellbeing has been working collaboratively with Orygen on delivering this evidence-based product for young Canberrans.

The rollout of MOST will make a significant contribution to better outcomes, but Mr Pettersson's motion rightly points to the need to advocate with the commonwealth government for increased headspace services in the ACT and delivery across the rest of our commitments in this space as well.

As members would be aware, headspace is a key partner in the provision of mental health services in the ACT for young people aged 12 to 25, and it is funded by the

commonwealth government through the Capital Health Network. Headspace has a focus on early intervention and provides support to young people with mental health, physical health, including sexual health, alcohol and other drug services, as well as with work and study support.

Many young people accessing headspace services report that it is their first instance of help-seeking for their mental health concerns. Headspace also provides low to no cost services to young people who access private health and mental health services through a headspace service.

As such, the ACT government was pleased that a second headspace centre opened in 2021, located in Tuggeranong. This is a welcome investment to support the increased accessibility of mental health services for young people across the ACT.

In our bilateral agreement with the commonwealth, they have funded the enhancement of existing headspace services in the ACT. This will help to ensure that these headspace services can meet the growing needs of the young people accessing them.

Canberra Health Services has also been renegotiating the service-level agreement with headspace in Braddon and Tuggeranong to improve service delivery and care coordination between the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service, CAMHS, and headspace. The new SLA, which is yet to be signed by both parties, offers headspace opportunity for peer consultation with CAMHS to work in partnership to provide a collaborative care approach in assessment, care planning, referral and treatment of young people and their families.

CHS and headspace have committed to exploring opportunities to work more collaboratively, to improve service delivery for young people and their families and ensure more streamlined services for those who move between headspace and CAMHS. CHS and headspace have agreed to share training opportunities. CHS has offered to provide headspace with peer supervision in 2023 to build skills and capacity within headspace—maybe seeking to address some of the workforce challenges that Mr Cocks has rightly identified.

The timing of Mr Pettersson's motion is welcome, and I look forward to hearing from the Minister for Mental Health early in 2023 on how the government is continuing to work to deliver for young Canberrans, and particularly the young people of Gungahlin.

I commend Mr Pettersson's motion to the Assembly, and his ongoing commitment to young people's health in Canberra and to his local community.

MR BRADDOCK (Yerrabi) (3.38): I would like to thank Mr Pettersson for bringing forward this motion, which highlights not only some of the government's excellent work on mental health but also what remains outstanding, particularly given the rapid expansion of the population of Gungahlin.

In the last census, Gungahlin was home to 87,682 people. This population growth is particularly amongst young people, who, like young people everywhere, are looking for mental health services and support. I applaud the Minister for Mental Health for

securing \$4 million to go towards providing youth mental health services in Gungahlin, through the expansion of the ACT government's childhood early intervention program. This will ensure these services are readily available to local children in the Gungahlin district aged five to 12 who are experiencing symptoms of anxiety, depression and other challenges. This is very welcome because the number of young people in Gungahlin in that age range is 11,208—a 29 per cent increase from the previous census.

I applaud the call in paragraph (4)(b) to advocate for the federal government to fund a headspace located in Gungahlin, and I also support Mr Cocks's amendment regarding that particular call.

Headspace has demonstrated that it is cost effective, well designed and aligned to the mental health needs of young people. As the headspace CEO, Jason Trethowan, stated:

We know headspace is a place young people and families turn to for support during difficult times which became particularly apparent when the community was faced with climate change events such as bushfires, droughts, floods and other major events such as Covid-19. It's important to note that these events were all occurring during a global mental health workforce shortage, putting additional pressure on those working in the sector.

I would welcome such investment in the Gungahlin district to help meet the needs of young people there. In the last census the Gungahlin population in the age range for headspace was 15,382. This population will continue to increase significantly, particularly as the demographic bow wave of young people grow, and move into the teenage years and young adulthood. This population also includes a greater proportion of intersectional vulnerabilities, including race and limited English proficiency.

I also wish to speak to paragraph (4)(e) of the motion, which states:

- (e) provide suitable social and recreational spaces for young people in Gungahlin where they can develop their physical, social, emotional, and cognitive abilities;

I applaud Minister Davidson's comments about the development and rollout of skating infrastructure in the Gungahlin district and would wholeheartedly support that.

For many years it has been acknowledged that Gungahlin requires a safe and inclusive space to which young people in the region can have easy access. A number of drop-in-type programs have been trialled in some local schools and colleges, but there have been difficulties with transport links and access issues which have excluded many young people.

I wish to talk about Gunners Place, a youth drop-in space that was established in the Marketplace Gungahlin, run in collaboration by Barnardos Australia, Northside Community Service and Multicultural Hub Canberra. Gunners Place provided a centrally located safe space for the young people of Gungahlin to drop in and access supports and information.

The important thing about this space was that it was centrally located, close to transport links and accessible not just for young people but for other community groups, who could utilise the space when it was not being utilised as a youth drop-in centre. Young people were actively involved in the set-up of Gunners Place from day one and it allowed for a range of services to be provided.

The service created strong links with schools and colleges, local business chamber and local public representatives. It created and fostered a sense of empowerment and self-advocacy within the local youth community and led to a sense of ownership over the program from the young people.

It utilised a hard-to-lease site that allowed the program to offer a safe space to Gungahlin young people from which data, outcomes and experiences could be utilised to advocate for a more permanent, long-term solution to best meet the needs of young people in Gungahlin.

I have used the past tense to refer to Gunners Place because they were required to vacate their premises not once but twice. They are now desperately seeking a space in Gungahlin to make their own so as to serve the needs of the Gungahlin community. I have been working with Barnardos and other non-governmental organisations to find a new location for Gunners Place. I believe that if we can ensure that such a space is made available, the service would be highly successful and never short of work.

In closing, I commend Mr Pettersson for this motion and look forward to everyone being able to agree that it is important to address the mental health services that we provide for young people.

MR PETTERSSON (Yerrabi) (3.44): In closing, I want to confirm my support for Mr Cocks's amendments. It is not every day that another member picks up one of your committee reports and thinks that there is some value in it, so I appreciate the amendment.

I would like to thank all members for their contributions today. I think they were all significant and important. I particularly want to thank the many young Canberrans that have shared with me their mental health journeys. It is hard to speak up, but it is a good thing that you have.

We should never think about youth mental health as a "one and done" issue. This government certainly does not, having invested tens of millions of dollars in mental health and community care supports for many years. But I do believe there is always more work to be done to improve access to these services.

Specifically, we need to be strategic in locating mental health supports in our community. That is why I think having a headspace in Gungahlin is such a good idea. I am also optimistic that the other action items included my motion will drive better outcomes for mental health services in Canberra.

In closing, I would again like to thank all members who have contributed to this debate and the many young people of Gungahlin.

Amendments agreed to.

Original question, as amended, resolved in the affirmative.

ACT Ambulance Service—staffing and working conditions

MR MILLIGAN (Yerrabi) (3.45): I move:

That this Assembly:

- (1) notes that:
 - (a) since 2020, the Government has promised to increase the number of serving ambulance officers to meet the increasing demand;
 - (b) on 4 August 2022, Mr Gentleman told the Assembly that previous funding packages had delivered 53 new paramedics; and
 - (c) annual reports from the previous years show that the number of serving ambulance officers has increased by only five this last financial year, and only 18 the financial year previously, which is a total of only 23 paramedics;
- (2) further notes that:
 - (a) annual reports show that demand has increased by 11 percent over the last year;
 - (b) this year has seen a significant shortage of paramedics such that fire crews have had to be deployed to meet demand;
 - (c) major issues for the paramedics present at the meeting include long night shifts, with paramedic rosters scheduling workers on back-to-back night shifts of 14 hours long per night;
 - (d) according to the Transport Workers' Union spokesperson, the one ComCen program has lagged for seven years and delivered nothing other than a change in uniforms; and
 - (e) on Friday 25 November, paramedics unanimously passed a motion of want of confidence in the leadership of the Emergency Services Agency; and
- (3) calls on the Minister for Police and Emergency Services to:
 - (a) detail to the Assembly all actions he is taking to address the issues raised by the ambulance officers; and
 - (b) report back in the first sitting day of 2023 with a progress report.

Today I am calling on the minister for emergency services to detail to the Assembly all actions he is taking to address the issues raised by ACT paramedics and to report back on the first sitting day of 2023 with a progress report.

In particular, I am looking to hear from the minister how he is addressing the shortages of paramedics that we have seen this year; his response to last Friday's no-confidence motion by paramedics because of ongoing rostering issues and long shifts; what he is doing to employ new paramedics; and how he is addressing their health and wellbeing needs.

This motion highlights the significant problems facing our ACT paramedics and the ACT community. Recently, I received an email detailing the long wait for an ambulance by an elderly patient. The elderly person, suffering significant health

issues, experienced a stroke or a cardiac event whilst out shopping. An ambulance was called immediately but it took over an hour for the ambulance to arrive. This is just one of the many incidents that I have become aware of since taking on this shadow portfolio role.

The problem, of course, is not with the Ambulance Service—as we know only too well, they do an amazing job; rather, it is about the number of paramedics that are employed to cover an ever-increasing workload.

In June this year the Canberra community became aware that ACT firefighters were being rostered to respond to ambulance emergencies on Saturday evenings due to staff shortages. What is concerning about this practice is that this is part of a business continuity plan. Why is it that non-paramedics are being called out to deal with paramedic emergencies when they are already stretched to the limit?

This was followed in August by a very sad incident where a fire crew were asked to respond to a health emergency in support of an ambulance crew. Again, the problem is not with the fire service; I know that they also do an amazing job. As Greg McConville of the United Firefighters Union said, “Firefighters are trained in some medical emergency response procedures, including advanced first aid.” I have no doubt that fire crew treat patients with care and consideration where they can; again the issue is the lack of available ambulance emergency crews. These are only a few of the issues that have led me to table this motion today.

Last week several ambulances were spotted with signs on the back of their vehicles such as “We are not okay”, “We are not triple okay” and “Canberra deserves better”. I would have to agree with that last sentiment.

This led to the astonishing action last Friday by members of the Ambulance Service who took a vote of no confidence in the leaders of the ESA. What emerged were harrowing stories of long shifts, night shifts of 14 hours or more, and working for 28 hours in every 38. This is something that most people do in a whole week of work, not two days. They spoke about being exhausted, and I am not surprised. More scarily, they spoke of falling asleep at the wheel on the way home from such long shifts.

What was disturbing for me was hearing from people like Darren Neville on ABC TV that they had not been able to get through to this government and that they were not being listened to. Mr Gentleman spoke only last week about how much they are doing, yet we are seeing here that, whatever is being done—and we do not actually know what that is—it is not getting more staff on the ground, and it is not reaching the people who need it most—the paramedic officers on the ground or our frontline crew.

That is the crux of this motion. The people of Canberra want to know the details. We want to know what this government are actually doing to provide adequate services to the ACT to manage the health and wellbeing of our community. Ambulance officers deserve to know what the government are actually doing, not just what they say they are doing. They want to know that their concerns are being treated seriously.

Paramedics tell us that they have been waiting for seven years to see an improvement in their employment, rostering and increased staffing numbers—seven years. That is

six years too many, in my opinion. I asked my staff to go back through the annual reports to see how many additional staff had been employed in the past six years—noting that this is not replacements but additional staff.

The minister said in the Assembly on 4 August 2022 that they had employed 53 new paramedics between the last term and to date. To be fair, he did not say “additional”. After all, if you are making the point that you are listening to the needs of the paramedic community, and they are asking for extra paramedics to assist with rostering issues, the expectation is that they will get extra paramedics. However, that is not what we found when we went digging.

Of course, I only have the government’s own annual reports to go by. However, the numbers are quite revealing. Let me read them out. From 2016 to 2018, the service actually lost 18 ambulance officers. From 2017 to 2019, the service again lost an ambulance officer, so there were no increases. From 2018 to 2020, the service finally gained 30 ambulance officers, but it should be remembered that there were 19 lost in the previous two years, so it is really only an increase of 11. From 2019 to 2021, the service gained another 18 ambulance officers. In the past financial year, the service gained another five.

Using the minister’s own time period, over that time, according to the annual reports, there have been exactly 34 additional new ambulance officers employed. That is not enough. As I mentioned in my response to this year’s budget, it was disappointing to again see no real additional promise of more frontline crew.

Yes, new staff have been promised, but it is divided between the much-needed PACER crews and some unspecified number of intensive care paramedics, as well as more call centre staff. There is, again, a complete lack of detail, and detail is what we want—the paramedics working long shifts and the Canberra community who are waiting long hours for an ambulance to attend to them.

Someone listening to this may well wonder why we need more frontline crew. I was staggered by a statistic posted on the ambos’ ACT Facebook page, which showed a comparison between paramedics in Australia and New Zealand. On average, ambulance officers in Australia attend six patients every minute, compared to their counterparts in New Zealand, who attend one patient per minute.

Again, a quick review of the annual reports confirms that the level of work that paramedics do is overwhelming and increasing. There has been an increase in the number of incidents, on average, every year for the past six years, with 5,000 more medical incidents reported. The last year has been the most significant, with an 11 per cent increase in incidents reported.

What is also concerning about these numbers is that the number of incidents responded to has dropped. Whilst previously the number of incidents and responses ran fairly evenly, in the past year, for example, there were 75,698 medical incidents reported but only 63,614 were responded to. It begs the question: what happened to the other 12,084 callers? Were they ignored? Were they told to make their own way to hospital? I would love to hear the minister explain those numbers.

It is not just the health of Canberrans that is being put at risk; it is also the health of the ambulance officers themselves. A review in New South Wales found that those working in health care were more than twice as likely to claim for psychological injury than other workers, with paramedics most likely to claim for PTSD.

Research by Beyond Blue and others shows that there has been an 11 per cent increase in PTSD reported by ambulance officers. Those interviewed for the studies reported a lack of adequate support, compensation to meet financial burdens or proper redeployment, with some losing as much as \$30,000 out of their pay package.

PTSD, diabetes, inhibited mental performance, increased risk of injury and accidents, weight gain, depression, and anxiety from chronic fatigue are all consequences that are being faced by our paramedics, who are working long hours without adequate breaks, holidays and time off. Most of the research on PTSD and other health problems has been done elsewhere, with no data available in the ACT.

It is an ongoing roundabout of being not enough and not adequate and, everywhere, a lack of detail. In this motion I am calling on the minister to detail to the Assembly all actions he has taken to address the issues raised by the ambulance officers—issues over additional staffing; how rosters are being managed and will be adjusted; what is being done about the workload through increased incidents; and how the minister intends to respond to their health concerns—and to report back on the first sitting day of 2023.

I, along with the paramedics on the front line, will look forward to hearing from him. In my discussions with the minister today in relation to this motion, I was pleased to hear that he will agree to the “calls on” in this motion. I know he will be talking to the amendment that he has circulated and which the Canberra Liberals support. I think that is a good outcome, and the community will be looking forward to seeing, on what has been a long issue, some outcomes and a resolution, and working towards correcting some of the issues that our paramedics have been facing.

MR GENTLEMAN (Brindabella—Manager of Government Business, Minister for Corrections, Minister for Industrial Relations and Workplace Safety, Minister for Planning and Land Management and Minister for Police and Emergency Services) (3.57): I thank Mr Milligan for his motion today. We will be supporting it, as we do support our paramedics, with some minor changes. We have had a discussion with him, and Mr Braddock and the Greens as well, who support the amendment. I will move that amendment now:

Omit all text after paragraph (1)(b), substitute:

“(2) further notes that:

- (a) annual reports show that demand has increased by 11 percent over the last year;
- (b) major issues for the paramedics present at the meeting include long night shifts, with paramedic rosters scheduling workers on back-to-back night shifts of 14 hours long per night;

- (c) according to the Transport Workers' Union spokesperson, the one ComCen program has lagged for seven years and delivered nothing other than a change in uniforms; and
- (3) calls on the Minister for Police and Emergency Services to:
 - (a) detail to the Assembly all actions he is taking to address the issues raised by the ambulance officers; and
 - (b) report back in the first sitting day of 2023 with a progress report; and
- (4) thanks paramedics and ACTAS staff for their dedication, effort and hard work in caring for Canberrans, particularly during the pandemic.”.

I am pleased to have the opportunity to talk about our hardworking paramedics and staff within the ACT Ambulance Service. They are some of our hardest working Canberrans. I once again place on the record my thanks for their work, and I acknowledge their efforts, particularly through the pandemic. Ambulance services nationally have faced some extraordinary pressures over the past three or four years. Here in Canberra, natural disasters, the pandemic and a fast-growing and ageing population have placed an increasing demand on our Ambulance Service.

We have seen this growth in demand for all emergency services, particularly in mental health and primary health care. In fact, I can confirm that incoming calls through our triple-0 communication centre to request assistance have increased by 11 per cent in just the past year. Despite this growing demand, through the sustained dedication of our ambulance workforce and the government's investment in our Ambulance Service, the ACT has continued to record some of the best response times in the country, as well as high levels of patient satisfaction.

The government has made substantial investments in and improvements to our Ambulance Service. We will build on the work already started with ACTAS staff, the TWU and the ESA to continue to improve and modernise the Ambulance Service. Since our government was elected in 2020 more than \$50 million in funding has been provided to the ACT Ambulance Service. Since 2018 the ACT Ambulance Service has recruited over 100 paramedics. These paramedics filled additional paramedic roles to increase the frontline workforce, addressed attrition or supplemented the workforce to allow the adoption of better flexible working arrangements.

In relation to the headcount figures presented in the annual report, it is important to note that the headcount figures capture the number on the day reported. This number does not account for positions that may be unfilled—for example, due to recruitment underway. The pandemic has presented particular challenges in recruitment. The current skills and labour shortage has also impacted recruitment. On top of this, there are national and global challenges in recruiting paramedics.

In response, the ACT Ambulance Service continues to explore ways to respond to these challenges. I understand that one change has been to implement continuous recruitment. This means commencing a recruitment round as soon as a round has closed. I am also informed that ACTAS are hoping to have up to 30 recruits by the end of this financial year. These will cover attrition and add to the overall number.

More recently, the ESA has been working with ACTAS and the TWU to deliver a modernised and sustainable service plan. This strategic planning encompasses findings and recommendations from previous external reviews, including the Blueprint for Change, and focuses on increasing training and development opportunities, improving wellbeing support and better work-life balance, while continuing to address the operational demands of the growing ACT community.

Additionally, there is an immense body of work and research that has already commenced in formulating a new and modernised roster that supports our hardworking paramedics. As a former shiftworker, I do understand the pressures of shiftwork and an effective roster system. The implementation of this new roster remains one of our top priorities, moving forward. It will focus on addressing the operational demands of the growing ACT community, increasing training and development opportunities, improving wellbeing support for paramedics by combating fatigue, and offering more opportunity for a better work-life balance.

Furthermore, the government has continued to invest in our triple-0 centre, known as ComCen, in recognition of the increased workload and demands on staff and infrastructure. We do recognise that there is much more work to be done in this area, and we remain committed to working with ACTAS staff, the TWU and the ESA to deliver this important reform. In the 2021-22 and 2022-23 budgets the government funded an additional eight positions for the ambulance section of ComCen and a further \$210,000 for health and wellbeing initiatives. Over \$1.3 million was also provided to help boost significant infrastructure upgrades by adding a further 10 call-taker consoles.

I am advised that the ESA is working hard to establish improved lines of communication between the day-to-day management of ComCen, ACT Ambulance senior staff and the chief officer. As part of ESA's engagement with unions, the TWU has put forward a proposal concerning the future of ComCen. I understand that this is being carefully considered and that further decisions and discussions will occur with the unions once the proposal has been worked through. The ESA and the government are open to considering any suggestion that improves outcomes for staff and ensures that the ComCen structure continues to provide a range of benefits and career opportunities across the service.

The government is committed to protecting Canberra's future and will continue to invest in our frontline services. I would like to reiterate how proud I am of the work that the ACT Ambulance Service does in supporting our community. Our paramedics are highly resilient and always strive to be there when Canberrans need them. Our continued investment, through ACT government funding and ongoing work with the ESA, unions and staff, will help to ensure that they can continue to protect Canberrans as our city grows.

In closing, I want to thank Mr Milligan and Mr Braddock for their engagement on this issue and the tripartisan manner in which we have been able to deal with Mr Milligan's motion and the amendment that I have circulated.

MR BRADDOCK (Yerrabi) (4.04): I would like to thank Mr Milligan for bringing this important topic into this Assembly, because it is one matter that our community is

highly concerned about. We have all seen the chalk messages scrawled on ACT ambulances that they are not triple-okay. Hence, it is important that their issues can be brought into this chamber for debate.

Medical emergencies can happen in the blink of an eye. The community, quite rightly, hopes and expects that when they do happen, they will receive prompt and professional care. Ambos are the unsung heroes of the emergency services world, quietly responding 65,496 times in the past financial year. That equates to a response, on average, every eight minutes—24 hours a day, seven days a week and 365 days a year. This is a massive task that falls on the shoulders of 267 ambulance officers.

For those who are ambulance officers, many have spoken of it as a calling. They describe it as a sense of quiet pride in making a real difference to their community, helping people when they need it most. They enjoy the camaraderie that comes from being part of a team. But we also need to recognise that the lot of an ambo is a difficult one. Ambos are more likely to suffer post-traumatic stress disorder than any other emergency service. Stress and burnout severely impact at both an individual and a workforce level. In many of my conversations with ambos I have noted a sense of bubbling frustration. This workforce is speaking and we should be listening.

The Greens believe that free and independent democratic unions are an essential pillar of our society. The right to be a member of a union and collectively bargain is essential to achieving a sustainable and democratic future. Workers and their representatives are entitled to democratic participation in decisions about the future direction and the development of the organisations for which they work. The ambulance officers, through the Transport Workers Union, are now calling for an improved rostering system, more support from the Emergency Services Agency and better working conditions.

It is important that the ACT government set a good example of good industrial relations policies and practices that respects our staff and offer conditions that attract and retain quality staff, and also that a balance between paid work and personal time, with fair pay for overtime and unsociable working hours, is achieved. As we progress through the enterprise bargaining agreement process, we need to negotiate in good faith and provide the support that our ambos are calling out for to practise their calling.

MR MILLIGAN (Yerrabi) (4.08): I want to thank the minister for taking the challenge of this motion in this positive way. It is great to hear that he will report to the Assembly the progress that is being made towards solving this issue. Yes, he has made some changes to the motion, but they do not alter the facts that I raised in my opening speech.

The speech was about the motion. It was about the paramedics and the people of Canberra who are concerned about not having enough paramedics and who want to know that their health and wellbeing are important to this government. It was about the paramedics on the ground, who are doing it tough and who tell me that they do not feel listened to, who are feeling ignored—to such an extent that they passed a vote of no confidence in the leadership. That is rough on the person at the centre of the vote of no confidence but also rough on those taking that action because they show that they are at their wit's end with this matter.

So I am happy that the minister has accepted the motion, though with some changes, which we agreed to, and has agreed to report back—and so will be our community. I look forward to hearing back and reading the report in February of next year, and I know that the Canberra Liberals will be supporting Mr Gentleman’s amendments.

Amendment agreed to.

Original question, as amended, resolved in the affirmative.

Adjournment

Motion (by **Mr Gentleman**) proposed:

That the Assembly do now adjourn.

Valedictory

MS ORR (Yerrabi) (4.10): As we all know, this year has flown by, and I am proud to say that there is a lot to discuss as we approach the end of the year.

I will begin with what is easily the most significant and time-intensive project that my team and I have undertaken this year—the Period Products and Facilities (Access) Bill 2022. This work started with my fellow Yerrabi resident and friend, Pradeep Sornaraj, who first raised the issue with me several years ago, with a unique cultural lens.

Since then, and after releasing an exposure draft of the bill, I have worked with Labor Party members, community members, not-for-profit organisations, workers and their representatives, and my Assembly colleagues to get the bill into the best shape possible before introducing it in the August sitting period. The bill’s success so far is in no small part thanks to their close engagement with the consultation process. Indeed, introducing the bill has afforded me the opportunity to come to know and develop an even stronger working relationship with many of these people.

I would also like to note that Share the Dignity’s unique research and the feedback that they have provided was particularly important for us as we progressed this bill, as was Womens Health Matters and their input. I am very grateful to have maintained ongoing collaborative relationships with all of these incredible organisations and knowing that so many people are working towards ending period poverty.

Something I would also like to speak about is Share the Dignity’s Global Period Poverty Forum. The forum was in Brisbane on 10 October this year, and mobilised change-makers from across the globe to come together and share their perspective on ending period poverty. I was privileged to have been asked to speak at the forum about my experience here in the ACT, working on the Period Products and Facilities (Access) Bill. It is my hope that this knowledge-sharing event will serve those fighting period poverty in other jurisdictions, and sectors, and I am extremely grateful for the opportunity.

One last bit of work in this area that I am quite proud of is the motion I recently moved to develop a menstruation and menopause policy here in the ACT for our public service. The motion, which passed this place, calls on the government to work with stakeholders in developing a policy which helps employees meet their work commitments as they manage menopause and menstruation, and in developing an education awareness campaign to reduce reproductive health stigma in the workplace and support the ACT's public service Menstruation and Menopause Policy.

Importantly, it also requires the ACT government to report on how menstruation and menopause leave could be implemented within the ACT public service. This is fundamental to preparing any potential opportunity for bargaining to implement a leave of this type. As I noted, during my speech about that motion, it is a big step forward and it is something that I think we see more and more calls for.

I am happy to say there has also been lots of work going on in other areas of interest and around my electorate. More locally, I am glad to see construction is about to start on the Giralang shops. During the Giralang Shops Committee hearing, I asked Mr Nikias when he was going to give someone else a go. While he declined to comment at the time, he has now confirmed the sale of the shops to TP Dynamic. I have met with TP Dynamics and am encouraged by their enthusiasm to get this development done. A crane has been installed at the site and construction will commence shortly.

I am pleased to say that the government has secured a commitment from TP Dynamics to deliver all the community improvements committed by the previous developer, including reconfiguration of the school car park; contributions to the community park, foot and bike paths in the precinct; and a few other bits and pieces too. As a Giralanger, of long term, and someone whose mum is very passionate about this cause, if not all of Giralang, I think it is great, and everyone would agree, to see that this is finally progressing.

I would also like to discuss some other positive local achievements, such as the resounding community engagement with the multiple grassland clean-ups and tree planting days that we have had. I had the pleasure of organising these events, in collaboration with Friends of Grasslands and other groups and people in the area. It has been fantastic to see such strong turnouts on every occasion despite what could only be described as some shocking weather.

Speaking of tree planting, this September I am very happy to announce that an additional 32 crepe myrtle trees will be planted in the median strip along Mabo Boulevard, between Mobourne and Roy Marika Streets. Bonner residents have been quite clear about their need for more greenery in their area. I was very pleased to see the planting of the initial suite of trees. I was able to provide a choice of the species through a survey to local residents. I look forward to seeing the rest of the trees planted.

Additionally, after a very comprehensive consultation process, which included a survey of residents and a subsequent brief to the Minister of Transport and City Services, a draft design plan and landscape drawings for the future Casey Community Recreation Park has been released. Feedback on this design was open to the

community until October of this year. Construction will commence next year, and I am very excited to see this park developed.

I would also like to thank my staff, and I am sorry, I ran out of time. (*Time expired.*)

Valedictory

MR PARTON (Brindabella) (4.15): Members, as far as 2022 goes, that is it; we are done for another year. I will be brief. I want to thank my wife, Luisa, and the two kelpies for putting up with my ridiculous hours. I would say the same for our 18-year-old, Anna, but she is never home anyway. So she would not know whether or not I was working. But I still think she puts up with me, along with Jasmine, Angela, Brydie, Harry, and even Jessie.

I am not going to stand here and try to convince you that I have done a good job over the year, because the people who matter to me know that I have. I am here to hold the government to account, and that is what I am going to do over this year and on electorate matters and on portfolio related matters. The ministers who have me as their shadow, wished that they did not—and that will do me.

I want to thank my staff for helping me to do my job to the best of my ability. Thanks to Rob Lovett, who was a foundation staff member back in 2016. He left the Assembly this year to tramp off into the wilderness. His legacy remains in the Parton office, and I continue to consult him on matters of importance. I can report that after a bit of a health scare Rob is back on his feet. He has just returned from a little jaunt to Queensland.

Big thanks also to Max Evans, who was in my office up until September before heading off again to the United States, where he is living up to his ANU reputation as a lovable rogue and a party animal. He will not mind me saying that.

To Elyse: I am so indebted to you, Elyse. You hold my office together in so many ways. Your dedication to helping people is remarkable and your attention to detail is what is required on so many occasions. So thanks for everything.

To Brooke: your arrival has sharpened every knife in my knife block. You have brought to the office a skillset honed over years of working as a senior adviser up on the hill. I am so pleased that you have joined us. I hope that we can continue working together in opposition up until 2024 and in government after that.

Thanks to Elizabeth Lee and the rest of the Liberal team. We know it is going to be an extraordinary year for you, Elizabeth, and Nathan, and Mia next year. We are pleased to be along for the ride.

Thanks to Jeremy, my partner in crime in the interjection stakes. We might take this show on the road at some stage, I think, Mr Hanson. I do not know why the ratings for sittings here do not—anyway. Thanks to Nicole, my Brindabella sister, for sticking up for fellow South-siders. It is a pleasure to sit next to the likeable larrikin, James Milligan, here in the chamber, and to share the opposition benches with someone as warm and energetic as Elizabeth Kikkert.

Leanne Castley: it has been such a great pleasure to watch you grow into the role of an effective shadow minister, and I value your friendship and humour. Peter Cain continues to throw himself at the role of political representation with wild abandon, and his passion to serve is admirable.

And Ed: we are so glad that you are here, big guy. You have already become the well-researched calm voice of reason in shadow cabinet discussions. You are such an important part of our team.

Thanks to the Assembly staff at all levels. A special mention to the Planning Committee staff, who are amazing—present and past. I know there are some here.

In closing, as we get close to Christmas, I just want to acknowledge and thank government members, of both Labor and Green colour, who we joust with here on most sitting days. Again, I would like to reiterate, as I do from time to time: I quite like you all, and none of the attacks that I make on you are ever personal in any way, and I hope that they are not taken that way.

So I genuinely wish everyone in here all the best for the Christmas season. To those opposite, I would suggest that you get a good long break and recharge the batteries, because, Comrades, it is on! I promise you big time—it is on! I am always up for a stoush. I am always up for a bar-room brawl. And I promise you, it is on.

Valedictory

MS VASSAROTTI (Kurrajong—Minister for the Environment, Minister for Heritage, Minister for Homelessness and Housing Services and Minister for Sustainable Building and Construction) (4.19): I rise briefly to speak about the year that was 2022.

It started in a way that none of us wished for, with omicron sweeping our city and nation. It led to many of us fighting the virus, spending time in isolation—six times, just saying—and in waiting lines for COVID tests, a little saddened that the summer break we had all craved for after a relentless 2021 was slipping away from us. But thanks to a world-leading vaccination program, a heroic health and essential services effort, the strength of our city shone through in a very difficult time.

In 2022 the impact of this pandemic has continued to shape our lives, our workplaces and the life of this city. I would like to thank and acknowledge the hardworking public servants who have continued to provide outstanding professional work in the strange times that we live in. As I get out and about and spend times with our public servants, our ecologists, our researchers, our rangers and our GSOs, I am blown away by their talent and their enthusiasm. We are very lucky to have them. Thank you.

There are many things to be proud of in terms of the achievements in the portfolios that I am privileged to lead. We have continued the important work to achieve our aspiration of ensuring that everyone has a decent home. I so deeply value and appreciate the ongoing partnership we have fostered with the specialist homelessness sector as we work to reshape the sector through co-design and commissioning.

I acknowledge the strong working partnership with Minister Berry as we work together across the housing portfolio. It is hard and complex, and we are fighting against national and worldwide trends. But we are committed to make things better for everyone in our community.

This year, 2022, has been an exciting year for some of the species that we share our city with. We have discovered new populations of the purple copper butterfly and common dunnarts. We have introduced corroboree frogs to new areas. We have led national work on our beloved gang-gangs. Also, I am not sure if you all saw, but I caught the biggest fish—it was so big. It was a Murray cod.

We have progressed work on our food and fibre strategy and we are looking to move beyond, looking at our precious patches of habitat in isolation and looked at connectivity. I thank Minister Gentleman for the collaborative work that we have undertaken to look after our precious environment; support our urban living infrastructure; and ensure that our environment and heritage is protected through our planning regime.

We have also progressed significant work in building reform. We have pushed our national colleagues to look at higher environmental building standards. We are progressing on issues, including engineers registration; and we have got on with the job of removing potentially combustible cladding on government buildings and supporting private owners to remove cladding from their apartments.

These achievements are collective ones. Thank you for the deep relationships that I have with community partners and volunteers. I would like to personally thank all of you who engaged with me in good faith, with good humour and often with great patience.

I would like to take a moment to thank the extraordinary staff in my office. You deal with wicked problems and complex challenges with grace. I want to thank the broader Greens team staff and my fellow Greens MLAs. Thank you to my cabinet colleagues. We are doing things so differently to anywhere else in the country. Shared government can be an interesting journey, but with shared values and mutual respect I think we are doing it with grace and panache. Thank you to all members of this Assembly for being my teachers in the art of parliamentary politics.

Being an elected representative is an incredible privilege. I want to thank every member of the community and, in particular, shout out to the great people of Kurrajong for your trust, your connection, your interest and your care. I continue to promise to work every day next year as I have this year. Have a safe, restful and restorative festive break. I will spend time with my beautiful, tolerant and patient family, who share me with all of you, and look forward to next year with optimism and enthusiasm. Best tidings to all of you. See you in 2023.

Valedictory

MS CASTLEY (Yerrabi) (4.24): It has been a cracker of a year. I will not attempt to name everybody this year like I did last year, because I missed a couple. There have been many things that we have done—many motions, questions with notice, questions

without notice, FOIs and all of the events. It is amazing to have been able to get back out and see people now that events are back on. I think that is awesome for all of the industries but also the businesses that rely on events.

I want to thank all of the Assembly staff—admin, facilities, every one of you. I appreciate everything that you do and have really needed many of you at many times this year.

Next year I am looking forward to meeting with more businesses. This year we have had a great run of chatting to people who are recovering from the pandemic, some who have not and some who are still struggling to get back up to anywhere close to what they used to be. I want to give them a shout out because it takes incredible courage to start a business and to keep it going—just courage to start. So all the best to those businessowners. I really hope that this end of the year period for you is a winner.

To all of our frontline health workers and everybody in health: it has been a tough time for everybody, and I acknowledge all of the hard work that everybody has gone through and wish you all the best, and hope that you can get some respite this Christmas, time with your family and time enjoying the sunshine. I will continue to fight for our businesses and our health workers. That is what I am looking forward to next year as well.

Thanks go to my team: Felicity and Liam. Liam has steered the boat and brought us home towards the end of the year, and it has been quite a journey. I thank all of my colleagues here at the Assembly. Mr Parton, your speech was very amazing. So I cannot hope to beat you there but thank you. Thank you to everybody for your constant encouragement.

I want to thank my family. This is the year my 20-year-old learned to cook, and often I will come home to steak and salad with the foil on top of it in the fridge. It is sometimes a little sweaty but it is dinner and I am very grateful. She has been beautiful. Thank you to Shannon and my mum and my gorgeous son Lachlan. He has finally become engaged in politics and keeps asking me all sorts of weird and wonderful questions.

Importantly, I would like to thank the people of Yerrabi. Without them I would not be here. It is a constant reminder to me that the most important part of my role is remaining a local member. It is not always easy. There is a lot of Assembly stuff to do, but I remain firmly committed to staying in the electorate and getting to know more and more people in Yerrabi. I wish you all a wonderful Christmas. Thank you.

Valedictory

MS DAVIDSON (Murrumbidgee—Assistant Minister for Families and Community Services, Minister for Disability, Minister for Justice Health, Minister for Mental Health, Minister for Veterans and Seniors) (4.27): Mr Deputy Speaker, 2022 has been a big year for everyone in Canberra. It is no wonder that so many of us are looking forward to time to reconnect with family and friends and to look after ourselves. I hope, as our public service reflects on 2022, that you are all able to celebrate the many things you have achieved and given to our Canberra community this year.

On so many occasions this year, I have talked with our public service about the need for courage to listen to hard truths, to understand the problems and to work alongside our community to find creative and effective solutions. I have been so thankful for the many great Canberrans working in our public service who have done exactly that—who have stepped outside the comfort zone to try something different. They have helped people in need and learned new things along the way. To everyone at Canberra Health Services, ACT Health, the Office for Mental Health and Wellbeing, and the Community Services Directorate, thank you for your commitment and caring.

I am also so very thankful for our amazing community sector. It is you that I look to for research and advocacy to know what is really happening in the lives of the people we are all here for. I know we are heading into the busiest time of year for so many of you who provide frontline services to those most at risk in our community; whether that is putting a roof over someone's head, food on the table, family and relationship support during crisis, counselling services and mental health support, legal help, or drug and alcohol support—seeing a need in the community and pitching in to help. I want you to know that I am looking forward to continuing to work hard for you in 2023.

I know that everyone in my team is just as committed to doing that work in 2023. I have the privilege of working with the most wonderful team of creative, caring, calm people. They take the phone calls and emails, listen and learn in meetings and community events, and collectively work through complex problems with our public service and community sector. Together, we are able to do so much more than the sum of what each of us could do on our own.

Thank you to Toni, Taylor, Loi, Emily and Jillian for your calm advice and support. Jon, thank you for your guidance and leadership in our team and for being the voice I listen to in the trickiest situations. Julia, we all miss you already, and we are looking forward to seeing you come back next year. Thanks to Zachary and Eric, who came in for work experience this year and were a joy to work with.

Thank you also to Ali, John and Lachlan in the communications team, who help us stay engaged with the community we serve, and to Carol and Fiona for being the connectors in our big Greens team—as well as all my Greens party room colleagues. I have always been happier in a team, and I really value your advice and friendly faces.

Thank you to David and Dina, who I have not seen quite as much as I did during 2021 but who have continued to keep our office COVID-safe. Thank you to all the Assembly staff here. I appreciate your smiles every day.

Most importantly though, at this time of year when I am reflecting on what I am most thankful for it is my family. Ash, Sophia, Juliet and Will have not seen much of me this year. But the hug at the end of a long day of work, the text messages in the middle of a cabinet meeting to tell me we have run out of Weet-Bix again, the chauffeuring of kids to football and friends' houses, and the pitching in to clean up the kitchen and make burritos together—all of those everyday moments matter, and I would not be me without you.

Mr Deputy Speaker, thank you for your patience with me this year, and with this speech tonight. As Tony Stark said, “Part of the journey is the end.” With that, I wish you all a peaceful and enjoyable summer season.

Waste—Tarago proposed industrial waste incinerator

MS CLAY (Ginninderra) (4.30): I gave my end-of-year adjournment speech yesterday. I am sorry I am going to change the tone a little bit, because there is something serious that has come up that I need to check-in with to make sure members are aware of it.

There is a proposal for an industrial waste incinerator in Tarago, and a lot of people are quite concerned about this. I will be lodging a submission about this for the ACT Greens, and I am pleased to hear that I understand the ACT government will also be lodging a submission about this.

We have received a petition about it here in the Assembly. We have 919 signatures on that petition. There is a group called Communities Against the Tarago Incinerator. They have got quite a lot of information up about this on their website as well. It is a really simple matter: we simply do not need thermal incineration. We have banned thermal incineration here in the ACT. We have just committed, this week, to introduce the right to a healthy environment into our ACT human rights legislation, which is great news.

There are a lot of locals in Canberra and in Tarago, and food growers and wine growers in our region, who are really concerned about the impact this might have on our air and on our water. If you are interested in finding out more, I would encourage you to jump onto the “No Tarago Incinerator” website or to have a look at the information in the petition.

Valedictory

MR COCKS (Murrumbidgee) (4.32): Tomorrow marks four months since I was sworn into this Assembly. It seems hard to believe that I have been here for such a short time. I will try to be brief in my remarks today, but it is hard when there are so many people to thank who have helped make this transition so much easier for me.

I will start with some of the first people to give me support, which is the Assembly staff—the Clerk and everyone who works here. Without that support, I would have been lost. Thank you to my colleagues, all of whom have reached out and provided support at one time or another throughout this very brief period. They have offered me advice, offered observations when I have done well and, more frequently, offered more words of advice when I have messed something up!

I would really like to thank my staff. In the first few days, and first couple of weeks, in this place, I walked in, and I had an empty office. It was not until Liam joined my team, and set everything up and made everything work, that walking into this place felt welcoming and felt like a place where I was coming to work and getting things done each day. Liam, thank you very much.

Thank you to Rafe. Rafe reached out to me, I think, before anyone else, shortly after my election. Rafe is an amazing young man: his observations, his ability to deliver and his skills are so far in excess of anything I could have expected to have when stepping in as a new member. He has made things work brilliantly in my office. I cannot say enough good things about him.

Thank you to Paddy, who came to my office from the leader's office—from Elizabeth Lee's office. His manner and the way that he engages with people from across this Assembly, all staff, is just phenomenal. Paddy, I am always in awe of you. You are a great guy.

Thank you to Anton, the most recent member of my team. Anton is a fantastic, quiet and effective deliverer. He has stepped into my team absolutely effectively on very short notice, and I am incredibly grateful.

I would like to thank, especially, the members of the public service who endured my questioning through estimates and annual reports. I know that it is no small thing for those public servants to sit and be questioned by politicians, and I really appreciate the way they deal professionally with us all the time.

My staff suggested that I thank every single organisation by name that I have met with in the past four months. I am not sure I have got quite enough time to fit that in, but I do want to say thank you to all of those organisations and all of those representatives. I want to say thank you to everyone who has approached me at mobile offices—it is not easy to step forward and talk to your politician. And I really want to thank the thousands of people who have put up with me turning up unannounced on their doorstep to introduce myself and have a chat, sometimes at very inconvenient times.

Finally, I must thank my family—I could not be here if I did not have their support—and my wife Nicole. No-one warns a family what it is going to be like when a member of the family ends up being a politician in this place. It is incredibly difficult, and she puts up with, endures and supports me through a huge amount.

Thank you to my kids, Cayleigh and Dylan. They are still my inspiration. They still keep me going, and I am looking forward to seeing them when I get home this evening. Finally, to everyone in this place: thank you for making the past four months absolutely incredible, and Merry Christmas.

Valedictory

MRS KIKKERT (Ginninderra) (4.37): I want to express my deepest gratitude to the people in my electorate who have given me their trust to be their voice and a representative in the Legislative Assembly. It has been great getting to know them through emails, letters and meeting them at the shops, including Woolworths, Aldi and Coles cashiers. Thank you for stopping by for a chat. I also want to acknowledge and give thanks to the stakeholders and the people of Canberra who have engaged with me in regard to my portfolio of correction services; families, youth and community services; domestic violence; and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander affairs. Thank you for your insights, guidance and brilliant, brilliant knowledge in

these areas. I want to thank the Committee Office, particularly the PAC secretaries in the past who were incredibly helpful with our many PAC inquiries and work. I wish to thank you and I am looking forward to working with Sophie, who is our newest PAC secretary. I really, really appreciate the hard work each secretary has given to me and also to my committee members in regard to the work we do in our committee.

I also want to thank my excellent staff and friends, Brett—it just so happens to be his birthday today, so birthday shout-out to Brett Baker—Joseph and Sylvia. This trio are amazing and I simply could not do what I do in the office as well as my electorate without these three amazing individuals. I am very grateful to each of them. They all have their very special talent, skills and unique sense of humour that makes my team incredible. I must say one of my favourite things of the day is our daily staff meeting.

Leaving the best for last, I want to give thanks to my family. My kids have been absolute rock stars and inspiring youngsters this year. Cormack, Utopia, Virtue, Mantay and Lanaya are sweet, sweet souls, each with their own uniqueness, aspirations, talents, skills and kindness. I do not know how I got lucky to be their mother but it is the greatest job in the world to be a mum. Every day I am grateful for the trust and the privilege it is to be their mother. Juggling motherhood and working is not always easy or fun but my kids have risen to the occasion. I am amazed at their resilience, their determination, hard work and thoughtfulness. It does not take a lot for me to have a great day. When I get home after a long day and the kids have done the washing and cooked dinner, I am the happiest woman in the world. Just two simple things and I am satisfied. I am happy. So I want to thank my kids for making me the happiest and luckiest woman in the world. Thank you.

Valedictory

MR RATTENBURY (Kurrajong—Attorney-General, Minister for Consumer Affairs, Minister for Gaming and Minister for Water, Energy and Emissions Reduction) (4.40): Mr Deputy Speaker, 2022 has felt like the most normal year we have had for a while. While the pandemic has continued to be a reality for many in our community, many of the simple pleasures and important rituals have returned to our lives; meeting up with friends and family, attending birthday parties and weddings, taking a break, going to the football, watching a band, and end-of-year school functions. It is great to see them all back, even if there is a little bit of extra care around them. I have been struck by the number of conversations I have had this year where people have shared the perspective of how grateful they are to be back doing things that really matter to them and perhaps they had taken for granted. And how much people really are hoping for a smooth run through the festive season this year. Let us hope that it is the case.

As always, the year that was, as a member of this place, has been a heady mixture of real progress and unplanned challenges. It is always great to get to the end of the year and have the chance to stop and reflect and also to think about what is coming along next year. For me, delivering things like a new zero emissions vehicle strategy, our plan to electrify the city, seeing a full-time coroner put in place—these are the sort of things we take to an election, have the opportunity to deliver and then see the impact that they will have in improving the lives of Canberrans. It is a privilege that is really

unique to have in this kind of role and one that I continue to thoroughly enjoy, even when some of the unplanned challenges make the days a little tougher on occasion.

For me, the part I like most about this end of year valedictory speech that we give is the opportunity to thank a range of people and reflect on the terrific contributions they have made through the course of this year. To my staff, of course, they continue to be a terrific team. We work hard and we have fun. There is a genuine sense in our office that people really like being there and respect each other in the team. It is a great feeling to have around the workplace. So I want to particularly acknowledge Carol, Matt, Lewis, Anna, Loi, Fiona, Lachlan, Ally, John, Zara, who has departed us for greener pastures, Laura, Amy, and our marvellous volunteer, Melissa, who just continues to be a real character and a terrific contributor to our team.

I want to thank my Greens colleagues. It is terrific having a whole gang of people here to work with who challenge me to think about things in a different way, who come up with creative ideas, who work really hard to represent their communities they are elected to represent and to carry forward the ideas that our voters were inspired by during the election campaign. Each of them has played a terrific role this year and I look forward to continuing to work with them next year. Of course we have all of their staff as well. Again, it is great to have such a big green family in this place that brings all these terrific perspectives and makes our work so much better by being that creative and thoughtful team.

I want to acknowledge the Chief Minister and our other colleagues in the Labor Party with whom we form a government in this place. We continue to get things done together. There are challenges at times but we always find a way through. I think that is a testament to the goodwill of all involved and some really important shared values about wanting to make this city the best city we can make it. We look forward to continuing to work with you next year as well.

Like Minister Vassarotti, I want to reflect on the staff who work in the directorates that, as ministers, we have an opportunity to work with. They are all thoughtful, dedicated people. I really value their wisdom, the insights they share with us and the work they do, often behind the scenes, often without great glamour but they contribute very significantly to this territory, moving forward.

To the Assembly staff who keep this place ticking over: as always, thank you and congratulations on the production of the new *Companion*. I see it has had an upgrade. We now have a hard cover version. So the Assembly continues to grow in stature as the years roll by.

I also want to thank the people of Kurrajong. As always, it is a privilege to represent you. I do enjoy getting out in the community and learning about all the different things that are going on, to this day. Mr Hanson talked this morning about having been here for 14 years. We came at the same time. I still continue to learn things about this city because the community invites us to their events, they tell us their stories and they are willing to share with us. I am grateful for that.

I must finish by thanking Louise, who continues to be an enormous support to me. I wish all members a wonderful festive season.

Valedictory

MR HANSON (Murrumbidgee) (4.45): I just want to reflect on a couple of things from this year. Firstly, I was elected as the Deputy after Giulia left at the beginning of the year. I would just like to say how honoured I was that that happened. It is great to be Deputy to someone like Elizabeth Lee. I think she is going to be our next Chief Minister. I look forward to the next couple of years, where we put our case forward to the electorate.

It is also great to be part of such a strong Liberal team. I think there is genuine diversity in our team, real diversity. One thing I enjoy about this term at the Liberals—and I am not reflecting on other terms—is we all get on. It is a great bunch of people. It is not just professionally rewarding but it is actually nice when your colleagues all get on; and often in the party room there is a great bon amie and spirit, which goes along well with the sometimes impassioned debates.

We have kicked some goals in the portfolios that I hold this year. There have been significant debates when it comes to ACT Policing, in terms of the support they need. I would like to put on the record my thanks to all of the ACT Policing members out there that are working so hard, and to the Association—Troy and Alex in particular from the Association. I would also like to mention Tom McLuckie and his family, who I think has done great work in elevating some of the many issues that are so important to people affected as victims and families of victims in this city.

Education. To all our hardworking teachers: I wish you well with your EBA that is ongoing. I am very glad that we were able to have a tripartisan motion that I moved earlier this year, which called on the government to actually come up with some solutions and put on the table some of the data and the plan forward for recruiting and retaining teachers in our system. I hope they enjoy a bit of a break over the Christmas period because I think, as we have debated in this place quite a bit, they are spread pretty thin.

To all of the veterans out there, many of whom I catch up with during the course of the year, I wish you all the very best.

We are all, as we have spoken about here, very much reliant on our staff. I am lucky to have amazing staff in my office, which is led by Ian Hagan, who I would have to say does not just support me but supports the whole Canberra Liberals team very effectively. Jess Simpson, who has now been with me, I think, 12 years, and Richard Smith and Brodie Taylor who support me so well out in the community.

This will be the first Christmas without my father. We lost him in February. Brian sadly passed away. And my mum turned 80 in April. Some of you have met my mum and she is often a feature at ACT elections. She is a keen observer of this place. I am often having to dissuade her about what a nice young man Shane Rattenbury is. They spent, I think in 2008, quite a bit of time back in the old Molonglo electorate days, campaigning side by side. She and Shane got on famously. It has been a bit of a challenge for me since that day to explain to her the pitfalls of that position.

Anyway, to all of you, I wish you all the best. Merry Christmas and see you all in the new year.

Valedictory

MS STEPHEN-SMITH (Kurrajong—Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs, Minister for Families and Community Services and Minister for Health) (4.49): In preparing this speech I looked back at my final COVID update for the Assembly in 2021, as a reminder of where our journey has taken us this year on our path towards living with COVID as an ongoing endemic disease. I want to recognise the impact of this very difficult year on our frontline health workers—from starting the year with our largest COVID wave to an incredibly tough winter, not only due to COVID but also to an early flu season and the impact of illness and quarantine on workforce availability, as well as healthcare demand.

The CHS accreditation took place during this busy winter, and over the past couple of months everyone got stuck into training and preparation for the digital health record go-live on 12 November. To Peter O'Halloran and Sandra Cook, and hundreds of people in the DHR team, thank you and congratulations. On behalf of all Canberrans, thank you to every single person on the front line of our health system—nurses, midwives, doctors, allied health professionals, cleaners, wardspeople, support staff and volunteers.

I also want to recognise our health system leaders, who have truly led throughout the year. Rebecca Cross, Director-General of the ACT Health Directorate, and her deputy for most of the year, Deb Anton, have led an enormous amount of policy work, and navigated the complexities of both COVID and commonwealth-state relations.

Thank you also to the Chief Health Officer, Dr Kerryn Coleman and her team, especially the indefatigable Vanessa Dal Molin, who is truly worth her weight in gold. Dave Peffer and Cathie O'Neill have led CHS with an absolute commitment to its values: reliable, progressive, respectful and kind. They have taken some hard decisions this year to deliver a safer workplace for staff and patients. As Dr Nick Taylor recently described it, CHS is on a journey from eminence-based medicine, where senior clinicians are never questioned, to evidence-based medicine, in an environment where every team member is empowered to speak up for safety. They have been recruiting some very impressive senior staff, who will really drive this necessary change.

To Duncan Edghill, Martin Little and the Canberra Hospital expansion team at Major Projects Canberra, this major project remains on track despite the challenging weather and supply chain environment; and I want to wish Duncan all the very best for whatever comes next.

I turn to Catherine Rule, Jo Wood, Anne-Maree Sabellico and the rest of the leadership team at the Community Services Directorate. The directorate has experienced significant churn in senior leadership over recent years, and it is great to know we now have a stable and united team to deliver a very large reform agenda across Child, Youth and Family Services, and Community Services more broadly.

Thank you as always to all the CSD staff in Child and Youth Protection, and Family and Community Services more broadly, and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs, who have continued supporting some of our most vulnerable families and driving positive change to build a more socially just Canberra. Thank you also to our non-government and community partners, and to the consumers with whom we co-design services and for whom our services are built.

I thank our union partners, particularly those I work most closely with—the CPSU, the UWU, the CFMEU, the ANMF and ASMOF. I also thank the AMA. Although they would not count themselves as a union, they are fantastic industrial representatives of their own members.

To Ash Van Dijk and the team at the ACT Labor Party Office, and to party members who have shown me such support, thank you very much.

To all the staff of the Legislative Assembly who have helped us out when things go right, and often when things go wrong, when we need your help the most—thank you.

I thank my Labor colleagues, Andrew, Yvette, Mick, Chris, Tara, Suzanne, Michael, Marisa and, of course, Madam Speaker, and all of the Labor staff, who work so collaboratively across our offices and who enable us to do the work that we do for the Canberra community. I recognise our directorate liaison officers throughout the year, Ella, Ryan, Tara, Karen, Fiona, Cathy, Letitia, Andrew and Lauren. I hope I have not forgotten anyone, but I will give an honourable mention to Chris Bartram just in case.

I extend my thanks to my own staff, Martin, Johnny, Ben, Meg, Caitlyn, Amy, Jed and Lily, and particularly to Cath, my chief of staff. She is someone who has demonstrated over three years of COVID that she can genuinely keep her head when all about her are losing theirs; though, I hasten to add, not blaming it on her. “Tireless” is not the right description, though she often seems that way. I have been very fortunate to have two fabulous women as chiefs of staff over the past six years, and I do not quite know how I would have managed through this COVID period without Cath. Thank you, Cath. They say that if you want a friend in politics, you should get a dog, but I feel incredibly fortunate to have an office where people do become friends, and I look forward to continuing our important work with my fabulous staff in 2023.

I also want to thank my family, friends and horses for keeping me grounded. And I say to the voters of Kurrajong that it is a privilege to serve you every day, and I promise that you will see me out and about more in 2023. Merry Christmas and happy New Year to all! I hope everyone gets a break and time with family and friends before we do it all again next year.

Valedictory

MS BURCH (Brindabella) (4.45): Members, I want to start by wishing my fabulous team, Mel and Emma, who have been with me for such a long time, a very restful break and Christmas. I also thank James, who helped me in my office, but I see he has settled very well into the Chris Steel office. So well done, James.

To the OLA team—those who we see every day and those that do all the work behind the scenes—I want to thank you, because, as has been expressed here before, you make us look clever and coordinated, and make things go seamlessly. So we thank you, indeed. To MLAs, I say: enjoy the break, come back rested—but perhaps not that rested, for me as Speaker!—and enjoy the time with family and friends over the New Year break.

To my Labor caucus colleagues I say that it has been an interesting year but always a good year to have a caucus that is forever thinking about the next way that we can make our community even better and stronger. That is why I joined the Labor Party and why I will be forever grateful and thankful for the caucus colleagues that I have.

I send a big thank you to the people of Brindabella. I will be back again with my A-frame at the local shops every second Thursday and Friday, and every fourth Thursday and Friday. I do not call it a mobile office but effectively it is—not that Jonathan is here. So, again, I thank the people of Brindabella.

Take this as my annual update on my grandchildren. I put a call out to the grandchildren's family to give me their favourite foods, words or what they are up to. For members who are very excited about this, I can say that Loup's favourite play time is to pretend. He can pretend to be Spiderman, or he can pretend to be one of his newly acquired chickens. Apparently, it is always quite entertaining. His word is “no way”—very loudly—but he is 2½ years, so it is probably within the character of a 2½-year-old. Cheese is his favourite food. That is a constant for him, but I am sure his French mother has an influence on his food tastes. He particularly likes his cheese with chocolate, I am told.

The older grandson, Hunter, has hit double digits. He is turning into a pre-teen, apparently with lots of eye-rolling in his household, but he is enjoying his passion for music. He is playing cello now on a daily basis, so that is good. Kade starts off every statement with, “Did you know ...”. He likes sports and will try everything and anything. He just enjoys running around. He is proving to be quite a speaker himself, and he will take any opportunity at school to take the lead in talking or presenting.

Young Fletcher is five. He is a feisty little fellow. He wants to prove himself an equal to his older brothers and do as much as them, but he has to be reminded that he is five. He loves dogs and can list at least every dog that is in the local park for playtime with all the dogs there. But to Cam, Kain, Tom and Lloyd: you make my world go around and I simply could not do it without you. With that, members, I wish you all a very restful and safe New Year.

Question resolved in the affirmative.

The Assembly adjourned at 4.59 pm until Tuesday, 7 February 2023 at 10.00 am.

Answers to questions

Justice—community service work orders (Question No 937)

Mrs Kikkert asked the Attorney-General, upon notice, on 14 October 2022:

- (1) Given that the Government’s submission to the inquiry into Community Corrections states that “CSW [Community Service Work] has attained increasing importance as a sentencing option in the ACT”, this is despite Australian Bureau of Statistics data indicating that community supervision/work orders have decreased as the principal sentence for an offender since 2017-2018, can the Attorney-General explain this contradiction.
- (2) Why have community supervision/work order sentences decreased significantly since 2017-2018.

Mr Rattenbury: The answer to the member’s question is as follows:

- (1) The statement in the government submission was “CSW has attained increasing importance as a sentencing option in the ACT and other Australian and international jurisdictions.” That statement is qualitative rather than quantitative.

However, community service work orders are an important sentencing option in the ACT and are used by the ACT Courts in appropriate circumstances.

- (2) Several factors outlined in the ABS Criminal Courts, Australia methodology¹ should be considered when considering ABS quantitative data on “community supervision/work orders as a principal sentence” in the ACT from 2017-18 including:
 - The COVID-19 pandemic resulted in restrictions in some states and territories that affected the number of defendants that could be finalised in the Criminal Courts in 2020–21. This context should be considered when interpreting the Criminal Courts data for the 2020–21 and 2019–20 reference periods, and when comparing to earlier years.
 - “Community supervision/work orders” count any order requiring a person to perform work within the community or report to a person nominated by the court which includes community service orders, probation orders, treatment orders and referrals to conference.
 - Only the most serious component of a compound/complex sentence is shown as the principal sentence.
 - In 2018–19, ACT Courts records were migrated to the Integrated Court Management System. This improved the ability to incorporate external data, reducing the number of duplicated defendant records and consolidating related cases into one. This is likely to have affected the number of finalised defendants.

Also of note is that the ACT is a small jurisdiction and any change in small numbers can significantly impact the overall trends.

¹<https://www.abs.gov.au/methodologies/criminal-courts-australia-methodology/2020-21#sentence-type-classification>

**Municipal services—footpaths
(Question No 967)**

Ms Lawder asked the Minister for Transport and City Services, upon notice, on 25 November 2022:

How much has the ACT Government spent on footpath maintenance and repairs in (a) 2017-2018, (b) 2018-2019, (c) 2019-2020, (d) 2020-2021 and (e) 2021-2022.

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

a)	2017-18	\$5,441,503
b)	2018-19	\$4,727,743
c)	2019-20	\$4,672,697
d)	2020-21	\$6,357,036
e)	2021-22	\$7,407,086

Please note that the 2021-22 year included \$2.6M (ex GST) of one-off additional Federal funding (via the Local Roads and Community Infrastructure – LRCI program).

**Aboriginals and Torres Strait Islanders—community-based corrections orders
(Question No 968)**

Ms Kikkert asked the Minister for Corrections, upon notice, on 25 November 2022:

- (1) Does page 78 of the Justice and Community Safety Directorate 2021-2022 annual report reference the launch of two external alternative reporting sites for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander offenders; if so, when were those sites launched and where are they.
- (2) Can the Minister provide a general overview of how this pilot works and what aspects of it make it culturally appropriate.

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

On 12 July 2021, ACT Corrective Services (ACTCS) launched an alternative reporting site at the offices of Yeddung Mura in Fadden for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander offenders. On 4 May 2022, the second alternative reporting site for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander offenders was launched at Winnunga Nimmityjah Aboriginal Health and Community Services in Narrabundah.

Community Corrections Officers (CCOs) attend these sites one day a week in conjunction with the Cultural Engagement Officer to meet with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander offenders who are subject to community-based corrections orders. This enables offenders to meet their reporting obligations in a culturally appropriate environment, with the aim to reduce the risk of non-compliance and promote successful completion of orders.

In addition to providing a culturally appropriate environment and having availability of Indigenous support staff, these sites also foster linkages between offenders, Community Corrections and other culturally appropriate services such as Indigenous health programs, Elders groups and alcohol and other drug services.

Municipal services—mowing (Question No 969)

Ms Lawder asked the Minister for Transport and City Services, upon notice, on 25 November 2022:

- (1) What is the breakdown of the different types of mowing machines in the ACT mowing fleet.
- (2) What is the average cost of these machines.
- (3) How many of these machines are owned by the ACT Government.

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

- (1) Machine types include:
 - 12 x John Deere tractors with slasher attachments.
 - 47 x Wide Cut Area Mowers (all ride-on). These machines form the bulk of the fleet and are commonly used to mow public open space and sportsgrounds.
 - 27 x Toro 5900/5910.
 - 14 x Toro 4000/4010.
 - 2 x John Deere 1600T Wide Area Mower.
 - 2 x Kubota Baroness LM2700.
 - 2 x Toro 7000.
 - 21 x Outfront Mowers (all ride on) also used to mow a variety of public open space situations.
 - 2 x Toro 721
 - 17 x Kubota FS3690.
 - 2 x Kubota Z122
 - (2) Current costs vary from \$485.79 (Slasher) to \$4,530.18 (Toro 5900) per month.
 - (3) The mowing fleet (80 machines) are all leased assets.
-

Development—greenfield precincts (Question No 970)

Ms Clay asked the Minister for Planning and Land Management, upon notice, on 25 November 2022:

- (1) What is the current number of greenfield district residential dwellings in following areas of (a) Gungahlin District, (b) Molonglo District and (c) Ginninderry.

- (2) What is the anticipated number of residential dwellings for the greenfield areas of
 (a) Gungahlin District, (b) Molonglo District, (c) Ginninderry and (d) CSIRO
 Ginninderra after they are fully released by the ACT Government.

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

- 1) The estimated number of total residential dwelling stock for the areas in question is based on ABS data and is provided in the table below.

Table 1: Estimated number of residential dwelling stock as at 30 June 2022

	District	Estimated residential dwelling stock (number)
(a)	Gungahlin	32,654
(b)	Molonglo Valley	5,252
(c)	Ginninderry	520

- 2) Anticipated number of residential dwellings for the greenfield areas of:
- a. Gungahlin District
 There are only two remaining greenfield areas to be released within Gungahlin, within Jacka and Kenny. The anticipated number of residential dwellings in these two greenfield areas is 2,180 as listed in the Indicative Land Release Program. This does not include Town Centre and infill sites currently subject to community consultation.
 - b. Molonglo District
 By comparison with Gungahlin, Molonglo is only partially developed. The total anticipated number of dwellings in Molonglo is around 25,000. This is consistent with the Molonglo and North Weston Structure Plan 2008 and figures provided within the Molonglo Group Centre and Surrounds Draft Concept Plan 2019.
 - c. Ginninderry
 The total anticipated number of residential dwellings for Ginninderry is 11,500. Of these, 6,500 dwellings are anticipated to be within the ACT.
 - d. CSIRO Ginninderra Land at the CSIRO site at Ginninderra is not owned by the ACT Government.

Taxation—residential rates (Question No 971)

Ms Clay asked the Treasurer, upon notice, on 25 November 2022:

- (1) What is the total (a) mean and (b) median nominal rates payable, in 2021 22, for all residential dwellings with AUVs within the thresholds of (i) \$1-\$149,999, (ii) \$150,000-\$299,999, (iii) \$300,000-\$449,999, (iv) \$450,000-\$599,999, (v) \$600,000-\$749,999, (vi) \$750,000-\$999,999, (vii) \$1 million-\$1,799,999, (viii) \$1.8 million-\$2,499,99 and (ix) \$2.5 million plus.

- (2) How many dwellings that paid residential rates, in 2021-22, in the ACT had an AUV of
- (a) \$1-\$149,999, (b) \$150,000-\$299,999, (c) \$300,000-\$449,999, (d) \$450,000-\$599,999,
 (e) \$600,000-\$749,999, (f) \$750,000-\$999,999, (g) \$1 million-\$1,799,999, (h) \$1.8 million-\$2,499,999 and (i) \$2.5 million plus.

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

Threshold Values \$	Mean \$	Median \$	Number of Dwellings
149,999	1,878	1,885	45,367
150,000-299,999	2,430	2,374	34,718
300,000-449,999	2,837	2,781	63,154
450,000-599,999	3,772	3,721	18,100
600,000-749,999	4,667	4,603	9,188
750,000-999,999	5,877	5,779	5,792
1,000,000-1,799,999	8,151	7,736	2,907
1,800,000-2,499,999	13,688	13,775	229
2,500,000 plus	32,677	22,469	203*

*This includes residential unit blocks that have not been unit titled at the time of preparing this response.

Taxation—commercial property rates (Question No 973)

Ms Clay asked the Treasurer, upon notice, on 25 November 2022:

- (1) What as the total (a) mean and (b) median nominal rates payable for all commercial dwellings, in 2021-22, with AUVs within the thresholds of (i) \$1-\$149,999, (ii) \$150,000-\$274,999, (iii) \$275,000-\$599,999, (iv) \$600,000-\$1,999,999, (v) \$2 million-\$4,999,999, (vi) \$5 million-\$9,999,999, (g) \$10 million-\$24,999,999, (h) \$25 million-\$74,999,999 and (i) \$75 million plus.
- (2) How many dwellings that paid commercial rates, in 2021-22, in the ACT had an AUV of (a) \$1-\$149,999, (b) \$150,000-\$274,999, (c) \$275,000-\$599,999, (d) \$600,000-\$1,999,999, (e) \$2 million-\$4,999,999, (f) \$5 million-\$9,999,999, (g) \$10 million-\$24,999,999, (h) \$25 million-\$74,999,999 and (i) \$75 million plus.

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

(1) & (2)

Threshold Value	Mean \$	Median \$	Number of properties
\$1-\$149,999	5,430	5,307	3,492
\$150,000-\$274,999	10,798	10,522	943
\$275,000-\$599,999	23,180	22,636	857
\$600,000-\$1,999,999	60,508	54,563	1,012
\$2m-\$4.99m	180,562	172,506	335
\$5m-\$9.99m	421,487	410,462	98
\$10m-\$24.9m	946,802	812,911	42
\$25m-\$74.99m	2,260,908	2,258,435	8
\$75m plus	Nil	Nil	Nil

- Commercial rates are not charged on dwellings. The numbers presented are taken for commercial properties that attract commercial rates.

Transport Canberra—bus drivers (Question No 974)

Ms Clay asked the Minister for Transport and City Services, upon notice, on 25 November 2022:

- What is the average tenure of Transport Canberra bus drivers.
- For the financial years (a) 2019-20, (b) 2020-21 and (c) 2021-22, (a) how many Transport Canberra bus drivers resigned and (b) what was the average tenure of bus drivers who resigned.

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

- The average tenure of current Transport Canberra bus drivers is 9.3 years. Noting this does not account for drivers who are employed casually.
- The table below outlines responses to questions a-c and a-b.

Financial Year	Resignations	Average Tenure
Financial Year	18	7.2
2019-20	18	6.8
2020-21	22	9.5

Transport Canberra—Chomley Court Park and Ride (Question No 975)

Ms Clay asked the Minister for Transport and City Services, upon notice, on 25 November 2022:

In relation to the Chomley Court Park and Ride, does Transport Canberra and City Services (TCCS) intend to sell the TCCS managed land blocks of (a) Evatt, Block 2 Section 121, (b) Evatt, Block 3 Section 131 and (c) Evatt, Block 14 Section 52.

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

The possible sale of Territory land that is under the custodianship of other Directorates, including Transport Canberra and City Services, is generally a matter led and coordinated by the Environment, Planning and Sustainable Development Directorate (EPSDD). I can advise that there are no current intentions to sell Block 2 Section 121 Evatt or Block 3 Section 131 Evatt. I can confirm that EPSDD has received an application for the direct sale of land at Block 14 Section 52 Evatt. This application is subject to government consideration.

**Alexander Maconochie Centre—detainee parent programs
(Question No 977)**

Mrs Kikkert asked the Minister for Corrections, upon notice, on 25 November 2022:

- (1) Given that the Shine for Kids program, referenced on page 69 of the Justice and Community Safety Directorate 2021-2022 Annual Report, only had two fathers complete the program, how many fathers completed the Storytime program in the (a) 2018-19, (b) 2019-20 and (c) 2020-21.
- (2) Does the ACT subsidise or pay Shine for Kids for facilitating the Storytime program; if so, how much.
- (3) Can the Minister provide a description of how this program works in practice.
- (4) Is there an equivalent program for women detainees.
- (5) How did Covid-19 impact on the service delivery of this program.

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

- 1) Detainee participation numbers in the Story Time Program were not readily available within the timeframe for response, noting the need to engage with Shine for Kids. The detail will be provided as soon as it comes to hand.
- 2) Yes, the ACT Government pays Shine for Kids for their services which includes the Story Time Program. In 2021/22, \$165,947 was paid to Shine for Kids for their services, including the Story Time Program. It is noted the Story Time Program is not separately costed.
- 3) The Story Time Program is open to all detainees and involves recording a detainee narrating a story so their child can listen to their parent's voice. Shine for Kids promotes the program to which detainees may self-refer.
- 4) As above, the Story Time Program is open to all detainees including women.

- 5) In response to COVID-19 related lockdowns, all non-essential activities were paused at the Alexander Maconochie Centre (AMC) in line with ACTCS Pandemic Arrangements. During this time, in collaboration with ACTCS, Shine for Kids proposed activities including Family Activity Packs, Family Support, and Story Time. Shine for Kids and ACTCS staff (Case Managers, the Women and Children Services Coordinator and the AMC Executive Support team) worked on post-release plans to ensure children remained connected with their family members and coordinated Zoom visits while in custody. Further, Shine for Kids worked with families of detainees by providing support and coordinating services such as Prisoners Aid, food pantries, family support services and mental health support services.

Municipal services—street sweeping (Question No 978)

Ms Lawder asked the Minister for Transport and City Services, upon notice, on 25 November 2022:

- (1) What was the (a) budget and (b) estimated amount spent on street sweeping by the ACT Government in (i) 2018-2019, (ii) 2019-2020, (iii) 2020-2021 and (iv) 2021-2022.
- (2) How many street sweeping machines does the ACT have in its fleet and what is the average cost of these machines.

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

(1)

Year	Budget (\$)	Estimated spend (\$)
2018-19	1,963,546	1,480,228
2019-20	2,160,973	1,974,946
2020-21	2,594,286	2,862,283
2021-22	2,469,503	2,228,885

- (2) The ACT leases five street sweeping vehicles, which operate over two shifts. The forecast cost of each street sweeping vehicle in the 2022-23 year is estimated at approximately \$0.125m per annum; this includes lease, fuel and maintenance provisions but excludes operator and waste management costs.

Taxation—payroll tax rate (Question No 979)

Ms Clay asked the Treasurer, upon notice, on 25 November 2022:

What is the mean and median final tax-free threshold amount for companies which paid ACT Payroll Tax in the 2021-22 financial year.

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

Mean is \$306,360 and Median is \$65,359*.

*Payroll tax is a self-assessment tax. The above figures are based on the 2021-22 assessments for all companies registered for payroll tax regardless of whether they claimed the tax-free threshold. The above mean and median figures reflect that not all companies chose to claim the tax-free threshold; and if a company operates in multiple jurisdictions, then the allowable tax-free threshold is adjusted to be proportional to the total ACT taxable wages compared to total Australia-wide wages.

Information on the calculation of payroll tax, including the tax-free threshold can be found at https://www.revenue.act.gov.au/payroll-tax?result_1060955_result_page=7

Alexander Maconochie Centre—transitional release centre detainees (Question No 980)

Mrs Kikkert asked the Minister for Corrections, upon notice, on 25 November 2022:

- (1) How many detainees have entered the Transitional Release Centre (TRC) since its reopening in April 2022 to present.
- (2) Of those detainees, how many were (a) men and (b) women.
- (3) How many of these detainees ended their incarceration period (ie, finished their custodial sentence or achieved parole) following their stay at the TRC.
- (4) Were any detainees who were staying in the TRC moved back to the main part of the prison for any reason; if so, (a) how many and (b) for what reasons were they sent back to the main part of the prison.
- (5) What has been the average length of stay of a detainee in the TRC since April 2022 to present.

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

- (1) There have been 13 detainees who have entered the Transitional Release Program (TRP) with 11 of these being accommodated in the TRC since its reopening in April 2022.
 - (2) Of these 13 detainees, there were 12 men and one woman in the TRP program. All 11 TRC accommodated detainees were men.
 - (3) Three male detainees were released to parole following their stay in the TRC. One female detainee was released to parole following participation in the TRP.
 - (4) Two detainees were exited from the TRC and TRP for attempting to introduce contraband and unauthorised use of the internet, respectively. In addition, one detainee was exited from the TRP for returning a positive urinalysis test.
 - (5) The average length of stay in the TRC is 101 days.
-

Roads—maintenance (Question No 981)

Ms Lawder asked the Minister for Transport and City Services, upon notice, on 25 November 2022:

What was the (a) budget and (b) estimated amount spent on road maintenance by the ACT Government in (a) 2018-2019, (b) 2019-2020, (c) 2020-2021 and (d) 2021-2022.

Mr Steel: The answer to the member’s question is as follows:

Year	Budget	Estimated amount
2018-19	18,706,745	19,055,004
2019-20	18,168,372	17,165,683
2020-21	19,153,169	21,089,996
2021-22	22,495,248	23,341,93

Road Maintenance has been defined as work related to repairing the road surface and includes routine works, heavy patching works, resurfacing works, rural road grading and pavement assessment/resurfacing program development.

Taxation—land tax (Question No 982)

Ms Clay asked the Treasurer, upon notice, on 25 November 2022:

- (1) What was the number of (a) non-unit and (b) unit titled residential properties that paid general rates in 2021-22.
- (2) What is the mean AUV for residential properties in the ACT with an AUV above (a) \$2 million and (b) \$5 million.
- (3) What is the mean AUV for residential properties which paid land tax in 2021-22 in the ACT with an AUV above (a) \$2 million and (b) 5 million.
- (4) What was the total mean nominal land tax payable, in 2021-22, for all dwellings with AUVs, within the thresholds of (a) under \$150,000, (b) \$150,000-\$275,000, (c) \$275,000-\$2 million, (d) \$2 million-\$5 million and (e) \$5 million plus.
- (5) How many dwellings that paid land tax, in 2021-22, in the ACT had an AUV of (a) under \$150,000, (b) \$150,000-\$275,000, (c) \$275,000-\$2 million, (d) \$2 million-\$5 million and (e) \$5 million plus.

Mr Barr: The answer to the member’s question is as follows:

- (1) (a) There are 117,765 non-unit residential properties
(b) There are 62,059 unit titled residential properties

- (2) (a) The mean AUV for residential properties above \$2 million is \$3.9 million in 2021-22.
 (b) The mean AUV for residential properties above \$5 million is \$10.6 million in 2021-22.
- (3) (a) The mean AUV for residential properties which had land tax assessed at any time in 2021 22 with an AUV above \$2 million is \$3.2 million.
 (b) The mean AUV for residential properties which had land tax assessed at any time in 2021 22 with an AUV above \$5 million is \$6.0 million.
- (4) & (5)

Threshold Value	Mean land Tax ¹ \$	Number of Dwellings ²
\$1-\$149,999	2,010	27,266
\$150,000-\$274,999	2,874	8,465
\$275,000-\$1,999,999	4,523	18,167
\$2,000,000-\$4,999,999	28,651	28
\$5,000,000 and above	55,666	3

¹ Calculated as the mean of the land tax assessed for eligible properties in 2021-22 per specified AUV threshold. Note that some properties included in the calculation might not have been eligible for land tax for the full financial year.

² Number of properties that were assessed for land tax at any time in 2021-22.

Municipal services—Charnwood shops (Question No 984)

Mrs Kikkert asked the Minister for Transport and City Services, upon notice, on 2 December 2022:

- (1) When will the final design of the Charnwood public space improvements be released, given it is scheduled to be released late 2022 and as of 30 November, not on the yoursay.act.gov.au website.
- (2) If the final design is not being released this year, when will it be released and what is the cause of the delay.
- (3) What modifications were made to the final design following public comment on the preliminary designs.

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

- (1) The final design of the Charnwood public space improvements has been released and is available on the YourSay website.
- (2) As above.

(3) Feedback on the preliminary design was supportive of the proposal. Two key changes were made to the plans based on the feedback received:

- I. Drainage improvements have been made to address flooding issues in heavy rain on the lower-level pavements and laneways between Woolworths and the Tavern. The flooding issue was raised during consultation on the preliminary design.
- II. Antisocial behaviour at the public toilets was raised as an issue during the consultation. This has been considered with regard to Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED), with planting/design changes ensuring no conflict with public lighting or general surveillance from adjacent spaces.

Roads—Parkes Way (Question No 986)

Mrs Kikkert asked the Minister for Transport and City Services, upon notice, on 2 December 2022:

Why was resealing of Parkes Way done during the day in November rather than in the night.

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

Sections of Parkes Way are a part of this year's arterial road resealing program.

Preparatory works, including asphalt patching, can be undertaken as nightworks as they are less dependent on temperature. However, the resealing works, which are what caused impacts to traffic flow on Friday 25 November, needed to be completed in warmer conditions during daylight hours. If resealing works are not undertaken during warmer conditions during the day, there is a high risk the seal will not dry and there will be premature cracking and failure. TCCS aim to minimise impacts to traffic as much as possible and therefore, works were carried out during off-peak hours. TCCS are, however, aware there are some arterial roads which carry significant traffic loads no matter the time of day and so an extensive number of communications was undertaken in the lead-up to and during these works on Parkes Way to encourage commuters to take an alternative traffic route.

Public housing—construction and redevelopment costs (Question No 987)

Ms Clay asked the Minister for Housing and Suburban Development, upon notice, on 2 December 2022:

- (1) What is the average cost of developing a new public housing dwelling to the ACT Government as part of the growth and renewal program.
- (2) What is the breakdown of these costs between (a) redeveloping existing properties and (b) building a new property.
- (3) Can these costs be further detailed including and excluding the cost of land.

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

- 1) Since the start of the Program in 2019-20 to September 2022, the Growing and Renewing Program has constructed 235 dwellings at an average price of \$419,506 per dwelling (construction cost only).
- 2) On average, the breakdown of these costs is as follow:
 - a. Redeveloping on existing land: \$426,772 per dwelling
 - b. Building on greenfield (including cost of land): \$685,494 per dwelling
- 3) On average, building on greenfield sites, without the cost of land equates to \$376,553 per dwelling. For detailed breakdown see table below:

(A copy of the attachment is available at the Chamber Support Office.)

**Waste—green waste services relocation
(Question No 991)**

Mrs Kikkert asked the Minister for Transport and City Services, upon notice, on 2 December 2022:

- (1) Can the Minister provide an update on the progress of finding another location for the Parkwood green waste and what progress has been made on a revised development application.
- (2) When does the Government intend to lodge a revised development application.

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

- (1) A feasibility study was undertaken to identify potential future waste sites in North Canberra. The report identified 23 sites for further investigation. Five of these sites were shortlisted for detailed review and from this assessment, Block 1582 on Stockdill Drive, Belconnen, was considered the most appropriate location for a facility of this type.
- (2) Additional information in relation to traffic, bushfire, and utility management and also clarification about how the proposal is consistent with the Territory Plan has been prepared. A re-submission of the DA occurred on 9 December 2022. This will be followed by a second public notification period in early 2023.

**artsACT—Emerging Arts Organisation Investment funding
(Question No 993)**

Ms Lawder asked the Minister for Arts, upon notice, on 2 December 2022:

- (1) Was an unsuccessful applicant told by a representative from ArtsACT that they “didn’t have enough runs on the board” to be considered for the Emerging Arts Organisation Investment Funding.

- (2) How can an organisation applying for an emerging organisation grant be told that they don't have enough runs on the board to be considered for this type of funding.
- (3) Did a representative from ArtsACT tell the unsuccessful applicant that the three emerging arts organisations that received funding already had established funding arrangements with ArtsACT so that made them feel more comfortable funding them with this grant.
- (4) What does this say about integrity of the grants process if a representative from ArtsACT is openly stating that they feel more comfortable funding organisations that ArtsACT already have established funding arrangements with.
- (5) How can emerging arts organisations receive funding from ArtsACT if ArtsACT feel more comfortable providing funding to organisations that they already have established funding relationships with.
- (6) Did a representative from ArtsACT tell an unsuccessful applicant that ArtsACT had no intention of funding any organisation up to \$100,000 per year, the top amount that the funding was advertised at.
- (7) Why would a grant be advertised at a certain amount if ArtsACT has no intention of funding any organisation that amount.

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

- (1) No, I am advised unsuccessful applicants were not told by artsACT that they needed 'runs on the board' to be considered for the Emerging Arts Organisation Investment Funding.
- (2) As above, applicants were not told by artsACT that they needed 'runs on the board'. The Arts Organisation Investment Program provides funding to leading arts organisations for the delivery of activities that meet the three strategies in Canberra: Australia's Arts Capital – a Statement of Ambition for the Arts. Part of the published assessment criteria for the program includes a demonstrated history of managing government and other grant funding which was taken into consideration along with the other assessment criteria in assessing each application.
- (3) No, I am advised unsuccessful applicants were not told by artsACT that they feel more comfortable funding organisations that already had established funding arrangements. Applicants that did have a funding history with artsACT or other government agencies were able to draw on this history in stating their claims against the assessment criteria.
- (4) As per the response to question 3; unsuccessful applicants were not told by artsACT that they feel more comfortable funding organisations that already had established funding arrangements. Organisations were required to demonstrate their capacity as leading arts organisations, including for Emerging Arts Organisations. Applications were assessed against the criteria by artsACT staff and industry experts, and funding was awarded in a highly competitive field and within the available budget.
- (5) Please refer to the response for question 3. Emerging arts organisations and artists are able to establish funding relationships with artsACT through the Arts Activities Funding categories.

- (6) No, I am advised artsACT did not tell unsuccessful applicants that there was no intention of funding organisations up to \$100,000 per year in the Emerging Arts Organisation Investment funding stream.
- (7) As per the response to question 6; artsACT did not tell unsuccessful applicants that there was no intention of funding organisations up to \$100,000 per year in the Emerging Arts Organisation Investment funding stream.

The Arts Organisation Investment Program funding guidelines included indicative funding amounts for each of the three funding streams. The subsequent submitted applications had a high demand for funds. Applications were assessed against the criteria by artsACT staff and industry experts, and funding was awarded within the available budget.

Environment—box elder weed management (Question No 994)

Ms Lawder asked the Minister for the Environment, upon notice, on 2 December 2022:

- (1) What work is being done to prevent the spread of Box Elder in Canberra.
- (2) What areas in particular are suffering from Box Elder.
- (3) What work is being done to protect our waterways from the spread of Box Elder.

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

- 1) The Environment, Planning and Sustainable Development Directorate (EPSDD) and the Transport Canberra and City Services Directorate undertake control activities on Box Elder as part of their general woody weeds management programs.
- 2) Incursions of Box Elder may typically occur in the ACT's urban areas. These incursions may typically occur around ponds or waterways. Infestations are mapped on the invasive weed operational dashboard which is available online at <https://actgov.maps.arcgis.com/apps/dashboards/c6083d9db4f240c7a93f39dcb06244e2>
- 3) Ongoing invasive plant programs target priority weeds that impact the environment, agriculture and community. Box Elders are controlled along with other weeds that pose a threat to the ACT's natural environment. As part of the ACT Government's additional investment in biosecurity (\$2.9M over 4 years), the Biosecurity Response Team within EPSDD has greater capacity to respond to and control weeds such as Box Elder.

Molonglo River—bridge (Question No 997)

Mrs Kikkert asked the Minister for Transport and City Services, upon notice, on 2 December 2022:

Given that the last update on the City Services website for the Molonglo River bridge crossing project description is that the Government is currently evaluating the responses to a tender process that closed in June 2022, can the Minister provide an update on the progress of this project and how far along the evaluation of the tender responses is.

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

The evaluation has been completed by the Tender Evaluation Team and the team is currently working to finalise tender reports.

A contract award for the Design and Construction work is anticipated to occur in Quarter 1 2023.

Parking—company ownership (Question No 999)

Mrs Kikkert asked the Minister for Transport and City Services, upon notice, on 2 December 2022:

- (1) Who is the predominant owner of the carparks immediately adjacent (ie, the carparks most customers would use to park at the businesses in the CZ4 zone) to the CZ4 Local Centre Zone's in the Ginninderra and Yerrabi electorates.
- (2) Who is the predominant owner of the carparks immediately adjacent to the shopping centres of (a) Amaroo around Pioneer Street, (b) Charnwood around Charnwood Place, (c) Hawker, (d) Jamison, (e) Kaleen around Georgina Crescent, (f) Kippax Fair and (g) Nicholls along O'Hanlon Place.
- (3) Who is the predominant owner of the carparks along (a) Huddart Circuit, (b) Baillieu Circuit, (c) Kemble Circuit and (d) Winchcombe Circuit Mitchell, in Mitchell.

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

- (1) Transport Canberra and City Services (TCCS).
- (2) As above.
- (3) As above.

Land—environmental impact statement exemptions (Question No 1000)

Ms Clay asked the Minister for Planning and Land Management, upon notice, on 2 December 2022:

- (1) Given that Block 12, Section 1, Denman Prospect, acts as a buffer between ecologically rich Bluett's Block and the Denman Prospect Urban Footprint and that there is currently an application on foot to exempt this block from an environmental impact statement, what further technical or other reports have been requested of or prepared or submitted by the proponent for the purposes of the proposal and

environmental impact statement exemption request, since the consultation on the environmental impact statement exemption closed.

- (2) When are these reports due.
- (3) When will these reports be publicly available.

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

- (1) The planning and land authority (the Authority) is currently considering an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) Exemption Application (EIS202100040) for Block 12, Section 1, Denman Prospect. At the draft EIS Exemption stage, a number of documents were publicly notified from 20 December 2021 to 10 February 2022.

Documents included:

- a. an Exemption Application Report,
- b. Deferred Area Consideration Report,
- c. Ecological Impact Assessment,
- d. Salvage Artefacts Report,
- e. Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999 (EPBC) Molonglo National Environmental Significance (NES) Plan Endorsements,
- f. EPBC Strategic Assessment Approval Decision, and
- g. Bushfire EDP1.

The Conservator of Flora and Fauna, ACT Fire and Rescue, ACT Emergency Services, and the ACT Heritage Council required, amongst other things, further investigations regarding the potential environmental impacts on Block 12 Section 1 Denman Prospect and on neighbouring blocks. In particular, the Conservator requires information regarding:

- a. clarification on proposed works,
- b. asset protection,
- c. Pink-tailed Worm-lizard (*Aprasia parapulchella*) habitat,
- d. Impacts on protected native flora and any off-site impacts.

- (2) Comments from the Authority, entities and representations received during the public notification process were provided to the applicant for their response in the revised application submission. A Revised EIS Exemption was submitted to the Authority on 30 November 2022, which consisted of a number of reports that were updated from the draft stage, including:

- a. the Exemption Application Report,
- b. Ecological Impact Assessment,
- c. Cultural Heritage Assessment and Statement of Heritage Effects, and
- d. 7 additional documents, including a Site Audit Report, Environmental Protection Authority Site Audit, Interim Audit Advice Report, Contamination Report, Bushfire Protection Report, Final Consultation Report (with responses to public representations) and an Entity Comments Table.

The Authority has referred the revised EIS exemption application to relevant entities, with comments expected by 16 December 2022.

- (3) The reports provided as part of the Revised EIS Exemption package for

EIS202100040 are currently under assessment by the Authority. The documents submitted as part of the application will be made available on the Authority's website once a decision has been made on the EIS Exemption application. Information and updates on the application can be accessed at <https://www.planning.act.gov.au/development-applications-assessments/assessment-of-development/environmental-impact-assessment/exemption-from-requiring-an-eis-s211/denman-prospect-2-estate>.

Land—land titles transfer (Question No 1002)

Ms Lee asked the Minister for Business and Better Regulation, upon notice, on 2 December 2022:

For the financial years 2011-12 to 2021-22 inclusive, can the Minister advise the number of transactions with (a) with zero consideration where the transfer was to an entity other than an individual, and the year the title was established, (b) \$1.00 consideration where the transfer was to an entity other than an individual, and the year the title was established and (c) consideration of \$100,000 or less where the transfer was to an entity other than an individual, and the year the title was established.

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

Please refer to [Attachment A](#) for the response to the question.

(A copy of the attachment is available at the Chamber Support Office.)

Parking—Yerrabi Pond (Question No 1003)

Ms Castley asked the Minister for Transport and City Services, upon notice, on 2 December 2022:

- (1) Has the Government commissioned any more parking studies in Gungahlin and Yerrabi Pond foreshore since 2013; if so, can the Minister provide (a) a copy of these reports including recommendations, (b) a date these reports were provided to the Minister, (c) a cost of these reports and (d) details on what action the Government have taken following these reports.
- (2) How many submissions to the YourSay survey in 2021 for Yerrabi Pond were regarding parking.
- (3) Further to part (2), (a) what is the breakdown of how many submissions were made, (b) what is the breakdown of what facilities were requested and (c) what is the amount of people who requested these facilities (eg, parking – 300).
- (4) What actions have the ACT Government completed regarding parking YourSay requests since the survey closed.
- (5) Has the Minister's office or Transport Canberra and City Services received any more complaints or correspondence about parking in Gungahlin/Yerrabi Pond foreshore since this survey closed; if so, how many.

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

- (1) EPSDD has previously undertaken a parking survey in November 2014 and March 2015 and then subsequently again in 2019 to assess the level of parking supply and usage across the Gungahlin Town Centre (GTC). Most recently TCCS commissioned a further parking utilisation survey within GTC survey in May 2022 and is currently reviewing the data and compiling the subsequent outcomes report which is not complete. The cost for this survey (which also surveyed other town and group centres across Canberra) was \$112,198.90. TCCS uses this information to monitor parking behaviours and to assist in future policy, development and planning decisions.
- (2) Of the more than 1,000 submissions received during the YourSay consultation between 21 April and 4 June 2021, parking was identified as an issue by approximately 30 respondents.
- (3) Following the consultation period, both a What We Heard and Engagement Report were compiled and released publicly on 29 July 2021. These reports detail the number of submissions received and how they were made, as well as the key issues and improvements suggested through the feedback and the number of submissions which raised them. This report is available on the [YourSay project page](#).
- (4) Funding was provided in the 2021-22 ACT Budget for planning and design works for improved and new amenities including increased car parking.
- (5) During the period of the feasibility and design phase, three questions from the community were received in relation to the feasibility and design work on parking. Two related to whether parking provided along the foreshore area (on Phyllis Ashton Circuit) would negatively impact the natural landscape setting along the pond foreshore; and one was not supportive of adding parking to the Nellie Hamilton Avenue median strip. My office received one piece of correspondence regarding parking around Yerrabi Pond in October 2021.

Photovoltaic systems—electrical safety inspections (Question No 1004)

Ms Castley asked the Minister for Business and Better Regulation, upon notice, on 2 December 2022:

- (1) In relation to certificates for electrical safety, how many inspections were completed between 1 November 2021 and 1 November 2022 per month for (a) new photovoltaic systems, (b) battery systems, (c) additions and alterations and (d) new electrical installations.
- (2) How many (a) electrical inspections is Access Canberra falling behind each month, (b) new photovoltaic systems were added to inspection lists each month between 1 November 2021 and 1 November 2022 and (c) new photovoltaic installations still need to be inspected as of 30 November 2022.
- (3) Does the Government aim to complete inspections of new photovoltaic installations within a timeframe; if so, (a) what is the timeframe, (b) what percentage of inspections are completed within this timeframe and (c) has the timeframe been changed; if so, (i) when was the timeframe changed, (ii) what was it before and

- (iii) what was it changed to.
- (4) How many new photovoltaic installations have been waiting for inspection since completion for more than (a) three, (b) four, (c) five, (d) six, (e) seven, (f) eight, (g) nine months and (h) a year.
- (5) Has the ACT Government committed to inspect 100 percent of new photovoltaic installations; if so, can the Minister provide details.
- (6) Further to question on notice No 704, can the Minister provide (a) an update for quarter one and quarter three and include existing photovoltaic and NexGen battery inspections/failures as well as for the 2021-22 financial year, (b) a breakdown by what the demerit points were received from eg, new photovoltaic installation, battery etc.

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

1. The numbers of inspections completed between 1 November 2021 and 1 November 2022 are as follows:
 - a) new photovoltaic systems = 6,816
 - b) battery systems = 2,998
 - c) additions and alterations = 13,529
 - d) new electrical installations = 20,661

Month	a) new photovoltaic systems	b) battery systems	c) additions and alterations	d) new electrical installations
November 2021	828	132	2,851	2,128
December 2021	612	116	3,126	1,444
January 2022	341	140	1,658	736
February 2022	435	184	2,204	1,511
March 2022	549	287	2,760	2,136
April 2022	436	227	1,980	1,392
May 2022	821	390	2,086	2,183
June 2022	780	232	2,585	1,994
July 2022	573	205	3,569	1,947
August 2022	532	289	2,991	1,854
September 2022	368	490	2,371	1,580
October 2022	541	306	2,128	1,756
Total	6,816	2,998	13,529	20,661

2. a) There is no set timeframe in which inspections are required. Inspections are undertaken following the submission of the Certificate of Electrical Safety (CES) for the works, which certifies the electrical work has followed necessary standards and guidelines and that this work was performed by qualified electrician. For new photovoltaic installations, the CES allows for the operation and use of the system, and there are no delays to the consumer while the inspection is pending.

- b) The number of new photovoltaic systems added to inspection lists each month between 1 November 2021 and 1 November 2022 are as follows:

Month	New photovoltaic systems added
November 2021	741
December 2021	395
January 2022	701
February 2022	856
March 2022	832
April 2022	661
May 2022	800
June 2022	899
July 2022	830
August 2022	1,038
September 2022	1,092
October 2022	936

- c) new photovoltaic installations that still need to be inspected as of 30 November 2022 = 3,513.

3. There is no set timeframe in which inspections are expected to be completed. Inspections are prioritised to allow Certificates of Occupancy and Use to be issued for new residential and commercial premises. Inspections are undertaken following the submission of the Certificate of Electrical Safety (CES) for the works, which certifies the electrical work has followed necessary standards and guidelines and that this work was performed by qualified electrician. For new photovoltaic installations, the CES allows for the operation and use of the system, and there are no delays to the consumer while the inspection is pending.
4. The number of new photovoltaic installations that have been waiting for inspection since completion are as follows:

Months	Number
Three	1,765
Four	1,207
Five	871
Six	527
Seven	274
Eight	123
Nine	11
Twelve	0

5. Part 2 of the *Electricity Safety Act 1971* (the Act) provides that all new electrical installations must be inspected. Access Canberra undertakes inspections for all new solar photovoltaic installations as required by the Act.
6. (a) Update to Question on Notice No 704:

- Quarter 1 (July-September 2021) = 14 defects;
- Quarter 3 (January-March 2022) = 90 defects;
- Defects for financial year 2021/22 = 420

(b) A total of 21 demerit points from seven demerit actions were issued regarding photovoltaic and battery installations in the financial year 2021/22.

ACT Ambulance Service—salary costs and staff (Question No 1005)

Ms Lee asked the Minister for Police and Emergency Services, upon notice, on 2 December 2022:

For each financial year from 2011-12 to 2021-22 (inclusive), for the ACT Ambulance Service (ACTAS) can the Minister provide the (a) sum total of salary expenses for paramedics broken down by employee classification, including (i) base salary, (ii) superannuation and (iii) allowances, (b) number of paramedics that were hired broken down by employee classification, (c) gender of paramedics employed by ACTAS broken down by employee classification and (d) number of paramedics who ceased employment with ACTAS broken down by employee classification, including the reasons for their departures.

Mr Gentleman: The answer to the member’s question is as follows:

ACT Ambulance Paramedics are employed against a range of classifications broken down further in the following response. For the period requested (2011-2012 to 2022-2023), some employee classifications have changed as a result of changes to the ACT Ambulance Service Enterprise Agreement. For this reason, the data requested results in some employee classifications showing a \$0 figure either before creation, or after cessation of the relevant employee classification.

(a) Total salary expenses by financial year:

Year	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17
Total Salaries	\$15,057,538.04	\$17,950,212.95	\$18,969,337.92	\$20,371,518.86	\$21,766,595.27	\$22,475,898.94

Year	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22
Total Salaries	\$23,585,411.52	\$25,094,285.40	\$30,037,723.93	\$29,272,705.68	\$30,086,917.39

i. Base Salary by classification. These figures include base salary and leave payments:

(A copy of the attachment is available at the Chamber Support Office.)

ii. Superannuation by classification:

(A copy of the attachment is available at the Chamber Support Office.)

iii. Allowances by classification: These figures are inclusive of on call allowances, penalties, and higher duties allowances.

(A copy of the attachment is available at the Chamber Support Office.)

- (b) Paramedic recruitment by classification; and
- (c) Gender breakdown:

ACT Ambulance Service does not directly recruit into the classifications of AM1, AM2, ICP1 and ICP2. Paramedics are promoted into these classifications so they will not appear in the below breakdown. From 2011-2012 the Student Paramedic (SP) classification was replaced with Graduate Paramedic Intern (GPI).

(A copy of the attachment is available at the Chamber Support Office.)

- (d) Paramedic cessation by classification and reason for departure:

(A copy of the attachment is available at the Chamber Support Office.)

Canberra Institute of Technology—tuition fees (Question No 1008)

Ms Clay asked the Minister for Skills, upon notice, on 2 December 2022:

- (1) What was the value of tuition fees and charges collected by the Canberra Institute of Technology (CIT) for the financial years of (a) 2021-22, (b) 2020-21, (c) 2019-20, (d) 2018-19 and (e) 2017-18.
- (2) What was the value of tuition waivers and fee reductions for CIT tuition fees and charges for the financial years of (a) 2021-22, (b) 2020-21, (c) 2019-20, (d) 2018-19 and (e) 2017-18.

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

CIT, an independent body with a governing board, advises:

As an educational institution, CIT is required to follow a January to December (calendar) financial year therefore the figures provided below align with relevant calendar years (CIT's financial year).

1. As included in CIT's financial statements, the revenue including for non-subsidised training (commercial rates) for each year for the relevant period is as follows:

(The figures shown below include revenue from User Choice and Skilled Capital funding, domestic and international student fees and commercial courses.)

Year	\$'000
2017	32,807
2018	33,743
2019	36,173
2020	27,409
2021	31,380
2022 (partial*)	19,790

* Figures are provisional (to 30 November 2022) and only include confirmed transactions for 2022 and do not represent a pro-rata proportion of the year. Final fees are subject to several conditions and modifying factors, including student final completions, which are not fully resolved until year end.

2. The value of waivers and write-offs for each year for the relevant period reported in CIT's financial statements is as follows:

Year	\$ '000
2017	96
2018	31
2019	502
2020	228
2021	245
2022	Note 1

Note 1: 2022 not assessed and reconciled until the end of the financial year.

Photovoltaic systems—electrical safety inspections (Question No 1009)

Ms Castley asked the Minister for Business and Better Regulation, upon notice, on 2 December 2022:

- (1) In relation to certificates for electrical safety, did the Better Regulation Taskforce (BRT) hear from any electrical company about inspections of new solar; if so, did the BRT make any recommendations to change regulation or pass on any advice the Minister or Chief Minister.
- (2) Has the Minister's office or any other Minister's office requested a briefing or information about inspections of new photovoltaic installations; if so, which office and what information did they request.
- (3) Does the Government intend to change any aspects of new photovoltaic installation (a) regulation, (b) pricing and (c) policy; if so, can the Minister provide relevant details.

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

- (1) All new rooftop solar installations in the ACT are required to be inspected by Access Canberra. Electricians are required to submit a certificate of electrical safety within 14 days of installation. The Better Regulation Taskforce has not received any feedback about this requirement or more broadly about the performance of the current regulatory regime.
- (2) As Minister for Business and Better Regulation, I am regularly briefed on Access Canberra's regulatory performance and compliance activities, which include inspections of new photovoltaic installations.

On 5 May 2022, my office sought advice ahead of a meeting between Access

Canberra officials and two solar businesses, requested by the business owners to discuss concerns they have related to their industry.

Questions about briefings provided to other Ministers should be directed to the relevant Ministers.

- (3) The Government is not currently intending to change regulation, pricing or policy for new photovoltaic installations.

Land—land titles registration (Question No 1010)

Ms Lee asked the Minister for Business and Better Regulation, upon notice, on 2 December 2022:

- (1) In relation to registration of land titles where no consideration was paid, can the Minister advise if there are categories that are used to identify the reason for these transactions.
- (2) If there are categories that are used to identify the reason for these transactions, can the Minister advise (a) the names of the individual categories and (b) for the years 2011-2012 to 2021-2022 inclusive, the breakdown by category of each of the registration of land titles where no consideration was paid transactions for each category.

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

- (1) The Land Titles Office does not collect data on specific categories where no consideration was paid.
- (2) See answer to Q1.

ACT Property Group—policy for declaring gifts or benefits (Question No 1011)

Ms Lee asked the Special Minister of State, upon notice, on 2 December 2022:

- (1) Are ACT Property Group staff able to accept gifts from contractors or any other parties, and is there a policy covering gifts to staff.
- (2) Does ACT Property Group maintain a gift register for staff; if so, does the gift register refer to the gift source and the recipient.
- (3) Can the Minister provide a copy of the gift register for the financial years 2018-19 to 2021-22 inclusive.

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

1. ACT Property Group staff are subject to the CMTEDD Gifts and Hospitality Policy 2022.

The policy provides that gifts or benefits should generally not be accepted. And that under no circumstances should staff:

- accept gifts of money or items easily transferrable into cash (for example, lottery tickets or gift cards); or
- accept gifts from a person or organisation involved in a tender process or subject to a decision-making process in which the staff member is personally involved (including recruitment processes); or
- solicit personal gifts or benefits.

In limited circumstances staff may accept gifts where:

- it is of minimal value (\$40 or less) and offered as a thank you for something they have already done, such as been a presenter at a conference or a participant in a course and does not create an actual or perceived conflict of interest; or
- it is not possible to politely decline the gift without causing embarrassment, for example gifts offered by visiting delegations of foreign officials; or
- approval has been sought and received in advance of the gift being offered, for example a gift provided at a function recognising service previously provided; or
- certain hospitality/event invitations.

The policy also sets rules around the circumstances where gifts must be registered. Registers include information about the context in which a gift was received.

2. CMTEDD Corporate maintains gift and hospitality register records for all CMTEDD employees including those of ACT Property Group.
3. There were no gifts declared for 2019-20 and 2021-22. One gift was declared in 2018-19:

Reporting Year	Date of gift	Received From	Item	Value	Reason for gift	Action taken	Decision Maker
2018/19	13/12/18	Woden Community Service	Gift Basket	Est \$100	Appreciation for high standard of customer service	Donated to Charity	Under Treasurer

Transport Canberra—availability payments (Question No 1012)

Mr Parton asked the Minister for Transport and City Services, upon notice, on 2 December 2022:

- (1) Given that the Transport Canberra City to Gungahlin Light Rail Project Delivery Report - June 2019, at Table 14, page 32, outlines availability payments to Canberra Metro, can the Minister provide an updated table.
- (2) Can the Minister provide the actual availability payments for each year, that have been paid to date (from the 2019 financial year) and the future schedule of availability payments, for each year, to be made up to the 2040 financial year.

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

(1) & (2)

(A copy of the attachment is available at the Chamber Support Office.)

**Lake Tuggeranong—floating wetlands
(Question No 1013)**

Ms Lawder asked the Minister for Water, Energy and Emissions Reduction, upon notice, on 2 December 2022:

- (1) What was the total cost of the floating wetlands in Lake Tuggeranong.
- (2) How much has been spent on their maintenance to date.

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

- 1) The cost of the platforms, their deployment and construction management for the floating wetlands in Tuggeranong is approximately \$325,000 (excl GST). In addition, there was a cost of \$15,000 (excl GST) for the relocation of the floating wetland from the Village Creek Bay to the lake.

The design of the floating wetland was done as part of a bigger design package and the costs attributable specifically to the floating wetland is estimated at around \$25,000 (excl GST).

- 2) The cost for the two-year operation, maintenance, and monitoring contract (and its management) is \$35,616 (excl GST). The contract is at the half-way point and the associated expenditure about the same.
-

**ACT Emergency Services Agency—ambulance fees
(Question No 1014)**

Ms Clay asked the Minister for Police and Emergency Services, upon notice, on 2 December 2022:

- (1) What was the value of ambulance fees and charges collected by ACT Emergency Services Agency (ESA) for the financial years of (a) 2021-22, (b) 2020-21, (c) 2019-20, (d) 2018-19 and (e) 2017-18.
- (2) What was the value of waivers and fee reductions for ambulance services for ACT ESA fees and charges for the financial years of (a) 2021-22, (b) 2020-21, (c) 2019-20, (d) 2018-19 and (e) 2017-18.

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

Shared Services Response:

1. The Value of ambulance fees and charges collected by ACT Emergency Service (ESA) for the financial years of (a) 2021-22, (b) 2020-21, (c) 2019-20, (d) 2018-19 and (e) 2017-18 is tabled below.

Table 1 - The Value of ambulance fees and charges collected by ACT Emergency Service (ESA) by Financial Year.

	2021-22 (‘000)	2020-21 (‘000)	2019-20 (‘000)	2018-19 (‘000)	2017-18 (‘000)
Fees & Charges collected	6,145	6,050	6,722	5,522	5,160

2. What was the value of waivers and fee reductions for ambulance services for ACT ESA fees and charges for the financial years of (a) 2021-22, (b) 2020-21, (c) 2019-20, (d) 2018-19 and (e) 2017-18.

The Chief Officer, ACT Ambulance Service, approves waivers in accordance with the *Emergencies Act 2004 and as defined in Schedule 2, Emergencies (Fees) Determination*.

Table 2- The value of waivers and fee reductions for ambulance services for ACT ESA fees and charges by Financial Year.

	2021-22 (‘000)	2020-21 (‘000)	2019-20 (‘000)	2018-19 (‘000)	2017-18 (‘000)
Waivers	103	86	29	67	31

In some circumstances, a determination of a waiver is made prior to the billing process. This may be to avoid the distress of an invoice being issued, or due to some other understood circumstances (e.g. in the 2019-20 financial year 178 determinations were made related to the bushfire event).

In these circumstances there is no calculation of the waived fee as it does not enter the billing process, the respective volumes for the billed and unbilled waivers are provided below in Table 3 for full clarity and understanding.

Table 3 - Waivers – Billed and Unbilled by Quantity by Financial Year.

Waiver Type	2021-22	2020-21	2019-20	2018-19	2017-18
Waivers billed	120	99	32	81	27
Waivers unbilled	8	3	190	5	11
Total Waivers	128	102	222	86	38

**Crace—Hilltop Reserve memorial
(Question No 1016)**

Ms Castley asked the Minister for Transport and City Services, upon notice, on 2 December 2022:

Did the Minister, in response to a letter regarding Crace Hilltop Reserve, state that “City Services is further assessing the damage with the intention of repairing the memorial map. The required repair works on site are expected to commence once suitable options to remediate the issue are identified”; if so, (a) have repairs been completed ; if so, when; if not, why not, (b) has Transport Canberra and City Services identified the cause of the damage; if so, can the Minister provide details and (c) what was the total cost of repairing the memorial.

Mr Steel: The answer to the member’s question is as follows:

- a) City Services is continuing to investigate remediation options for the Battle of the Coral Sea Memorial. Due to the specialised skills required to repair the memorial map, the identification of an appropriately qualified and skilled contractor is presenting a challenge and taking some time. Once a suitable contractor is found, City Services will proceed with scheduling the required repairs.
- b) TCCS has determined that damage to the memorial map was not due to an act of vandalism, but rather unintentional damage caused during the act of routine cleaning and maintenance. TCCS is reviewing the cleaning and maintenance practices to ensure better protection to the memorial once it is re-instated.
- c) The cost to repair the memorial has not yet been determined.

Lower Molonglo Water Quality Control Centre—wastewater treatment (Question No 1020)

Ms Lawder asked the Minister for Water, Energy and Emissions Reduction, upon notice, on 2 December 2022:

- (1) In relation the Lower Molonglo Water Quality Control Centre (LMWQCC), why is the 2012 reported capacity significantly reduced from the 1973 design capacity.
- (2) What is Icon Water doing to improve treatment capacity at LMWQCC.
- (3) What were the actual estimated bypass flows for the past 10 years.
- (4) What were the water quality tests done upstream and downstream of where the effluent is discharged into the Molonglo River and also in the Murrumbidgee River, and of the effluent discharged, before during and after the bypass.
- (5) Does the Environment Protection Authority (EPA) require this monitoring; if not, why not.
- (6) Was the bypass dam empty before both events; if not, why not.
- (7) Does the EPA get daily updates of the bypass dam volumes during wet events; if not, why not.
- (8) If LMWQCC can treat up to 190 megalitres per day, why wasn’t the bypass dam of volume 147 megalitres able to be emptied in about two days.
- (9) What is Icon Water doing to reduce stormwater ingress to the sewer network,

especially as the sewers react to stormwater ingress almost as quickly as the normal stormwater system.

- (10) What is the population that LMWQCC can treat if the treatment capacity has not increased in 50 years.

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

1. Icon Water advises that the Lower Molonglo's original design capacity was 270,000 equivalent persons (EP). The original plant was designed to be augmented in three stages to an ultimate capacity of 1,000,000 EP. In 2010, Icon Water augmented the Lower Molonglo Water Quality Control Centre (LMWQCC), increasing capacity to treat up to 100 megalitres per day, which is equivalent to approximately 550,000 EP.

In 2012, Icon Water undertook a capacity assessment which highlighted that the plant was sensitive to primary treatment variability, particularly sludge settleability, which significantly impacted the secondary treatment process capacity. This report made several recommendations for operational approaches to improve overall performance, which have been implemented.

2. Icon Water advises that since the 2012 review, Canberra's population has grown more rapidly, and Icon Water is beginning to see the impact of a changing climate on the wastewater system. This has brought forward the requirement for augmentations of some systems at LMWQCC.

Several major projects were initiated in the 2013 2018 and 2018 2023 regulatory periods to increase capacity in the secondary treatment and solids handling systems. They are now included in Icon Water's 2023 2028 pricing submission for construction. These projects are currently moving from concept design phase to planning and detailed design, having been through a rigorous options assessment to identify suitable technologies that are able to satisfy Icon Water's operating and performance requirements. The projects have been developed with an ultimate design horizon of 2070 and a forecast population of 1,000,000 EP.

3. Icon Water advises that since the completion of the LMWQCC bypass storage dam, there have been 11 release events associated with major wet weather events:

Date	Mega Litres (ML)
December 2010	34
March 2012	666
September 2016	31
August 2020	114
September 2021	20
November 2021	50.3
November 2021	79.3
August 2022	153.6
October 2022	211.5
October 2022	241.4
October/November 2022	72.7

During these major wet weather events the releases of partially treated effluent typically constituted less than 1 per cent of the river flow.

4. Icon Water collects routine fortnightly and monthly data from the receiving river systems. Tests are those parameters prescribed in Environmental Authorisation EA0009 for LMWQCC, including chemical, physical, and biological characteristics.

The samples are collected from sites located both up and downstream on the Molonglo River and for the Murrumbidgee River downstream of the Plant. It is unsafe to collect samples when river flows are high, which typically coincides with discharges from the bypass dam.

5. As above, the water monitoring tests are prescribed in Environmental Authorisation EA0009 for LMWQCC. Further, under EA0009 (see <https://www.accesscanberra.act.gov.au/s/epa-public-registers>) an Environment Management Plan (EMP) is required under conditions 17.1-3. The EMP is required to identify all activities that may have an adverse impact on the environment or the potential to cause environmental harm, and detail the mechanisms employed to prevent or minimise the impact of these activities.
6. Icon Water advises that the Bypass Storage dam is emptied as far as infrastructure allows at all times. Volume in the dam leading into the wet weather events of each of the above-mentioned releases was 2 per cent or less. It is worth noting that to protect the Storage Dam Return Pumps, which are used to pump from the storage dam back to the inlet of the treatment plant, from potential damage they automatically shut down at 3 metre water depth, which is approximately 1 per cent of the dam storage.
7. The ACT EPA advises that it is notified of bypass events at LMWQCC through Icon Water contacting the ACT EPA on call officer by phone. This notification is covered by condition 7.1 of EA0009:

In the event that an incident has caused, is causing or is likely to cause material or serious environmental harm, whether the harm occurs on or off the site, the Authorisation holder, their employee or agent must report the incident to the Authority immediately after it becomes known to the Authorisation holder or to their employee or agent in accordance with the below clause.

The incident must be reported to the Authority by telephoning Access Canberra on 132281 during and outside business hours.

Icon Water advises that it notifies the ACT EPA, NSW EPA and other relevant regulators and downstream stakeholders of the commencement of partially treated effluent being released to the environment, and on the cessation of the release, as part of Icon Water's incident management and restoration approach. Icon Water also notifies the public at commencement of releases through media releases and other notification channels including social media. A detailed incident report is provided to the ACT EPA post event including calculations of release volumes once validated data is available.

8. Icon Water's Sewerage network continuously conveys raw wastewater into LMWQCC. Following wet weather, the wastewater inflows to LMWQCC are elevated above normal, even when bypass to the storage dam is not being used. The volume of partially treated effluent stored in the Bypass Storage Dam is gradually returned to the inlet of the treatment plant for re-treatment. Icon Water operators must balance the ongoing flow entering the plant from the network and the return flows from the bypass to not exceed maximum treatment capacity and therefore this can take more than two days to empty.

9. Bureau of Meteorology water balance and water outlook models of the ACT predict that deep soil moisture content reached 30-year record high levels in 2021-2022. Inflows to LMWQCC historically reflect the deep soil moisture and have also seen record high inflows in late 2022.

Inflow and Infiltration (I&I) is a characteristic of all sewerage networks. Icon Water monitors industry best practice in identifying the levels of I&I within the network and assessing where it is economically viable to institute remedial works to actively target I&I. Specifically, Icon Water uses sewer gauging to identify catchments with the largest proportional flow to the services population which allows a targeted I&I reduction approach. Flow monitoring at sewer pump stations has also been utilised in this space to consider broader sewer catchment impacts. Individual inspections of existing backflow devices around the network have been undertaken to accelerate maintenance of these assets if required.

Icon Water has an extensive sewer flow gauging network across Canberra, which allows not only the monitoring of network demand over time but also the breakdown of demand from different areas of the city. The gauging network is a key tool in being able to track network performance trends over time. With regards to I&I, this allows Icon Water to analyse the system response to rainfall and assess performance against industry benchmarked metrics. More targeted network interventions and maintenance activities across smaller catchment areas can then be conducted to address I&I issues when they occur.

Icon Water's sewerage network has historically had low rates of I&I due to its relatively young network age. Implementing additional cost-effective controls in this space is difficult as I&I identification and remediation works have high costs attached and small defects in the network can be numerous and very difficult to locate accurately. Other than the I&I management techniques mentioned above, Icon Water's overall maintenance and targeted renewals programs also provide benefits of managing this issue. During the 2018-2023 regulatory period Icon Water will have renewed approximately 50 kilometres and cleaned or inspected approximately 1,400 kilometres of sewer mains. Additionally, Icon Water will have completed approximately 900 targeted localised sewer main repairs on reticulation, branch lines and service connections.

10. As noted in the response to question 1, LMWQCC's original design capacity was 270,000 EP which was intended to be augmented in three stages to an ultimate capacity of 1,000,000 EP. In 2010, LMWQCC was augmented, increasing its treatment capacity to 100 megalitres per day which is equivalent to approximately 550,000 EP. Icon Water have several projects underway to further augment this capacity to cater for approximately 790,000 EP. These projects are planned for construction during the 2023 – 2028 regulatory period.

Icon Water has also recently completed a review of its Wastewater System Strategy which considers infrastructure required to support long term population growth over a 50-year planning horizon.

Questions without notice taken on notice

Orroral Valley—campground

Mr Steel (*in reply to a question by Mr Parton on Tuesday, 22 November 2022*):

Repairs to Orroral Road are expected to commence in the coming weeks. These are preliminary works and involve temporary deflection of the river flow ahead of major works commencing in the new year.

Nationwide shortages and consequential extensive lead times in obtaining construction materials (particularly stormwater pipes) has affected the construction program. Ongoing inclement weather has also compromised site access, noting the limited rural access to the location.

Major works are expected be completed by the middle of 2023 (weather permitting).

We understand this has been frustrating for the community and appreciate the community's patience as we continue to work through these challenges.

Canberra Hospital—Fetal Medicine Unit accreditation

Ms Stephen-Smith (*in reply to a question by Ms Castley on Wednesday, 23 November 2022*):

No other staff have left the Fetal Medicine Unit.

Planning—district strategies

Mr Gentleman (*in reply to a question by Mr Braddock on Wednesday, 23 November 2022*):

In the district of Gungahlin, the draft District Strategy has considered the areas of Jacka Stage 2, Kenny, and the undeveloped portion of Taylor as greenfield sites for the purpose of calculating dwelling statistics.

In the district of Molonglo, the draft District Strategy has considered the additional stages for Whitlam and Denman Prospect, together with two proposed suburbs to the north of the Molonglo River and the proposed Molonglo Group centre area as greenfield sites.

Canberra Hospital—Respiratory Medicine Unit

Ms Stephen-Smith (*in reply to a question and a supplementary question by Ms Castley on Wednesday, 23 November 2022*):

- 1) As of 31 October 2022, there were 2,663 patients waiting for an initial appointment with the Department of Respiratory and Sleep Medicine (DRSM). The below table details the average waiting time for each category.

	Average wait time (days)
Category 1	193
Category 2	710
Category 3	1,156

- 2) From 1 January 2022 to 11 November 2022, DRSM received a total of 2,190 referrals and is not aware of any referrals that have been “lost” in that period.

Municipal services—streetlighting

Mr Steel (*in reply to a question by Ms Clay on Thursday, 24 November 2022*):

The audit of community paths undertaken in 2021 focused on the path network infrastructure and identified defects and general asset condition. This data is being used to inform future community path improvement programs of work. This audit did not include an assessment on lighting levels of community paths, which requires a specialised skillset.

However, TCCS’ streetlighting team actively reviews, assesses, and prioritises information that has been provided from the public relating to areas of concern with dull lighting. The streetlighting team also undertakes after hours assessments of lighting levels throughout parkland and walkway paths.

Using this information and allocated budgets, priority lists are continuously updated. TCCS is delivering multiple lighting projects directly related to active travel pathways. These projects are completed using funding within the recurrent infill budget, Better Infrastructure Funding program, and Local Roads and Community Infrastructure Program. Lighting project examples are Elkedra Close in Hawker, Paterick Place in Holt, Mullan Street in Fadden, the stairway between Monkman Street and Ordell Street in Chapman, 800m of frequently used pathways in Banks, and the entirety of Vicars Street in Mitchell.

Whitlam—land release

Ms Berry (*in reply to a question by Ms Lee on Thursday, 24 November 2022*):

The total number of registrations for the Whitlam Ballot was 5,459.

Housing ACT—complaints

Ms Vassarotti (*in reply to a question by Mr Parton on Thursday, 24 November 2022*):

Working from home or flexible working arrangements are available across the ACT public service and are implemented on an individual basis, giving consideration to the operational requirements of the area and the type of work undertaken.

The Client Engagement team call centre has been developed to provide a first response service to all incoming calls across the Client Services Branch to reduce the number of touch points for Housing ACT clients. If a more specialised response is

required outside the knowledge scope of this team, call centre staff will ‘warm refer’ each caller to the specific business area or email for follow up.

Tenant Experience staff do not spend 100% of their time in the office, as their focus is engaging with clients face to face and undertaking client service visits. However, there is always a full complement of staff across the call centre and Central Access Point teams to ensure timely customer service. All clients are encouraged to call through to the call centre to ensure their concerns can be addressed in a timely manner. If a client calls through to a staff member’s desk phone or mobile and leaves a message, staff endeavour to return the call within two working days.

Canberra Hospital—Fetal Medicine Unit accreditation

Ms Stephen-Smith (*in reply to a question and a supplementary question by Ms Castley on Wednesday, 30 November 2022*):

- 1) The Maternal Fetal Medicine subspecialist position has been advertised on multiple occasions since June 2022 and has most recently been advertised with a closing date of 22 December 2022.

This position is highly specialised and requires the successful applicant to hold a subspecialty qualification in Maternal Fetal Medicine with the Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists. There is a significant skills shortage in tertiary fetal medicine, leading to challenges attracting staff to the organisation. Recruitment will continue nationally and internationally to identify suitable applicants.

- 2) Five staff are currently on leave/reduced hours. Mitigation strategies have been implemented to enable the continuation of tertiary level services for women with complex pregnancies.

Parking—Rowland Rees Crescent

Mr Steel (*in reply to a question and a supplementary question by Ms Lawder on Thursday, 1 December 2022*):

Rowland Rees Crescent is a 7m wide road with a 50km speed limit that forms a cul-de-sac providing access to the Avani Terraces. It carries an estimated 300 – 1,000 vehicles per day, based on the Estate Development Code traffic volume calculation.

Parking arrangements on Rowland Rees Crescent are compliant with the requirements of the relevant Estate Development Code provisions.

When an initial enquiry was received last year, TCCS implemented ‘No Stopping’ parking restrictions to the turning head of the cul-de-sac as well as on one side of Rowland Rees Crescent.

Given ongoing concerns despite the road’s compliance with code provisions, TCCS will amend the existing, non-delineated on-street parking to be delineated parking with signs and line marking and include improved passing provision. This work is scheduled to be undertaken within the next three months.

Jabanungga Avenue—groundwater flooding

Mr Steel (*in reply to a question and a supplementary question by Ms Castley on Thursday, 1 December 2022*):

The new areas that are referred to are outside the current section of works. However TCCS has placed steel plates temporarily to improve the conditions of these sections and make them safely trafficable. On completion of the current works, the additional areas will be rectified utilising the existing contract to ensure project efficiencies. It is expected that these works will be completed February-March 2023.

Retirement villages—dispute resolution

Mr Rattenbury (*in reply to a question and a supplementary question by Mr Braddock and Ms Clay on Thursday, 1 December 2022*):

Since introduction of the Human Rights Commission retirement villages complaints mechanism in 2019, the Commission has received 2 retirement villages complaints (0 in 2019-20, 1 in 2020-21 and 1 in 2021-22).

The Commission also deals from time to time with complaints relating to retirement villages under its discrimination or older persons services complaints mechanisms. Disaggregated figures under these other complaints jurisdictions are not available.

Access Canberra—next gen energy storage program

Mr Rattenbury (*in reply to a question and a supplementary question by Ms Castley and Mr Milligan on Thursday, 1 December 2022*):

Next Gen retailers are required to provide evidence from the Access Canberra electrical inspection team stating each installation has passed an inspection before rebate payments are processed. This is to ensure all installations meet ACT Government requirements and also for consumer safety. The ACT regulations require all battery installations to be inspected. This has contributed to the high compliance of installations.

Access Canberra have advised that, as at 13 December 2022, there are 162 Next Gen inspections to be booked with the oldest inspection request from 29 August 2022. The timeline for inspections has increased slightly compared to the normal wait time due to the ACT Government shutdown period.

Next Gen and Access Canberra have collaborated to recruit a dedicated inspector to clear the backlog of Next Gen installs waiting for inspections. The inspector started on 21 November 2022 for a period of 12-months, and it is anticipated that they will deliver up to 1000 inspections.

Retailer rebate invoices submitted to Next Gen are paid within 30-days, as per ACT Government payment terms.

Planning—district strategies

Mr Gentleman (*in reply to a question by Mr Cain on Thursday, 1 December 2022*):

I received a letter from the Oaks Estate Residents Association in August this year and my written response noted the Association's concerns about being included in the East Canberra District, and preference for inclusion in the Inner South District. As I stated in that letter, while Oaks Estate's inclusion in the East Canberra district was because of its geographical location, this would not necessarily impact on existing relationships or associations that Oaks Estate has with the Inner South district, such as membership of the Inner South Canberra Community Council (ISCCC). The draft East Canberra District Strategy also acknowledges (page 88) that the Oaks Estate Residents Association strongly identifies with the ISCCC.

The government understands that Oaks Estate, and other residential communities are somewhat geographically removed from other parts of urban Canberra. This is why the draft East Canberra District Strategy includes a key direction to enhance the accessibility of services and facilities for Oaks Estate, Pialligo and Symonston residents in surrounding districts, particularly Inner South Canberra.

Housing ACT—vacant land

Ms Berry (*in reply to a question and a supplementary question by Ms Lawder on Thursday, 1 December 2022*):

The redevelopment at 3-7 Langdon Avenue and 2 Longmore Crescent is currently in pre-procurement stage. This redevelopment is expected to commence construction in the second half of 2023.

The Development Application was lodged on 9 September 2021 and the Notice of Decision was issued on 6 April 2022. Stamped plans were issued on 7 June 2022 after 20 days appeal period due to representations received during the Public Notification period. Design changes were required to meet the Environment, Planning and Sustainable Development Directorate requirements.

There are 124 vacant properties awaiting demolition. Some of these have a Head Contractor engaged and demolition is imminent.