



Debates

WEEKLY HANSARD

Legislative Assembly for the ACT

EIGHTH ASSEMBLY

19 MARCH 2013

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Tuesday, 19 March 2013

Absence of Speaker

The Clerk, pursuant to standing order 6, informed the Assembly that the Speaker would be temporarily absent and that in that period the Deputy Speaker, Ms Porter, as Acting Speaker, would perform the duties of the Speaker.

MADAM ACTING SPEAKER (Ms Porter) took the chair at 10 am, made a formal recognition that the Assembly was meeting on the lands of the traditional custodians, and asked members to stand in silence and pray or reflect on their responsibilities to the people of the Australian Capital Territory.

Canberra—centenary

MS GALLAGHER (Molonglo—Chief Minister, Minister for Regional Development, Minister for Health and Minister for Higher Education) (10.01), by leave: I move:

That this Assembly:

(1) notes:

- (a) that Tuesday, 12 March 2013 marked the 100th anniversary of the naming of Canberra as the national capital of Australia; and
- (b) the celebration of our Centenary year in 2013; and

(2) expresses its appreciation for the input of those individuals and organisations who have contributed to the growth, development and governance of our city over the past 100 years.

On 12 March 1913, Lord Denman said:

Remember that the traditions of this city will be the traditions of Australia. Let us hope that they will be the traditions of freedom, of peace, of honour, and of prosperity; that here will be reflected all that is finest and noblest in the national life of the country.

Exactly one week ago today, together with the current Governor-General, her husband, Mr Michael Bryce, the Prime Minister and the Minister for Regional Australia, at the place it all began, we raised a toast to the spirit of Canberra on the 100th anniversary of the city's naming.

And at that same time, in our workplaces, our schools, and in community groups and shopping centres right across our city, we celebrated the men and women who have played a part in making Canberra the city it is today. We raised a toast to a sustainable and peaceful Canberra—today and for the future.

Canberra is a city with two distinct lives—firstly as the purpose-built capital of the nation and the other our home. Canberra was built to be the place which all

Australians could proudly recognise as their capital, a planned and deliberate city that was accessible to all people, the heart of government, and with the people and infrastructure needed to service the needs of every single Australian.

Today, 100 years on, we are so much more than that. We are a place of learning that allows ideas and innovation to flourish and where progressive thought is encouraged and not feared. We are a place where creative people gravitate to enhance their talents. We are a home to our national cultural institutions, custodians of a nation's memories and historical roots as national treasures for all Australians.

We are a place where the quality of life is second to none for a city of this size. We are a place where the city melds seamlessly with the bush. And we are a place that people of all ages, young and old, are proud to call their home.

Walter Burley Griffin's partner, Marion Mahony, once described Canberra as "a city that could be a living and healthy and growing thing". And Canberra's growth and development over the last 100 years has been nothing short of remarkable. In 1945, at the end of the Second World War, only 13,000 people lived here. By 1970 that number had swelled 10 times, to 130,000, and it took all of that time, till the early 1970s, for all the major federal government departments to relocate to Canberra. Our city's growth really accelerated during what historians refer to as "the golden age" for Canberra, with a recognition at last that Canberra was not just home to the federal parliament but also the true home of the federal bureaucracy.

And as we celebrate the 100 milestone, it allows us to reflect on the story of Canberra—a capital city chosen to unite a newly established federation; a design competition to capture the most innovative minds and their ideas; a city relatively far from the sea, relatively remote, and in the unforgiving Australian bushland; a blank canvas from which to build a modern city from scratch.

As the building and infrastructure came out of the ground, and the physical city started to emerge, at exactly the same time, quietly and to some extent without deliberate intent, the social fabric of the city began. Strangers forced together from all over the country to build a capital started building what bricks and mortar could not—the spirit of a city.

Today we acknowledge the people who have made it the city we see today. Today we recognise the people who have worked together to meet the challenges, tackle the problems, and bring about change; who have worked with conviction and courage to realise the true potential of the nation's capital.

These individuals are not just our inspirational leaders, our captains of industry, our sporting stars, our eminent scientists or our gifted artists. They are our "average citizens" or our "unsung heroes" who do not necessarily receive notoriety or public accolade but who have been essential in developing and nurturing the social and spiritual side of our city.

Madam Acting Speaker, during the centenary week the celebrations have appropriately focused heavily on respecting and acknowledging the traditional owners

of the land on which Canberra was built. We have the original inhabitants of this land as we celebrate our 100th birthday—those people whose connection to this place goes back tens of thousands of years.

As Aunty Agnes reminded us through her welcome to country address, imagine what a difference it could have made if we had been able to have had the understanding we now have of the traditional owners of Australia and their connection to their land. In her usual unassuming, respectful but forceful way, Aunty Agnes made this point, and 100 years on the Governor-General, the Prime Minister and dignitaries listened and understood.

On our centenary birthday, we salute our forefathers, the early pioneers, who carved out an existence on the limestone plains in the 1800s, and those public leaders who understood the need for a neutral nation's capital and who chose this place as the site for that capital to be built. There were those whose thoughts for the design of the city were guided by idealism fused with practicality—a city built around Griffin's centrepiece, the magnificent Lake Burley Griffin, a beautifully planned city protected by the mountains and the bush.

There were the tradesmen who came here in the early 1920s, who lived in workers camps as they put up our first govie houses, and the shopkeepers who started our first businesses in Kingston, Manuka and Civic—the beginnings of the thriving business sector we see today which continues to drive the economy of the future. Throughout the 1950s migrants from across the globe arrived here to work on projects like the Snowy Mountains scheme, and later moved here to construct our national institutions and homes, lay our roads, and plant our trees and gardens.

From our earliest days, Canberra has been a multicultural city where people from many different countries and cultures, and from different religious beliefs, are united and strengthened by the place we all call home.

Then there are the thousands of public servants and young families who came from Melbourne in the 60s and 70s to carve out a new life, in new suburbs in a growing city. They are the people that lived in our new suburbs, worked in new local shops, and sent their children to Canberra's newest schools.

It was a time when we saw Canberra gain recognition, both nationally and internationally, as a university city and a city which demonstrated leadership in scientific endeavours. CSIRO, whose beginnings stretch back to our earliest years—founded in 1926—and the John Curtin School of Medical Research, founded in 1948, expanded in the second half of our first century to be among the world's great scientific research organisations.

Our own ANU Mt Stromlo Observatory saw us play a key role in one of the world's most significant historical events—like in June 1969 when our own Honeysuckle Creek Tracking Station provided the world with those first grainy pictures of the Apollo 11 moon walk. It was a proud moment for this city and our scientific community, and one which represents how much we have achieved and hints at what else is yet to be in our next 100 years.

Our 80s and 90s saw the economy turn, with many doing it tough as our reliance on the public sector became all too evident. But we recovered as a city and new opportunities were pursued.

It is also important to acknowledge that some of the greatest difficulties we faced as a community came just a decade ago when a firestorm tore through the forests and grasslands right into our south-western suburbs. The forces of nature on that day caused unprecedented damage. Four people lost their lives and hundreds of properties were lost. This year, we remember those who suffered and lost so much. We also pay tribute to the many charities, businesses, community services and clubs, and the many, many individuals, who helped to get this city back on its feet.

Today there are tens of thousands of people who contribute to our ever-evolving identity, who keep our city running, who give so freely of their time to help others, and who help build better neighbourhoods. These are the Canberrans, past and present, who have left, and will continue to leave, a lasting legacy for our city—our teachers and childcare workers who provide care and guidance for those who will be the future of Canberra; our doctors and nurses who go about their important work quietly in our hospitals and in our suburbs; our police and emergency services personnel, ambulance officers, firefighters, urban and rural, and our wonderful state emergency service volunteers who are always there when the going gets tough; our many charity workers who are there 24/7 to make sure our community's most needy citizens are fed and the homeless get a roof over their heads; the mums and dads who help out at junior sport, pitching in to run school canteens, provide a helping hand to visitors at Floriade and walk the streets doorknocking for charity like the Salvos Red Shield Appeal; the writers, sculptors, artists and performers; and, similarly, our sporting men and women, who represent us in every sporting code, who helped define our cultural identity. These are all the people that make a great city our capital but also the place we call home.

A 100th birthday for a city is a very young birthday indeed, and any celebration of our past requires us to do what the community leaders did 100 years ago when they laid the foundation stones. They looked forward. Today, 100 years on, we must do the same. The foundations of our city are strong. We are a city which will continue to lead the world in research and be a world-class centre of learning, research, innovation and enterprise—a city which is at the heart and centre of its region, a growing city which is not yet fully built. And it is this city, once the home of a transient population, which has become the place we are proud to call our home.

As we close the book on our city's first 100 years and acknowledge how far we have come, I have no doubt that our second century will be as good as our first.

Madam Acting Speaker, we are proud of our nation's capital. We are proud of our home. We are proud of what has been achieved in our first 100 years and we are excited about our next. Today we pay our respects to the federal capital city of Canberra. We pledge to work for a sustainable and peaceful future.

To the men and women, past and present, who have played their part in the beautiful city spread out before us, we thank you. And to those who will, in the centuries ahead, make their own contributions to Canberra's ongoing story, we wish you well.

Visitors

MADAM ACTING SPEAKER: Before I call the Leader of the Opposition, I would like to welcome some people to the gallery: former Chief Minister Rosemary Follett; former Speaker Greg Cornwell; former ministers John Hargreaves, Michael Moore, Bill Stefaniak and Bill Wood; former leader of the opposition Andrew Whitecross; and former members Amanda Bresnan, Roslyn Dundas, Meredith Hunter, Caroline Le Couteur, Louise Littlewood, Karin MacDonald, Robyn Nolan, and Lou Westende.

Canberra—centenary

Debate resumed.

MR HANSON (Molonglo—Leader of the Opposition) (10.13): It is my great pleasure to stand in this place today as few topics could give me as much pride as to speak to the motion celebrating the centenary of our great city. I thank the Chief Minister for bringing this motion before the Assembly today. Although it is normally a place known for its combative debate and its disagreement, there is no doubt in my mind that, whether you sit on the government benches or on the opposition benches, we are all united by our love of this great city, and this is one debate we can all agree on.

To the naysayers, I would like to quote the Chief Minister, who said last week in response to those people who knock Canberra, "Whatever." Now, Chief Minister, it was not perhaps your most eloquent quote, but after 100 years it is time for us Canberrans to stand up for our city and not to care unduly what those who do not live here and do not understand us have to say about this great place.

We have our own history; we have our own culture; we have our own character. And it is special and it is unique. Yes, we are a planned city and, yes, at 100 we are relatively young. But in that time we have also created our own identity. We have been forged by fire and by flood, and we truly are a bush capital.

Canberra is special because it is our national capital, and that is why we are recognising our centenary today. But the place we know as Canberra was also an important location before 1913 and has been populated for thousands of years, and I would like to recognise the traditional owners of these lands and their successors.

Our great city was sprung from an idea arising from debates of federation. It was established and enshrined in our constitution and grown on the hard work, endless toil and sometimes sheer inspiration of those who saw a stretch of Australian bush and imagined a city for the future—who built it, grew it and willed it into being. Today we live in the spoils of that foresight, and we are privileged to stand in this place to

represent the citizens of our city, knowing full well the responsibility we bear to ensure those initial dreams are grown for the next hundred years and beyond.

Canberra is a city born not from commercial necessity but a constitutional imperative. Section 125 of the commonwealth constitution states:

The seat of Government of the Commonwealth shall be determined by the Parliament, and shall be within territory which shall have been granted to or acquired by the Commonwealth, and shall be vested in and belong to the Commonwealth, and shall be in the State of New South Wales, and be distant not less than one hundred miles from Sydney.

This section specifies just what a unique place Canberra has in the history of our nation. Being the seat of our national government is our reason for being; it is what gives Canberra so much in terms of economic wealth and diversity. It is a great asset, but it can also cause us to lose our own identity as a city.

The national debates and the focus on the big house on the hill tend to characterise the view the nation has of us as well as the view we sometimes have of ourselves. As a result, our identity and, to an extent, our history have become intertwined with that of the national identity. Images like that of Gough Whitlam on the steps of Old Parliament House in 1975 are seared into the psyche of this nation. They are both a national but also Canberran image. The opening of new Parliament House created a new national landmark as recognisable as any in Australia but which is completely Canberran.

The other great national institutions that shape our skyline also mark what a special place Canberra is—the home to the national art collection, the National Archives, the Museum of Australia and the High Court. Each plays its own special part in the story of the city and in the history of our country.

Canberra is home to one institution that serves a specific symbolic role that also deserves a special place of reverence—that is the Australian War Memorial. The War Memorial is an institution that has spoken directly to thousands of visitors over many generations, and I can think of no better place to honour those who have paid the ultimate price in the service of our nation than at the very apex of the national capital's design.

The vista over Canberra from Mount Ainslie or the view of the lake on a clear autumn morning with the leaves a golden brown and the balloons floating aloft is as memorable as any in Australia. But Canberra is not just the place of parliaments or the host to major monuments; it is also the home for a community. Some of the more interesting reading on the history of Canberra comes from smaller publishers who tell the tales not just of the rise of the great institutions, the deliberations of the High Court or the rise and fall of governments but of the lives and roles of the first settlers, the families that followed and the community that grew up between them. Stories about the first public servants and those who built their houses, taught their children, fixed their cars and turned an idea into a city and a city into a community.

I have on my bookshelf in my office a small book called *Downer@50: the suburb and community, past and present*. It is compiled by members of the Downer Community Association and is full of pictures and stories of ordinary parks, schools and houses, pictures of the original fields before the houses were built, of the Downer Primary class 6F from 1977, of a spring fete, of a community growing. All over Canberra there are similar communities with thousands of stories which will never make the annals of history but which are equally important in the growth of our city.

It was the constant growth of our city that led us to take the steps to self-government, of standing on our own two feet, no longer cosseted by the commonwealth but independent, proud and able to determine our own development. There is no doubt that that was an interesting time in our growth. A sizable portion of the first Assembly was made up of no self-government representatives—I am not sure if we have any here today; I think not—who realised with a shock that running on a platform of no self-government might actually result in that member being elected to parliament.

I recognise those in the gallery today who have formed part of this Assembly and who have made it what it is. We are the beneficiaries of your hard work and I thank you. It is great to see three members of my own class of 2008 here again today as well.

I would also like to acknowledge the Mayor of Queanbeyan, Mr Tim Overall. Our relationship with Queanbeyan and our local area has played an important part in our growth as a city and it will continue to do so. It is wonderful to see you here now.

We have now become a mature democracy with an Assembly able to tackle the big issues of the day without losing sight of the small matters that mean so much to our fellow citizens. On this day, it is also time to look to the future—to take the next steps along the path, and to make Canberra as great in the next century as it has been in the last.

We in this place now and those who follow have an important role in shaping what that future will look like. It is a weighty responsibility, and as we engage in the various debates about our future, let us ensure it is with a mind to keeping the Assembly focused on the needs of those who live in this city and not necessarily be distracted by ideological crusades that may not serve the interests of the broader community.

As we build this city and shape its growth, let us make sure we stay as just as focused on our local streets and local parks which to thousands of Canberrans are just as important as some of our grander infrastructure, like arboretums and stadiums. Let us endeavour to maintain the nature of our bush capital and, as we grow, be sure to retain the sense that we are both a city in our amenity but a big country town in our character.

This year has been promoted as one very big year, and, indeed it is. It marks the anniversary of a very big day that occurred 100 years ago. The famous King O'Malley wrote of the significance of those events:

Such an opportunity as this, the Commonwealth selecting a site for its national city in almost virgin country, comes to few nations, and it comes but once in a history.

King O'Malley was right—the birth of a city and a national capital comes but once in history, but it is equally true that this day, our centennial day, also comes but once, and it is a great honour for all of us to play our part in this celebration.

A century is a significant milestone. A century as the national capital in a country that is just over two centuries old is particularly significant. My colleagues and I have attended many of the functions and ceremonies that have marked this momentous year, and I would like to take a moment to recognise and thank just some of those who have made such a significant contribution to this very special celebration: the Centenary of Canberra Patron, Sir William Deane; the staff of culture and communications in the Chief Minister's office; the creative director, Robyn Archer; and all of the sponsors, the staff, the volunteers, the performers and the artists who have worked to make this a special celebration.

There is much to celebrate in our centenary year. The big yellow book that we have all received copies of titled *One Big Year* outlines many of the events that have already occurred or are occurring in our city in coming months, and in many ways it is a celebration of who we are as a people. There are events that celebrate our cultural diversity, made even richer by our friends from international embassies; events that celebrate our diverse cultural interests, with everything from symphonies to Summernats. Our sporting enthusiasms that are a big part of our way of life are being acknowledged. We had our first one-day international under lights, which was a great event. And the government even managed to highlight Canberrans' passion for parking at the same event.

Many if not all of the events rely on volunteers in some way, and it is worth noting that when it comes to helping each other out by supporting local volunteer organisations, Canberrans are some of the most generous people in the world. From local sporting teams, charities, service clubs, emergency services, arts and crafts, meals on wheels, just about every endeavour, you will find a Canberran giving their time in the service of others.

Madam Acting Speaker, Canberra is unique. It was created in a unique way, built in a unique way, and continues to be an absolutely unique city to this day. The very nature of building a city from scratch, from the designs and plans of a singular team with a single vision, is unusual and extraordinarily bold. That it was so successfully carried out, even with the changes and the challenges that modern cityscaping brings, is a testament to those who built the city and a joy to those who live in it. We owe much to Walter Burley Griffin and his great plan for our city and to those who have implemented his plan.

Today, as we reflect on our centenary, we can look back to the successes of the past and use them to create a better future. And it gives us—all of us—the privilege of serving in this Assembly to make the great city of Canberra an even greater city for Australia. That is why the Canberra Liberals proudly support this motion.

Visitors

MADAM ACTING SPEAKER: Before I call the leader of the Greens, Mr Rattenbury, I acknowledge the presence in the gallery of a number of distinguished guests, including Mayor Rowena Abbey from the Yass Valley Council and Mayor Tim Overall from the Queanbeyan City Council. I also acknowledge a former member of the House of Assembly, Ken Doyle. On behalf of all members I welcome you here today.

Lastly, I pass on an apology from the patron of the 2013 centenary celebrations, Sir William Deane. He obviously wishes he could be with us today as well.

Canberra—centenary

Debate resumed.

MR RATTENBURY (Molonglo) (10.26): It is with great pleasure that I rise today to support this motion and to wish Canberra, and the people of Canberra, a happy 100th birthday. We have all enjoyed and been buoyed by the celebrations and special events to mark the centenary. I offer my congratulations to the organisers right across the government and the community who I know have worked very hard to deliver successful events and who I know will continue to work hard during the rest of this centenary year 2013.

In celebrating Canberra's 100th birthday, I want to first pause and reflect on the people who lived here before us—the Indigenous communities that lived on and from this land for thousands of years before white man stepped foot on this continent, let alone this region. In the past 100 years, we have built much and come far. But in the thousands of years before us, Indigenous peoples nurtured and protected this land, impacted lightly on its waterways and grasslands, took gently what they needed from its landscapes, and left native flora and fauna intact. I would like to thank them for the contribution they make to the history of this place, a history that goes back much further than our relatively short history of 100 years.

Building a brand new city on the limestone plains has inevitably had a significant impact on the natural environment. As the city has expanded, there is no doubt that getting the balance between development and environment has been challenging. This year we are celebrating 100 years of this city. A hundred years ago, Canberra was named as the place that would house the centre of governance for the new federation. Bound up with our identity is that Canberra was established as the home of the federal parliament, and the home away from home for our country's politicians.

In an egalitarian culture such as ours, no-one is afraid to take a pot shot at our national and local leaders and politicians. So Canberra, of course, gets its fair share of animosity, mostly directed towards a parliament that represents all of Australia and a group of people who return to the corners of Australia when the parliament is not sitting.

We wear the criticisms of our city with a mixture of frustration and, sometimes, defensive pride—frustration because we see that much of the criticism is misdirected and a little unfair, or is delivered by commentators who have only ever visited our city to engage with the federal parliament, or perhaps not even visited at all. Pride, because we know that, in spite of what people say, living in this city brings joy to our lives in many different and varied ways, and even if others cannot see that until they rest here long enough to experience it, there is something about living here that gets under your skin. It is that something that often keeps people here if they have moved from other places. More and more, it is the definition of home that those born here carry with them as they travel further afield.

I suspect that in another hundred years we will not feel the need to defend our city and speak so passionately about its attributes. Those attributes will shine ever more brightly, and the pride we have in our city will be more readily understood by those from other places. We Canberrans love this city for its big blue sky and for the clean air. We love it for the native bush landscape and the abundance of urban parks. We love it, in spite of our sometimes frequent complaints, for its ease of living, access to schools and services, the ability to get across town relatively easily and its urban amenity.

We love it for its emerging culture and entertainment. Restaurants abound; coffee shops are increasingly prolific; we have a rich and varied music scene, from classical to alternative and folk and jazz. We have dancers of all genres, and plenty of local and imported theatre. We love this city for its sporting and recreational opportunities. Canberra is a place that inspires health and activity, with our parks, our bike paths, and our lakes, as well as our proximity to the beach, snowfields and many national parks. We share the highs and lows of our sporting teams and athletes, especially those competing on the national and international arena.

We love it simply because it is our home, where we build our memories of good times with family and friends, of picnics and birthday parties on the side of the lake, events at the botanic gardens, running into neighbours at the local shops, riding through our forests, or playing sport on a Saturday morning. The Canberra that the people of this town are celebrating is the Canberra that we live in, not just the Canberra that is graced with national institutions and home to the federal parliament, though we know and understand that these things form an important part of our identity also.

Indeed, many of us love Canberra because we have so much immediate access to the wonderful national institutions that are here: the National Gallery, the National Library, Questacon, the National Museum and the War Memorial, to name but a few. Many of us work for the federal public service. This forms a unique part of our economy as well as a reason for many people to come here in the first place. But while employment is important, it is not the only reason people stay here. They stay because Canberra is a great city to live in.

At the heart of any great city are its people. Canberra is full of groups and individuals who have contributed their time and energy to building not just the physical environment, but also the cultural and social environment that we enjoy today. There

are community groups, music and theatre and other arts groups, environment groups and friends of our grasslands and nature reserves, disability support and advocacy groups, Indigenous groups and church groups, and so many more that simply there is not time to list.

We are people with diverse interests and skills, but with a shared motivation of contributing to a Canberra that is socially just, culturally interesting and environmentally sustainable. Collectively, the volunteer effort put into the development of our city is impossible to measure, but as we acknowledge the prominent moments in our history, we should also acknowledge the smaller, less obvious moments that have come about because of the efforts of thousands of Canberrans every year.

People have come to this city from all over the world, bringing with them rich and diverse cultural histories that contribute to the development and evolution of Canberra over the years. The 2011 census showed that close to 30 per cent of Canberra's population were born overseas. In the 1950s and 60s Canberra had a big wave of post-war migrants from Europe: Germans, Italians, Greeks, and the Balkan states.

The close proximity of the Snowy hydro scheme also brought to us highly skilled European workers who migrated to work on the massive project and then moved to Canberra when that project finished. Perhaps the largest notable wave of non-British migrants to Canberra is the Greeks, who were an integral part of establishing our now flourishing commercial centres. There are many third generation Canberrans of Greek origin who now who run the same supermarkets, cafes and shopping centres as their grandparents did.

Since then, we have been the new home for Vietnamese refugees in the 1970s and Lebanese refugees in the 1980s. We continue to be a city that welcomes refugees from countries around the world, including Kosovo, Iraq, Sudan, Afghanistan and Sri Lanka. The cultural diversity that these people have brought to our city is something that we treasure, as they help us build a more interesting and tolerant society.

Canberra is also unique in that we are home to the Australian diplomatic community, who have made numerous significant contributions to the development of the city's culture, bringing, among other things, wonderful cultural events and inspiring speakers from around the world. They add to the sense that Canberra is a city that is connected to the world.

Looking back we can see milestones of achievement and see how far we have come. But the development of Canberra is a journey that is far from over. In 1914 we saw the construction of the first railway line between Kingston and Queanbeyan, our very good neighbours who also this year are celebrating with their 175th birthday. In 2014 we will hopefully see the start of construction on the new light rail project from Civic to Gungahlin. I would like to think that by 2113 we will have an entire network of light rail covering Canberra from one end to the other—fast, efficient, clean and setting us well as a city to get around.

In 1927 we saw the opening of a cinema in Manuka. In 2013 we have seen the opening of another in New Acton. Cafes, restaurants and bars spring up regularly across the city, and our diverse community continues to expand their entertainment options. Live music can be found in some of the most unthought-of places. I would hope to see a Canberra in 100 years that has vibrant local communities flourishing around local shopping centres—not just retail spaces, but meeting places, places where local neighbourhoods come together to celebrate. I think that the parties at the shops that were held last week in Canberra give some indication of the desire people have to engage locally and to share good times with their local community.

In his design for Canberra in 1911, Walter Burley Griffin embedded the natural landscape into his vision for the city—the bush covered hills of Mt Ainslie and Black Mountain. Today, our urban development is encroaching on our bush boundaries in Gungahlin and Molonglo. In another hundred years I would hope that we have well and truly halted the spread of our urban footprint before we put at further risk the biodiversity values of our region.

It does seem unlikely that most of us will be here in another hundred years. But we are here today because we love this city, and we have some sense of the kind of city we want it to be. I am not one for living in the past. I do not believe that this city should be what it was in the 1970s or 80s. I believe this city still has a way to go. My vision is for a well-connected, environmentally sustainable, socially just and, yes, progressive city that we are all proud of.

This year is a wonderful opportunity to reflect on our past and our achievements in reaching our 100 year milestone. On behalf of the Greens, happy birthday Canberra! We wish you all the best for another 100 years. We hope to be a part of shaping your very promising future.

MS GALLAGHER (Molonglo—Chief Minister, Minister for Regional Development, Minister for Health and Minister for Higher Education) (10.37), in reply: I thank members for their contribution to the debate this morning. In closing the debate, I would like to acknowledge the very significant number of previous MLAs who have attended the ceremony this morning. Your presence here shows your continued commitment to the people of Canberra and to the Legislative Assembly.

I would also like to acknowledge the current members of this place for their ongoing contribution and the work that they do as members of the Assembly, in their electorates and to the city of Canberra.

To finish I go back to where I began by referring to Lord Denman again when he spoke at the laying of the foundation stone in 1913. His words then are as relevant today as they were 100 years ago when we wonder at what Canberra might look like in its bicentenary year.

From the past to the present; now when we look forward from to the present to the future, let us remember Lord Denman's words:

The city that is to be should have a splendid destiny before it, but the making of that destiny lies in your hands, the hands of your children, and those who come after them.

I commend the motion to the Assembly.

Question resolved in the affirmative.

At 10.38 am the sitting was suspended until the ringing of the bells.

The bells having been rung, Mr Assistant Speaker Gentleman took the chair at 11.23 am.

Justice and Community Safety—Standing Committee Scrutiny report 4

MR DOSZPOT (Molonglo): I present the following report:

Justice and Community Safety—Standing Committee (Legislative Scrutiny Role)—Scrutiny Report 4, dated 14 March 2013, together with the relevant minutes of proceedings.

I seek leave to make a brief statement.

Leave granted.

MR DOSZPOT: Scrutiny report 4 contains the committee's comments on one bill, three pieces of subordinate legislation, one government response and proposed government amendments to the Children and Young People Amendment Bill 2012 (No 2). The report was circulated to members when the Assembly was not sitting. I commend the report to the Assembly.

Education, Training and Youth Affairs—Standing Committee Statement by chair

MS PORTER (Ginninderra): Pursuant to standing order 246A, I wish to make a statement on behalf of the Standing Committee on Education, Training and Youth Affairs. Continuing resolution 5A was agreed to by the Legislative Assembly on 23 August 2012. The requirements of the resolution set out a transparency mechanism to promote accountability in the consideration of statutory appointments. The resolution requires relevant standing committees which consider statutory appointments to report on a six-monthly basis and present a schedule listing appointments considered during the applicable period.

The schedule is required to include the statutory appointments considered and, for each appointment, the date the request from the responsible minister for consultation was received and the date the committee's feedback was provided.

For the applicable reporting period, 1 July 2012 to 31 December 2012, the committee considered one statutory appointment, in this case a reappointment of a statutory office holder. The committee has advised the minister it had no comment to make on the reappointment proposed.

I therefore seek leave to table a schedule of statutory appointments for the period 1 July 2012 to 31 December 2012, as considered by the education, training and youth affairs committee for the Eighth Assembly, in accordance with continuing resolution 5A.

Leave granted.

MS PORTER: I table the following paper:

Education, Training and Youth Affairs—Standing Committee—Schedule of statutory appointments—1 July to 31 December 2012.

Legal recognition of sex and gender Paper and statement by minister

MR CORBELL (Molonglo—Attorney-General, Minister for Police and Emergency Services, Minister for Workplace Safety and Industrial Relations and Minister for the Environment and Sustainable Development): For the information of members, I present the following paper:

Beyond the Binary: legal recognition of sex and gender diversity in the ACT—
Report by the ACT Law Reform Advisory Council—Government response.

I ask leave to make a statement in relation to the paper.

Leave granted.

MR CORBELL: Today I am pleased to present the government's response to the ACT Law Reform Advisory Council's report *Beyond the binary: legal recognition of sex and gender diversity in the ACT*.

Sex and gender diverse people in Australia regularly report adverse experiences, sometimes as a result of legal requirements relating to recognition of their sex or gender. For example, individuals often experience discrimination and administrative barriers when applying for legal records or completing documents that require information about sex or gender identity. This can often be a problem when the information is required unnecessarily or in an overly simplistic way.

In the 2011 High Court case of *AB v Western Australia*, the court noted:

For many years the common law struggled with the question of the attribution of gender to persons who believe that they belong to the opposite sex. Many such persons undertake surgical and other procedures to alter their bodies and their physical appearance in order to acquire gender characteristics of the sex which

conforms with their perception of their gender. Self-perception is not the only difficulty with which transsexual persons must contend. They encounter legal and social difficulties, due in part to the official record of their gender at birth being at variance with the gender identity which they have assumed.

In 2003, the government in the ACT undertook a review of “all ACT legislation to identify provisions that discriminate against same-sex couples or against transgender or intersex people”. The government’s report on the audit stated that the review identified legislation that potentially discriminates against gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender and intersex people and which may need amending.

Following this review, in February 2004 the then Assembly passed the Sexuality Discrimination Legislation Amendment Act 2004. The purpose of that act was to remove discrimination relating to sexuality and marital status in 26 separate statutes.

Recognising that further work was necessary to address discrimination against the sex and gender diverse community, in early 2011 I referred the issue of legal recognition of transgender and intersex people in the ACT to the Law Reform Advisory Council for its consideration and report. In particular, I asked the council to inquire into steps necessary to provide for legal recognition with regard to the existing operation of the Births, Deaths and Marriages Registration Act 1997.

Following extensive research and public consultation with the community, the council presented its final report to me in June last year. The significance of the legal recognition for sex and gender diverse people is clearly set out in that report, which states at page 13:

The import of legal recognition is that a person’s stated sex and gender identity is formally recognised by the Territory, and can be relied on by the person as a definitive statement of their sex and gender identity in all circumstances, entitling the person to access services, benefits and treatment in accordance with that sex and gender identity.

The council went on to make 35 recommendations aimed at improving recognition of sex and gender diverse members of our community. In summary, the council recommended that the existing legal framework for the recognition of sex and gender diverse people be updated, the requirement of sexual reassignment surgery to change sex on a birth certificate be removed, data collection systems be reviewed to reflect the existence of intersex people, and information and support services for sex and gender diverse people and their families be improved.

I am pleased to advise the Assembly today that the government is supporting, either in full or in part, 16 of these recommendations. The government is supporting in principle nine recommendations and noting eight, largely due to the need for further policy consideration or assessment as to resource allocation.

The government does not support recommendation 5, which relates to a further audit of ACT laws and practices with the intention of removing whenever possible a requirement that a person identify their sex and gender. In the government’s view, such an audit would be expensive and time consuming. The government believes that

the outcome sought in this recommendation is more effectively achieved through an incremental approach, which is outlined in detail in the government's response.

The government is also not supporting recommendation 28(ii) relating to immunity from liability where, in good faith, a person acting on behalf of a public authority incorrectly records a person's sex. The government notes that the risk of incorrectly recording a person's sex and gender identity is largely mitigated through ensuring robust data collection and maintenance systems and procedures.

Central to legal recognition of a person's sex is the criterion for making a change in a person's sex as registered on their birth certificate. To continue to require an individual to undergo invasive surgery in order to change their sex on the most primary of legal documents is no longer acceptable in a civil society that values human rights.

I referred earlier to the 2011 High Court decision, *AB v Western Australia*, which considered the application of criteria for approving registration of a change of sex. The court found that "gender characteristics" under the Western Australian Gender Reassignment Act 2000 pertained to the physical characteristics by which a person is identified as male or female. It concluded that gender characteristics are confined to external physical features that are socially recognisable.

Within the context of the Western Australian act, the court stated at paragraph 35:

The question whether a person is identified as male or female, by reference to the person's physical characteristics, is intended by the act to be largely one of social recognition. It is not intended to require an evaluation of how much of a person's body remains male or female.

The court held that the act directs the decision maker to:

... the question of how other members of society would perceive the person, in their day-to-day lives. Such a recognition does not require knowledge of a person's remnant sexual organs.

Currently, a person in the ACT may only change their registered sex after sexual reassignment surgery. This surgery is invasive and expensive, and may not be available or desirable for all people seeking to change their sex.

The government responded to the report with significant consideration of the High Court judgement and the implications of this on the legislated requirement of sexual reassignment surgery in the territory. The government therefore supports the abolition of sexual reassignment surgery as a requirement for eligibility to change sex on a birth certificate, and will develop new criteria that will be consistent with the High Court's decision in *AB v Western Australia*.

The government also supports the expansion of options for notification of the sex of a child born in the ACT to include the categories "female", "male", "intersex", "to be advised" or "indeterminate". Consistent with current practice, the government

proposes that the “indeterminate” category will only be used in the case of the birth of a premature stillborn child where the sex is not determinable. For registration of sex, the available categories will be expanded to include the category “intersex”.

The report highlighted the difficulty of strict time limits for parents who have an intersex child, especially where decisions about possible medical treatment must be made. The government supports the report’s recommendation to increase the period allowed in which parents must register the sex of a child from 60 to 180 days. This will assist parents by providing them with sufficient time to consider the complex issues arising from the birth of an intersex child and to make any necessary decisions.

The ACT Health Directorate already provides comprehensive support for parents of intersex children in these situations. The additional time proposed for registration will ensure that families can receive the full benefits of this support and not be rushed into making decisions without adequate time for consideration.

To uphold the integrity of the existing privacy protections, the government supports those recommendations aimed at ensuring that adequate measures remain in place in relation to access to information on the births, deaths and marriages register.

The council also considered in its report the legal protection for sex and gender diverse people currently provided for in the Discrimination Act 1991 and recommended amendments to that act that would change terminology and expand protected attributes to cover characteristics such as intersex, a person who is in transition from one sex to another, and physical presentation. As the council’s current reference is to review the Discrimination Act, the government notes these recommendations until it receives the council’s final report on its review of the Discrimination Act.

The council also found that appropriate legal recognition is hindered by the lack of consistency in the use of terminology in the ACT relating to sex and gender diverse people. As a result, the council made recommendations about amending terminology to promote clarity and accuracy in legislative references to sex and gender diversity.

The government generally supports these recommendations and acknowledges that referring to sex and gender diverse people in an appropriate and respectful way is a necessary step in remedying other gaps in legal recognition. However, this will necessarily be an incremental process achieved through legislative amendment and promotion of the use of consistent and clearly defined terminology across government.

In line with the recommendations, the use of specific terminology will also be considered in terms of its applicability and appropriateness for data collection by ACT public authorities. As the implementation of the government response progresses, the government will be considering practices of data collection by public authorities and how these can be improved to better recognise sex and gender diverse people respectfully. The report notes:

There are no nationally consistent procedures to assist transgender, transsexual or intersex people who wish to change the record of their sex in official documents such as birth certificates, medical records, bank statements or employment records.

Access to accurate documents of identification for sex and gender diverse people is a central concern of the report and will be a focus for the government as implementation progresses. There may also be circumstances where it is not necessary for a person to disclose their sex and gender identity or where a person chooses not to identify their sex and gender identity.

The government supports in principle recommendations about including “intersex” and “none of the above” as options for identification on data collection forms. The government also acknowledges that it is not always necessary to collect information about sex and gender identity and this will be considered as public authorities review their data collection systems.

However, the government is also conscious of the need to ensure the integrity and security of record-keeping systems and other systems. As the council acknowledged in its report, there are occasions where it is necessary to know a person’s sex and gender identity, such as in the provision of certain emergency, health and education services. Therefore it is important that accurate records are maintained and that sex is recorded for the purposes mentioned, as long as the person knows what has been recorded, that it is an accurate record and that it can be amended. The report captures this balance. The report said:

At the heart of the issue is the extent to which the person applying to change the record of their sex and gender identity has to offer some guarantee or level of comfort that their change of sex and gender identity is genuine and is being recorded in good faith.

The government will be looking at ways to balance a robust data collection system with the need to respect a person’s sex and gender identity.

Improving recognition for sex and gender diverse people will require a multi-pronged approach through amending legislation, ensuring the implementation of appropriate practices and the reviewing of procedural structures.

It is important to use this opportunity to promote improved recognition and equality for sex and gender diverse people through increasing awareness, understanding and respect for people of all sex and gender identities in the community. The report notes:

Law reform is a significant part of achieving attitudinal change, giving a signal to the community about the general policy direction. Real change requires leadership and education to promote public acceptance [of] the intention behind the law.

The government wants to reduce the negative stigma faced by sex and gender diverse people and provide them with equal recognition before the law. A significant amount of work across government will be required to give effect to the government’s response and to ensure that meaningful and effective measures are implemented.

Improving legal recognition is not a one-step process, and continued work will be required to achieve a robust and full evaluation of the processes currently in effect in

the territory. I anticipate that the initial steps, in the form of legislative change to the relevant acts, including the Births, Deaths and Marriages Registration Act, will take place this year.

Social inclusion and the development of strong, diverse communities are key priorities of this government. The territory is proudly a human rights jurisdiction, and the government is committed to strengthening human rights protections for all in the community, but most especially for those most at risk of discrimination and stigma.

The preamble of the Human Rights Act 2004 states:

Human rights are necessary for individuals to live lives of dignity and value.

The act also protects the rights of each person in the ACT to equality before the law and freedom from discrimination. Legal recognition of sex and gender diverse people in the ACT will support this fundamental human right. I commend the Law Reform Advisory Council's report to the Assembly, along with the government's response.

Leave of absence

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

That leave of absence for this sitting week be granted to Mr Coe, for personal reasons, and for Mrs Dunne, who is attending a CPA meeting overseas.

Women—~~independence~~ and financial security **Ministerial statement**

MS BURCH (Brindabella—Minister for Education and Training, Minister for Disability, Children and Young People, Minister for the Arts, Minister for Women, Minister for Multicultural Affairs and Minister for Racing and Gaming) (11.44), by leave: Over the last two years as Minister for Women I have provided a statement on ACT women's economic and financial progress to the Assembly. Economic empowerment is an important measure in the pursuit of gender equality, and this is why I wish to continue to update the Assembly on the progress this government is making to support women's economic and financial independence.

Our government is committed to embedding an understanding of the different needs of women into policy and practice as a mechanism for improving gender equity. Canberra women contribute a lot to our community. According to the 2011 census women in the ACT make up just over half of the population, with one in four born overseas and one in five speaking a language other than English.

We are an ageing population. Over 10 per cent of the female population in the ACT is aged 65 and over, and the median age of ACT women has increased significantly over the past 20 years from 29.9 years in 1991 to 35.4 years in 2011.

Women in the ACT have a high level of workforce participation. As at November of last year, 64 per cent of women were participating in the workforce compared to the

national average of 58 per cent. The unemployment rate of women in the ACT sat at 3.7 per cent, below the national average of 4.9 per cent. Although ACT women generally do well in some areas of work such as work participation levels and fare better than the national average, we know this is not true for all ACT women. Factors such as risk of homelessness, experience of violence, barriers to education and employment can have a significantly negative impact on women's health and wellbeing and economic security.

To progress women's economic and financial empowerment, this government has put in place a number of successful gender responsive strategies. These include the return to work grants program which commenced in 2008 and which has assisted over 600 women entering or re-entering the workforce following caring responsibilities. The program provides women with financial assistance for education and training fees, transport, work-related expenses such as clothing, uniform and equipment and child care.

It is always heartening to hear how return to work grants have made a difference to a woman's life. For example, a single mother of three children, including one child with a disability, applied for a return to work grant in 2011. Her goal was to improve her self-confidence and her annual income. She received a \$1,000 return to work grant to assist her to complete her IT degree. Her income has increased from \$17,000 per annum to \$120,000 per annum. She told the Women's Information and Referral Centre that this relatively small sum of money went a long way to making her study easier to complete but that the support and encouragement was worth 100 times more than the money. She is now saving a deposit for a new home—the first stable home since her divorce six years ago.

There is also the ACT women's microcredit program, brilliant ideas. It was established in March of 2010 and has supported over 33 women with low incomes to either establish or further develop an existing business through no-interest loans and access to mentoring, training and networking opportunities. A number of women have now fully paid back their loans. The success of brilliant ideas is illustrated by the recognition of five women who participated in the program and were finalists at the Canberra's business point awards in 2011 and 2012. Three women took out awards in their categories, and I am pleased to hear that two brilliant ideas fashion designers are looking to break into the overseas market. These women have gained the confidence to expand their horizons by working with the team at Lighthouse on building stronger financial management skills.

The Women's Information and Referral Centre supports groups and courses and information sessions. It opened its doors in 1978 and has provided confidential and often free advice, information and direction to countless women and their families in the ACT and from the surrounding regions. One of the main services provided by the centre is the facilitation of gender responsive courses, information sessions, support groups, training programs and workshops. Many of these focus on personal and professional development with an overarching aim of supporting women to either return to or enter the workforce. For example, women can attend financial Fridays for Women, the five secrets of self-confidence, self-esteem and assertiveness for women, and getting back to work for women.

The centre produces a biannual calendar booklet called *What's on for women*, and this 60-page booklet provides comprehensive information about all the services delivered by the centre as well as details about community and other government assistance programs such as ACT Health's childbirth and parent support services. *What's on for women* is widely distributed throughout the ACT to schools, community groups, hospitals, ACT libraries and many other avenues. I hope you received your copy, Mrs Jones.

Mrs Jones: Thank you.

MS BURCH: That is good to hear. There is also the multicultural employability participation program. This is a tailored employability program particularly for culturally and linguistically diverse refugee and migrant women. It provides women with mentors and skill development and empowers them to find their voice in order to seek employment or to start their own business. These women can experience double barriers to gaining entry into the workforce because of their gender and cultural backgrounds.

In December of 2011 I was very pleased to be able to present 17 certificates to the first graduates of the program. Through the program one woman has rediscovered her passion for painting and designed the certificates I gave out on the day. Working with her mentor, she has held an art exhibition and now shares her passion by teaching art to young children. The positive social and financial impacts for women who have participated in the program are significant and ongoing, and I want to thank the crew at the women's multicultural advocacy group for the great work they do.

In addition, the ACT government has supported social enterprises for women, including White Nile Catering, a local catering company owned by Sudanese women, and No Sweat Fashions, which, again, is another social enterprise supporting migrant and refugee women to market their skills and experience as sample makers, tailors and machinists.

These initiatives are about supporting women to access paid work. This is crucial for women to ensure their own financial security, to contribute to the family budget and to secure their economic future into retirement.

In the coming months, the Office for Women will roll out a women's financial literacy program. Financial literacy is about understanding money and finances and being able to confidently apply that knowledge to make effective decisions. Research tells us that women are less likely to be financially secure in their retirement and are less confident in planning for the future. We also know that financial independence can be one of the key ways to help women escape from violent relationships. The majority of Canberrans that experience financial hardships are women, and the government provides a range of concessions to improve the affordability of essential services, including taxis, spectacles and utilities, for low income earners and people experiencing disadvantage.

The gender pay gap is a good indicator of how women continue to be disadvantaged financially in our society. In the ACT we continue to have a relatively low gender pay gap, with men on average earning 12 per cent more than women compared with a national average of 17.4 per cent. In the ACT government, nearly 65 per cent of employees are women, and this number significantly increases in the health and education directorates, where female employees comprise over 76 per cent of the workforce.

If we are to attract and retain women in the ACT public service we need to listen to their views. The Community and Public Service Sector Union's—the CPSU—annual what women want survey provides useful information on women's experience in the ACT public service. In 2012 flexibility emerged as the key issue, with the majority of survey respondents placing importance on access to leave and flexible working hours regardless of their caring or other responsibilities.

This ACT government has in place initiatives to support flexible work arrangements. These not only meet the work-life balance needs of employees but also provide opportunities to reorganise and reinvigorate the work environment, improve morale, and develop staff and broader career options. Facilities and conditions to support staff with family responsibilities include access to dedicated carers rooms, nursing mothers rooms and 18 weeks paid maternity leave. Work-life balance includes flexible hours, home-based work and access to grandparental leave and part-time work.

The ACT government is also working on breaking down the gender divide across industries, because by limiting one profession as “men's work” and another as “women's work” we exclude half the talent pool. For example, we know women are underrepresented in the building and construction industry and overrepresented in health, education and community services. Attracting more women into building and construction and the trades would open up often well-paid employment opportunities and benefit our whole economy. This is why I am proud to have initiated and launched the ACT government's women in construction project last year. This project will highlight and promote women working in the construction industry.

The project brings together a female project manager and a female architect and will be an opportunity for tradeswomen and women working in the industry to meet and support one another and to form networks. Located on site at an existing ACT Housing property in Richardson that has recently become vacant, this property has been identified for development as part of our normal renewal of social housing stock. I am informed that the final development application has been submitted for the project, and the closing date for subcontractors to express their interest in tender is Thursday, 28 March, which is next week.

In addition to this project, the ACT Building and Construction Industry Training Fund Authority encourages the entrance of women into the industry through the tradeswomen in building and construction campaign and associated events and activities and financial incentives to employers with female apprentices in non-traditional vocations. The campaign has developed to increase the awareness and participation rates of females in apprenticeships in the building and construction industry.

All of the initiatives and policies I have just outlined go to the heart of the government's vision and agenda for gender equity that is contained in the 2010-15 ACT women's plan that was launched three years ago. A progress report on the ACT women's plan is due to be released shortly. It will provide evidence against the indicators of progress across the economic, social and environmental areas outlined in the women's plan. The report will include enhanced sex disaggregated data, which will help us build a clearer picture of progress towards equity and participation for women and girls and meeting their needs, as well as informing policy formulation and implementation. I am confident the ACT government's efforts to enhance the availability of sex disaggregated data will assist to better inform future policy and planning in the ACT and lead to better outcomes for women and girls.

Finally, I take the opportunity to speak about the importance of International Women's Day and how we continue to celebrate its significance here in the ACT. On 8 March I honoured the ACT Women's Service Network with a special 2013 International Women's Day Canberra centenary tribute—a painting by local Aboriginal woman Belinda Nelson McDowell replicating the red cover of the ACT women's plan. I am not quite sure how the multiple members of the Women's Service Network will share one such painting, but I imagine they will have many an interesting discussion and that it will move around that network very nicely. For over 20 years the network has provided expertise and skills ensuring women's services are delivered effectively and meet the needs of the most vulnerable women in our community.

I also hosted a cocktail function and a tour of the *Women in the Making of Canberra* exhibition at the Canberra Museum and Gallery where over 130 men and women came to share a commitment to improving gender equality in our community.

International Women's Day also provided us with an opportunity to acknowledge that a number of issues still need to be addressed. On International Women's Day this year, respected writer and true champion of the Australian feminist movement, Anne Summers, wrote that the number one issue for women in Australia is still, sadly, violence against women. Summers said:

... of the many issues that clamour for our attention, I think on this Women's Day we should be focusing on one that destroys or ruins the lives of so many women around the world: violence against women.

In November 2012 I hosted and participated in the inaugural partners in prevention function. Over 170 business, community and government leaders brainstormed strategies to address violence against women in our community. Building on the work of the partners in prevention function, I recently announced the inaugural violence against women prevention awards. These awards will highlight the work being done in our community to prevent violence against women and to support those who are experiencing violence. These awards will be presented this year as part of the 16 days of activism to stop violence against women commencing on 25 November.

In addition to these awards, I also announced the opening of applications for the inaugural Audrey Fagan violence prevention grants, and these grants provide funding of up to \$15,000 for projects to progress one or more of the objectives in the ACT prevention of violence against women and children strategy.

On occasions such as this there are opportunities to reflect as a society on the work that still needs to be done towards gender equity. It is also an opportunity to celebrate and acknowledge the significant progress that has been made and the people who make these reforms possible. It is a reminder that we all have a role to play in realising this vision—how we raise our children, how we treat our friends, family and colleagues and indeed, how we conduct ourselves on a daily basis here in the Assembly and how we go about our daily lives in society.

On International Women's Day we take the chance to reflect on all women in our community—whether they are in the paid workforce or they are working as stay-at-home mums, whether they are teenaged, middle aged or mature aged, it matters not. We as a community need to have regard and respect for all women in our community.

I table the following paper:

ACT Women's economic and financial progress—Ministerial statement,
19 March 2013.

I move:

That the Assembly takes note of the paper.

MRS JONES (Molonglo) (12.02): I thank the minister for drawing the attention of the Assembly to the state of women's economic independence and financial security in the ACT, especially in light of the recent celebration of International Women's Day for 2013 and in this our centenary year.

Friday, 8 March was International Women's Day, a day for all women, a day to reflect on what is good about our lives and what we can still do as a society to advance the aspirations and needs of women here and abroad.

The first International Women's Day occurred on 19 March 1911, so we are celebrating an event that is over a century old, but we are really celebrating the contribution—and role—of women to the life of humanity since it first began. In so many ways, from the home to the workplace to public life and in the community, women set the agenda; and some are, by their nature, very powerful. Women make many economic and directional decisions about family life, and increasingly, thanks to the work of so many women of goodwill, women in modern Western democracies are taking up the challenge of career and economic advancement.

This year the theme for the day was ending violence against women. UN Women Australia raised significant funds this year for women in Papua New Guinea, in particular supporting the work of their critical services initiative.

The website for UN Women's National Committee Australia states that in the year 2000, 189 nations committed to the millennium development goals, including eradicating extreme hunger and poverty; achieving universal primary education; promoting gender equity and the empowerment of women; reducing child mortality; improving maternal health; combating HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases; ensuring environmental sustainability; and developing a global partnership for development. All eight goals relate to various aspects of women's lives, making women's empowerment a crucial part of success at achieving this change over the next few years.

In my maiden speech in this place I said I was grateful to live in modern Australia—and, let me say, in Canberra above all. Canberra is a very special place for women. I was at a function recently for the opening of the exhibition *Women Who Made Canberra* at the Canberra Museum and Gallery, where Rosemary Follett, our very first Chief Minister, said that Canberra has been good to women. I agree that it has; I have never lived in a city so good to women. I am not saying that there is not any work to do in advancing the women's cause here, but there is a certain freedom experienced by women here in career progression and opportunity that is not experienced by women in very many places around the world or around our nation.

I was very excited to come here and to live in Canberra because I had a feeling it would be a good place for me as well as for my husband and my children. And indeed it is a good place. With 67 per cent of ACT women participating in the workforce, compared to only 58 per cent as the national average, as mentioned by the minister—given this situation, I believe our responsibilities are very great to achieve two aims. Firstly, we must continue to encourage and facilitate the women of Canberra to take up the very many opportunities for work and economic power that we have to offer here. And I believe we also have a responsibility to walk with women in other places, especially in less wealthy nations and less developed countries, so they are able to live freer lives and to have more economic opportunities. This is our responsibility.

Regarding encouraging women in Canberra, I believe that we as a local legislature should turn our minds to improvements that might be able to be made in a couple of areas in which I think we can genuinely improve. I believe we can improve women's access to economic power even as they have their children. In light of this, let me say how disappointed I am that the federal government this year axed the ABS's work, life and family survey. This means that there will be a 13-year gap between the last survey in 2006 and the next survey in 2019. Kylie Higgins, a mother of two in Wanniassa, was quoted as saying that this is a slap in the face to many women who already feel pretty invisible some days.

Women who may feel invisible are faced with challenges such as the high cost of housing in Canberra. Many women here have to make the tough choices around having children. What can we do to continue to see new ways of paying women for work that they are able to do while having children? I believe that there are ways of remunerating women in some more flexible industries on outcomes rather than simply on hours worked. Working nine to five in an office building miles from home, let us

face it, is a male work model. This is a model constructed for men to leave the home and to support a family financially. It has been a hallmark of post-industrialised societies the world over.

However, women have many positive and natural desires to have children, and often to be a close element of raising their own children. I would love to see more opportunities open up, in private industry as well as in public work, for women to be paid on another basis, not simply on the male nine to five model of hours worked. Sophie Mirabella MP, a good woman in our federal parliament, wrote, in her article *Australian women and the glass ceiling*, about the trend towards women taking up part-time employment, suggesting that family-based decision making may very well be a factor for these women.

What industries could create business models based on outcomes? Because mums are very hard workers and there are times when we have to or want to be at home, what work can women do from home, unsupervised and producing outcomes to gain economic power? It is a point to think deeply about. If we created a new economy of mum-friendly work, they would be more able to afford a home, and we would see fewer family breakdowns, more families having their often deeply desired third and fourth babies and fewer crisis pregnancies because they would be more able to afford an expanding family. This would lead to a society of more content mums who will live their daily lives with a greater sense of self-esteem. When mums are happy and have strong senses of self-esteem, children flourish, families do better and the whole society is stronger.

My great-grandmother, Nonna Giovanna, or “Nonna Giovanin”, as we used to call her, which is the Neopolitan word for her name, was very glad when my mother, a first generation migrant, enrolled in university. “Good,” she is said to have said; “Brava. Then you will never have to rely on a man”—in Italian, of course. Now Nonna Giovanin was a woman from a very poor family from Naples who had emigrated to Australia for her final years. She never learned to speak English. She had lived a very tough life. Her husband spent most of his life doing physical labour all over Italy and returning on some weekends from far away. She had to feed and raise the children on the earnings he returned with each trip home. Together Great Nonna and Great Nonno had faced poverty and difficulty. I do not think my great-grandfather considered his life fantastic as a worker, and I think my great-grandmother lived a tough life, but they supported each other in their efforts and raised their five children. I think her comments about my mother’s education were born out of frustrations at the realities of her life, not a life where she was especially victimised or harshly treated by her husband—certainly not—but a life in which neither of them experienced a great deal of opportunity.

My mother said that, growing up here, she was just so grateful for the many opportunities that Australia offered to her. As an Australian today, I thank my grandparents and great-grandparents for all the sufferings they bore and all the hard work to settle in Australia—as so many families in Canberra do today as well. I love this nation, and I love this city, for its goodness to all of us gathered here today. We have so much to be grateful for.

We women of Canberra, and indeed the women of Australia, though not without our troubles, live by comparison a life of great wealth and education compared to the women of the past and many women in poor and less developed parts of the world today. I am often reminding my two eldest children—who are old enough, at five and seven, to listen to such logic—that we are some of the most fortunate people on earth and that as a dual-income Canberra family we must be part of the wealthiest two or three per cent in the world.

I think we should not sit around feeling guilty about our place; we are part of a successful society. We of all people must not see ourselves as victims. Usually for women today, where there is a will there is a way. We really need to take the opportunities before us and grasp them with both hands and be positive about our lives. We can be mothers, carers and women; we can become educated; we can have jobs.

I would like to see a generation of women come up who do define their gender not as a weight but as an opportunity. There is so much we can achieve. Let us do more. I am not a great believer in the glass ceiling, but I do believe there are structural difficulties for women in attaining some roles, and there are still things for us to achieve for the first time. But let us do so full of hope, because my life is so much better than my great-grandmother's, and I feel so grateful to this nation and to our city.

There is still work to be done. We have a woman PM, a woman Governor-General, a woman Chief Minister and a woman Speaker as well as a woman Acting Speaker, and, with four young children, I have been elected here, as has Ms Berry with her two children. This would have to be getting close to a woman's world.

I encourage all women in Canberra to look to the future with hope and to ask not what can society do for me but what can I do for society?

Question resolved in the affirmative.

Crimes Legislation Amendment Bill 2012 (No 2) **Detail stage**

Clause 1.

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

Sitting suspended from 12.13 to 2.30 pm.

Questions without notice **Canberra Hospital—infrastructure planning**

MR HANSON: My question is to the Minister for Health. Minister, you stated in annual reports hearings on Friday and in the media that the \$41 million intended for planning a design for the \$800 million hospital tower block was now in doubt or is

being delayed. Minister, can you outline to the Assembly why you made the decision to delay this planning and possibly the tower block?

MS GALLAGHER: I thank the Leader of the Opposition for the question. I find it a little bit unusual in the sense that he was present in the annual report hearings where we did discuss the nature of the decision that was yet to be taken by government. I pointed out that a decision had not been taken.

The issue facing the government at this point in time, and which indeed is occupying my mind when making the decisions about the next stage of the capital plans in health, is how to deliver the same amount of beds with the money we have available now over the next, say, two to three years. What is the best configuration of that? We have to build a secure mental health unit. We need to expand beds at Calvary. We need to start the work on the new University of Canberra public hospital. The question that I am faced with is: is spending \$41 million on the design of a building actually the best use of taxpayers' money at this point in time or is it better to use that money to, for example, build the secure unit and work on the other expansion of health services and then move to the tower block in a few years time?

That is the decision, and it is a decision that the budget cabinet has not taken at this point, but it will need to be taken in the next month. I explained all of this at annual reports hearings.

MADAM ACTING SPEAKER: Mr Hanson, a supplementary?

MR HANSON: Minister, what research or data has changed or is new that has caused you to reconsider this decision, and when did you make this decision to reconsider the project?

MS GALLAGHER: What has changed has been, I think, understanding over the last four years around the delivery of capital on a brownfield location. We have got a lot better at understanding the impact of construction on a very busy hospital site, and I have to be mindful of that. We have done the cancer centre, the adult mental health unit, the women's and children's hospital and a car park, all at the time that we were expanding facilities on that site. It has presented challenges to us.

The other issue is the capital available to the government, at this point in time and for future health expenditure. We made some very strong commitments about expanding health services in the election campaign, and we will deliver on those, but I think it would be wrong of me to just proceed with the design of this building, and that is spending \$41 million on just the design of this building, at a time when I have more pressing infrastructure needs in health, and that is specifically, at this point in time, the secure mental health unit.

That is the question that I am deliberating on as minister, and when I am looking at the available capital for the health redevelopment, when I am looking at the pressures

on the budget, when I am looking at the other projects that we want to proceed with, and perhaps proceed with more quickly, that has all affected the reconsideration of this project.

MR GENTLEMAN: Supplementary, Madam Acting Speaker.

MADAM ACTING SPEAKER: Supplementary question, Mr Gentleman.

MR GENTLEMAN: Chief Minister, can you tell us how important these decisions on health infrastructure are, especially the mental health secure unit?

Mr Hanson interjecting—

MADAM ACTING SPEAKER: Mr Hanson, you have had your question.

MS GALLAGHER: I thank Mr Gentleman for the question. I think the community expects ministers to consider these matters every year and that is what I am doing.

Mr Smyth: They expect ministers to deliver on time and on budget.

MS GALLAGHER: Mr Smyth, I can tell you that as health minister I have delivered infrastructure—

Mr Smyth interjecting—

MS GALLAGHER: that would rival anything in any other public health system in the country.

MADAM ACTING SPEAKER: Order! Resume your seat, Chief Minister. Stop the clock, please. Mr Smyth, you will have a chance to ask a supplementary in a minute if you wish to. I will hear the answer. I hope that you are listening to the answer as well. Give the minister a chance to be heard. Ms Gallagher.

MS GALLAGHER: Thank you, Madam Acting Speaker. When you look at the investment that this government has made into health infrastructure and that Mr Smyth jokes about over there, when you look at the health infrastructure—

Mr Smyth interjecting—

MADAM ACTING SPEAKER: Mr Smyth!

MS GALLAGHER: and what we achieved to rebuild—

Mr Hanson: Madam Acting Speaker, a point of order on question time. Mr Smyth has made a couple of pretty moderate interjections. It is the form of this place that there will be some engagement from the opposition during question time. The minister is referring to the member, directly referring to comments that he has made. I think it is not unreasonable that there be some level of interjection. If your ruling is

that we must sit here in silence through question time, if that is what you want, could you make that clear so that we do not have any conflict?

MADAM ACTING SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr Hanson. I have said that the minister will be heard in silence. That is just what I have said. Ms Gallagher, you will improve the situation if you do not have a conversation with Mr Smyth and just address all your remarks through the chair. Thank you, Ms Gallagher.

MS GALLAGHER: Thank you, Madam Acting Speaker. The issue that is presented to me, and there is the opportunity to reconsider the allocation of this capital, and I think it is right that I reconsider it, is the available capital to the budget as a whole, the priority we are placing on health and the fact that we have now taken some decisions around the secure unit, which will see that project proceed and the potential to reallocate some funding to that project. That is the decision I am taking. It is responsible and it is looking at the immediate term without taking away from the long-term plans for the redevelopment of the health system which will be delivered over the next eight to 10 years.

MADAM ACTING SPEAKER: A supplementary, Mr Seselja.

MR SESELJA: Minister, does the decision to delay this project have anything to do with the allocation of capital for the light rail project?

MS GALLAGHER: No.

Housing—stamp duty

MR SMYTH: My question is to the Treasurer and is in relation to the ACT Supreme Court's recent ruling on the government's application of stamp duty to its land and house packages under the affordable housing scheme. Minister, how many people could be entitled to a similar stamp duty refund?

MR BARR: I thank the shadow treasurer for the question. At this stage it is difficult to determine an exact figure. It would be a very small number. The particular issues that have been raised in the ACAT hearing and the Supreme Court reflect a set of circumstances that are particularly narrow in their application and reflect upon the interaction of a concessions scheme with interdependent contracts, and clearly are not ones that are usual in the context of the Revenue Office's treatment of stamp duty concessions—and, indeed, the stamp duty scheme more broadly.

I would observe that the Commissioner for Revenue has indicated that he is seeking further advice in relation to this matter. I do not think it is appropriate in this forum to comment on individual cases for taxpayers. But as a broad question I do not believe this has significant implications. It impacts on a very small number, possibly only one or two, although time will tell in relation to that. The important thing from a governance perspective is to ensure that the integrity of both the concessions scheme and the stamp duty scheme more broadly are upheld. The government certainly does not support tax avoidance, nor does it support tax loopholes.

MADAM ACTING SPEAKER: A supplementary, Mr Smyth.

MR SMYTH: Minister, what is the potential impact to the territory's finances should the government decide to refund eligible homebuyers?

MR BARR: Minimal.

MR HANSON: Supplementary.

MADAM ACTING SPEAKER: Yes, Mr Hanson.

MR HANSON: Minister, how was it that conflicting advice was given to eligible concession homebuyers?

MR BARR: The detail that I am aware of in relation to this particular instance that I understand had some airing at the ACAT hearing related to a verbal response to information provided to an officer within the Revenue Office. Looking at the detail of that ACAT matter, members would note that the officer responded to a set of scenarios that were put to the officer and, given that those particular scenarios did not necessarily reflect the interdependency of a particular contract or contracts, I do not believe it is fair to say that contradictory advice was provided.

MADAM ACTING SPEAKER: A supplementary, Dr Bourke.

DR BOURKE: Minister, what has been the level of constituent inquiry regarding this matter to the government?

MR BARR: None that I am aware of.

Children and young people—care and protection

MR SESELJA: My question is to the Minister for Children and Young People. I refer to the Auditor-General's report into Care and Protection Services which found:

There were 573 children and young people in care on the 18 November 2012. The Director General cannot rely on the Directorate's own system to provide accurate information to be able to answer the question for all those in care;
Where are they ...

Minister, why do we have a situation where the director-general of your directorate cannot rely on information about where these children are?

MS BURCH: I do thank Mr Seselja for his interest in these children. This was raised in annual report hearings. I was happy to provide answers there and I am happy to provide answers here. The report did highlight that there were some information gaps in information held within the CHYPS, which is the electronic system held within the department. We also manage a paper-based system.

But what is very clear is that when I put the question to the directorate, the system does know where the children are. Either the director-general, as the territory parent, or the external agencies that are managing the foster care placements do know where the children are. Where the information was not correct would have been a telephone number that was not right. Perhaps a school was not right. Perhaps there was not a current address. It was one element of information. But with a phone call, we certainly knew, and the director-general knew, where the children were. But it does highlight—and I am quite happy to have the conversation—that we need to be forever vigilant in making sure that our information systems are up to date.

The Auditor-General also made comment about the consideration of having those external agencies having direct input of that information that they hold, and they held all correct information. It was just the transfer from those agencies into a file system within the directorate where that information was not current in all its forms. So that is something that the agency is looking at, that the directorate is looking at, to make sure that we have that contemporary information.

But I would give all members here an assurance that we do know where the children are. And it is important that we do.

MADAM ACTING SPEAKER: Mr Seselja, a supplementary.

MR SESELJA: Minister, have these problems been identified before the Auditor-General's report? If yes, why was nothing done about it, and if not, why not?

MS BURCH: I think if you went through any data system, you would find some elements that would need updating. I have no doubt about that. But we have put significant effort into the care and protection system. Everyone in this place is aware of the Public Advocate's report. That was a piece of work that I commissioned about 18 months ago. New members may not be aware that as part of our response to the Public Advocate's report, which we commissioned and asked her to do, it was always agreed at that time that the Auditor-General would also come in and have a look at other elements of the system. And that is the report that was delivered just recently.

We have invested significantly in the care and protection system and have made significant improvements. Part of the response to the Public Advocate's report was to establish a milestone review committee, which has the Public Advocate on it and the Children and Young People Official Visitor, plus an independent member of an audit committee. They produce three-monthly reports. The most recent report shows that the reforms are in place, they are gaining traction and they are heading in the right direction. Even the Auditor-General reflects that and says that once they are completed they will address the issues of concern.

MADAM ACTING SPEAKER: Supplementary, Mr Smyth.

MR SMYTH: Minister, when will the director-general finally be able to provide accurate information about all the young people in your directorate?

MS BURCH: I refer back to the answer to your colleague Mr Seselja. The system knows where the children are. Over 50 per cent of the—

Mr Smyth interjecting—

MADAM ACTING SPEAKER: Mr Smyth, let the minister answer the question, please.

Mr Hanson interjecting—

MS BURCH: It shows your lack of understanding of the complexity of the system when you intervene like that. It is just extraordinary—the non-awareness of those opposite, Madam Acting Speaker. But let us be clear. Over 50 per cent of the placements are in kinship care, and the Auditor-General found no concerns with those records. Of those that were managed through foster care agencies—external agencies, foster care agencies—some of the information, not complete swags of information but small parts of the elements, were not contemporary or up to date.

Mr Smyth interjecting—

MADAM ACTING SPEAKER: Mr Smyth! Sit down, Mr Smyth.

Members interjecting—

MADAM ACTING SPEAKER: Members! Ms Gallagher and Mr Smyth! Mr Smyth!

Mr Smyth: Why pick on me?

MADAM ACTING SPEAKER: Mr Smyth, I have just spoken to Ms Gallagher. Unfortunately, you were speaking over me at the time.

Mr Smyth: She ignores you.

MS BURCH: You are ignoring her now.

Mr Smyth: No; I am having a conversation with her.

MADAM ACTING SPEAKER: I do not wish you to have a conversation with me.

MS BURCH: Why don't you stand?

MADAM ACTING SPEAKER: Or anybody else across the chamber.

Mr Smyth interjecting—

MADAM ACTING SPEAKER: Mr Smyth, I was just about to speak to Ms Gallagher. In fact, I started to speak to Ms Gallagher and then you started speaking

over me. That is why I came back to you. Don't have a conversation with Ms Gallagher while the minister is trying to answer the question. Ms Gallagher, please do not have a conversation across the chamber with Mr Smyth. Ms Burch.

Mr Hanson: Just on your ruling there, Madam Acting Speaker, whilst you were speaking the minister was again interjecting and calling across the chamber. If you are going to be chastising Mr Smyth, and indeed Ms Gallagher, you ought, for consistency, make sure that you are being equitable with your rulings for this side of the chamber and the other.

MADAM ACTING SPEAKER: I will continue to be such. Thank you, Mr Hanson, for your advice. Are you finished, minister?

MS BURCH: I have run out of time.

MADAM ACTING SPEAKER: Yes, you have. Ms Berry on a supplementary.

MS BERRY: Minister, could you inform the Assembly whether or not the government has agreed to, or agreed to in principle, the recommendations of the Auditor-General's report?

MS BURCH: I thank Ms Berry for her interest in this. Indeed, those who have read the Auditor-General's report would see that we have agreed in the main with all the recommendations. There are three where we have agreed in principle. So it is not a matter of not agreeing with the thrust of her recommendations. It was just a mechanism of how we get there and we will continue to invest in the reform.

It is on record in the Auditor-General's report, through the Public Advocate and the milestone review the serious reforms and investment that we have made in care and protection, that they are going in the right direction, and that once implemented and once bedded in they will address the issues raised in the Auditor-General's report.

Children and young people—care and protection

MRS JONES: My question is to the minister for children and young people. For the sake of the whole Assembly, in dealing with these most serious matters, I refer to the Auditor General's report into care and protection services which found:

... some children and young people, after being placed on long term orders, may never be visited by staff from this Branch. Furthermore, there is no policy to guide visitations for monitoring the welfare of children and young people in out-of-home care.

Minister, why do some children and young people, after being placed on long-term orders, seldom or never receive a visit from workers in the care and protection services branch?

MS BURCH: I thank Mrs Jones for her question. This was also explored in the annual reports hearing. I think you may have asked the same question then, Mrs Jones. But for members who have not read the transcript and were not tuned in to the most exciting bit of TV on the day, we do acknowledge that there is no clear policy articulating the absolute necessity for a visit. But let us again be very clear about the process for kids that are placed in care through care and protection. There is an annual review process. So each and every year, every child in care goes through, whether it is through a kinship care placement or a foster-care placement, an annual review of placement. Key considerations are: is their placement sustainable and safe? Are school matters cared for? Are employment or other opportunities cared for? Is there anything that needs to be done on behalf of the territory for the best outcome for that child?

At times, through those review processes, there are ad hoc decisions that will say, "This child's been in a long-term, stable placement." If you run the scenario where you have been in a placement since you were two and you are a 15-year-old and the family is yours—this is no longer in many ways a foster placement; you are a member of that family—a tap on the door from an out-of-home care agency may not be welcome. Again, I take heed of what the Auditor-General has said. So I have asked the directorate to put a very clear policy in place so that, in addition, and as part of the annual review process, there is indeed a visit.

MADAM ACTING SPEAKER: Mrs Jones, a supplementary.

MRS JONES: Why was there no policy previously to guide visitations for monitoring the welfare of children and young people as part of the annual review process?

MS BURCH: Without being in the internal machinations of the department itself, I cannot give you a clear answer. I think that all of these judgements that are made through the annual review process are always made in the best interests of the child. At times, workers have made the decision that everything is looking safe. As I have articulated in my first response, there may be a view that a knock on the door from an external agency or from a CPS staffer may not be ideal.

But that said, it is also very reasonable to expect that policy to be clearly articulated rather than to be left unsure of or unclear. Hence, now there will be a very clear statement.

MADAM ACTING SPEAKER: A supplementary, Mr Gentleman.

MR GENTLEMAN: Minister, how important is it for these children to be placed in a loving, family environment?

MS BURCH: I thank Mr Gentleman for his interest in this. It is absolutely critical that we have the best placement opportunities we can have for these children. Ideally, it is going to kin. We have strived to have most of the children within kin placements. We have achieved the majority of placements within kin arrangements. And that is, I think, a very good outcome.

We work very strongly with the handful—dozen, seven—foster care agencies in town. That is core placements. So we need to work very closely with them to make sure that that placement is optimal. It is about stability of placement as well. The fewer placements a child has, the better the outcome. If you look through the ROGS data, we fare quite well here in the ACT on the number of placements for children. That is critical. That gives them that stability.

Some of these children are coming from such traumatic circumstances and carry such trauma that it is a world apart from us hosting one of our children's friends for a week or something over holidays. These kids often come with quite severe trauma. So we have to support the child, the young person, but we also seriously need to put significant investment and care around the carer arrangements as well.

MADAM ACTING SPEAKER: Mr Hanson, a supplementary.

MR HANSON: Minister, why do we have a situation where there are still so many serious deficiencies in the care of children and young people nine years after the Vardon report?

MS BURCH: Certainly there has been the Vardon report, the Public Advocate's report and the Auditor-General's report. If we reflect back to the Public Advocate's report, we agreed to a suite of reforms, and we are putting them in place. If you look at the Auditor-General's report, we have agreed in the main—it is just the mechanics of a couple of them—and we will put them in place. I have no doubt that we will implement them and in two or three years time if we came back with a forensic analysis, we would still find work to do. As in any system in any state, if you go to any of your state colleagues that have gone through a similar process of review, they would say the same—that this is hard, complex work and you put the best effort in and the best process in place. If you want to bring a microscope back in two or three years time, you will find more work to do. In many ways that is the nature of the business, because it is always about doing the best you can for these most vulnerable kids.

Land—Denman Prospect

MR GENTLEMAN: My question is to the Minister for Economic Development. Could the minister update the Assembly on the land release at Denman Prospect?

MR BARR: I thank Mr Gentleman for his question. Members may be aware that the suburb of Denman Prospect is the first development of the second stage of the Molonglo valley development. Denman Prospect will be delivered through a mix of LDA estates, sales to private developers via englobo sales and land sales for multi-unit sites.

The first land sale to a private developer will be Denman Prospect englobo 1, which is a 109 hectare parcel of land that will deliver a maximum of 1,700 dwellings. The first component will contain around 550 dwellings and the second the balance of the development.

Denman Prospect englobo 1 contains land zoned for about 90 hectares of low density single residential dwellings and four community parks, around 8.5 hectares of medium density residential dwellings and around six hectares of high density residential dwellings. It will also include a local centre including convenience retail and specialty shops, a childcare centre, a church, and around 3.7 hectares of open space nature reserve and other open space.

Denman Prospect englobo 1 will be the largest englobo land sale to a private developer to occur in the territory. It provides a significant residential opportunity for land developers. The direct economic activity associated with this englobo development, and the subsequent building works, will be in excess of \$500 million over the life of the project.

The developer of Denman Prospect englobo parcel No 1 is required to ensure 20 per cent of homes are within the affordable housing benchmarks. The site was first advertised in December 2012 seeking interested parties to participate in a restricted auction, which is scheduled to occur in May this year.

A single developer being responsible for this large site will ensure an integrated development for the section of Denman Prospect south of Cravens Creek, giving the area a consistent look and feel. The developer will be required to design and deliver the local centre for the suburb of Denman Prospect. The childcare and church sites will be serviced by the developer and then returned to the territory.

The LDA is currently undertaking planning to deliver the remaining dwellings located in the suburb of Denman Prospect and is committed to continuing to develop sustainable communities in this area.

MADAM ACTING SPEAKER: Supplementary, Mr Gentleman.

MR GENTLEMAN: Minister, how many properties are in Denman Prospect, and over how many years will they be released?

MR BARR: Molonglo stage 2 is expected to deliver around 7,000 dwellings and is expected to be home to around 18,000 residents. Denman Prospect itself is anticipated to deliver up to 3,500 dwellings, which will be delivered to the community over the next 10 to 15 years in a staged process. Under the terms for the Denman Prospect englobo 1 sale, the developer has 12 years to complete the development. Should the developer deliver the maximum dwelling yield of 1,700 dwellings, this would equate to around 150 dwellings per year. Clearly this is an important part of the ACT land release program and will become a fantastic place to live for thousands of Canberrans.

MADAM ACTING SPEAKER: A supplementary, Ms Berry.

MS BERRY: Minister, what public infrastructure will service this area?

MR BARR: The plans for Denman Prospect include a primary school, to be located near the local centre, as well as a P-10 school. Both of these schools have been

identified as government schools. The suburb of Molonglo will contain a mixture of low density, medium density and high density housing, along with a site for a non-government school.

The suburb of Molonglo will contain the Molonglo group centre, which will provide key public infrastructure. Proposed land uses as part of the group centre may include another school, and a range of community facilities such as health services, child and family care services, a library, emergency services and community gardens.

The government has also committed to building an aquatic facility that will be part of a broader community service provision for the people of Molonglo and Weston Creek, as well as a new enclosed oval at Stromlo park.

DR BOURKE: A supplementary, Madam Acting Speaker.

MADAM ACTING SPEAKER: Dr Bourke.

DR BOURKE: Minister, what are the plans for public transport in Denman Prospect?

MR BARR: I thank Dr Bourke for the question. The planning for transport provision has been a part of the work undertaken at the very beginning of the development proposals for the Molonglo valley. Indeed, the main north-south and east-west arterial roads have been designed to ensure a public transport connectivity that is perhaps better designed than any other area of the city and allows for the existing public transport facilities to be enhanced for areas surrounding the new developments.

It also ensures that a full public transport loop can be provided. Those with a geographical awareness of the city would note that there is currently a large gap north of Weston Creek and south of Belconnen that this development fills and allows for the more efficient running of public transport services.

Children and young people—care and protection

MR WALL: My question is to the minister for children and young people. I refer to the Auditor-General's report into Care and Protection Services, which found:

Governance arrangements that affect the Care and Protection Service Branch are poor as key policies, procedures and supporting tools are outdated or not available and electronic links to key reference materials do not always work.

Why does the care and protection service branch still have poor governance arrangements nine years after the Vardon report?

MS BURCH: I thank Mr Wall for his question. This, too, was discussed at the annual report hearings, but for those members opposite that were not there or have not yet read the transcript—

Mr Hanson: Or were not satisfied with your response.

MS BURCH: I think the response in this came from the executive director, so are you actually saying that the official provided you with an inadequate response?

MADAM ACTING SPEAKER: Ms Burch, please do not have a conversation across the chamber.

MS BURCH: I do beg your pardon, Madam Acting Speaker. What we are doing, and the work has started, as a result of the Public Advocate's report, is this: the policies and procedures, the processes, were difficult to manage and were not clear, so we have begun on a very clear integrated management system that is quite a genuine overhaul of how policies and procedures, and practice, interplay in the day-to-day work of the worker as well. So you can have policies and procedures in a manual that are clearly defined and written, and sit electronically or sit in a manual on the shelf.

What an IMS seeks to do is to go through the functions of practice for when that first call is made, when that child of concern report is made. Then what are the processes and decisions, and what are the key points, that need to be determined and undertaken either until a decision is made to go into care or until alternative support arrangements are made. So what, through the IMS, is going through—it is working very clearly with a group of champions that are skilled social workers, care and protection workers, that are going through that process to make sure indeed that the policy and procedures are not separate and distinct from their day-to-day actions and decision-making processes.

At the end of it, and that is a longer process, it is a more complex process, but it will give the workers a stronger, safer and more supportive environment to operate in.

MADAM ACTING SPEAKER: A supplementary, Mr Wall.

MR WALL: Minister, why are there key policies and procedures and supporting tools that are either outdated or not in use?

MS BURCH: As part of the refresh in going through the IMS, you have to take a very big piece of work bites at a time. We have gone in and made the decision to look at those priority areas, the key areas. So those intakes and assessments, those crucial ones, it is my understanding are completed and we are working through the process over time. They will be completed this year. Because we made the very conscious decision to do the larger, more complex, in many ways more sensible piece of work than just to do a simple review and rewrite of policies and procedure, it takes longer. Again I refer those opposite to the milestone review committee reports. Their reports are available online and they make reference to the progress of this reform. They are satisfied with the progress we are making and the direction in which we are going.

MADAM ACTING SPEAKER: A supplementary, Mr Hanson.

MR HANSON: Minister, why did it take so long for your directorate to become aware of all of the government's problems and to start addressing them?

MS BURCH: There is an inference that we were not aware of it. We started this task following the recommendations from the Public Advocate's report. It is reflected—

Mr Hanson: That is not what the Auditor-General said.

MS BURCH: It is, if you read the detail in the Auditor-General's report and again if you refer to the milestone review committee's work. We accept and acknowledge that work needed to be done. We have started on that. We have actually scoped the work bigger than what the original assumptions were in response to the Public Advocate's report, because the bigger, more complex piece of work was the best piece of work to do.

MADAM ACTING SPEAKER: Dr Bourke.

DR BOURKE: Minister, in your previous answer to Mr Wall, you mentioned a group of champions. Could you tell us more about that, please?

MS BURCH: I thank Dr Bourke for his interest in this. When you are embarking on such a significant change under the umbrella of an integrated management system, this will only be successful when you have people that are in the workplace, on the ground, that are going to use these tools on a day-to-day basis. We have put expressions of interest out to all the CPS workers and those that work within that area who would want to be involved in this quite significant piece of reform.

More people than we had chairs around the table in many ways put their hand up to be involved in this, because they saw the benefit to their own practice, the guidance to their own practice and improved supervision and decision support for them as individual workers. They also saw the bigger picture of improvement in the system and how it can reform and improve the system.

We do have a group of champions and I thank them for their work. I thank all of the staff over in CPS for the work they do, not only on the IMS but with what they do each and every day. I have said before and I will say it again: this is some of the hardest work in human services. It is complicated work. Just think how your day would start if your first phone call was to go to the house of a child that has been physically or sexually abused. It is just incomprehensible for most of us to say that is what we do, Monday to Friday, nine to five. But that is what those CPS workers do every day. So I take my hat off to them. If it means that I will stand here and respond to questions about the Auditor-General's report, I will do that. But I will do that knowing that we are doing the reforms to make sure that we support them as best we can.

Schools—Catholic Education Week

DR BOURKE: My question is to the Minister for Education and Training. Minister, last week, Catholic schools celebrated Catholic Education Week. What activities did you attend in your capacity as minister for education? How does the ACT government support Catholic systemic schools in the ACT?

MS BURCH: I do thank Dr Bourke for his question and for his interest too in Catholic Education Week. I was delighted to be invited to attend a number of activities to celebrate Catholic Schools Week. For the benefit of the Assembly, Catholic Schools Week is about the celebration of the strength and distinctiveness of Catholic education in the ACT and across Australia.

I received a number of invitations from many schools during the week. Unfortunately, though, there were only a few that I was able to attend. But I want to congratulate each and every school and school community on their celebrating their special week. From all accounts, it was a very successful week and I wish them well in the 2013 year.

I was fortunate to be able to attend a community breakfast at St Michael's Primary School. This was organised by the school and hosted by the principal, Judy Walsh. I want to thank Mrs Walsh, her staff and the community for inviting me. I do note that there were a number of members from this Assembly there. I made the point that my primary school was a St Michael's school, but it was not the St Michael's where we had breakfast the other day.

I did enjoy sharing the primary school link that morning. We were celebrating Catholic schools and the Centenary of Canberra. I had also attended the centenary mass, which celebrated the contribution of Catholic education to Canberra over the life of this city. This event was organised and hosted by the Catholic Education Office. It was a very well attended event. One of the parts of that service that I enjoyed was the welcoming of the new teachers into the Catholic school system. Those that were there would remember the teachers coming to the front of the congregation and being welcomed into the system. It was really quite pleasant.

In relation to the second part of the member's question around the support provided to Catholic schools in the ACT, I can inform the member and the Assembly that over the term of this Labor government funding to our Catholic and independent schools has increased from \$30 million in 2001 to over \$55 million in 2012. This is an increase of over 80 per cent from the historic lows of the previous government.

Opposition members interjecting—

MS BURCH: They are saying it is not so, but that was the historic low of the previous government. This government does make funding decisions based on needs, a per capita assessment. The government has responded to this assessment by providing greater levels of funding to Catholic schools through our needs-based model and through targeted funding of our systemic Catholic schools. Funding has been provided where it is needed most, an approach reinforced by the outcomes of the recent commonwealth review of school funding.

I wish our Catholic schools and our Catholic Education Office, their staff, students, parents and community members all the best for the 2013 school year and for many more years to come. They are a highly valued contributor to education in the ACT and I look forward to working with them through the term of this government.

MADAM ACTING SPEAKER: A supplementary, Dr Bourke.

Mr Hanson: The ex-minister.

DR BOURKE: Better an ex than never. What recent commitments has the ACT government made to support Catholic—

Mr Hanson interjecting—

MADAM ACTING SPEAKER: Mr Hanson, I cannot hear the question that Dr Bourke is asking. Dr Bourke.

DR BOURKE: Thank you, Madam Acting Speaker. Minister, what recent commitments has the ACT government made to support Catholic schools and, indeed, the wider, non-government sector?

Mr Hanson: Thank him for his genuine interest.

MS BURCH: I do thank him for his interest. He has far more interest than any of you over there. You interjected about being replaced. How did you get where you are? That one over there is trying to get out of here altogether. Apparently the room is not big enough. The Assembly is not big enough. Now the room is not big enough.

Members interjecting—

MADAM ACTING SPEAKER: Members!

MS BURCH: Do you want me to continue?

MADAM ACTING SPEAKER: Return to the question, please, minister.

MS BURCH: I will, Madam Acting Speaker. The government made a number of commitments to support non-government schools in the ACT at the last election. During the election we committed to invest \$18.5 million in needs-based funding over the next four years, and this commitment includes \$11 million to support non-government schools and \$5 million to support non-government preschool students. We further made commitments to fund upgrades to IT infrastructure, at \$2.5 million.

Our support for non-government schools will be based on delivering support to those schools in need, which will include factors such as disability, students from an Indigenous background, socioeconomic status and English proficiency. Our commitments also include funding works to improve access to early education and childcare. This government does have an excellent record in providing early childhood education and care, and our commitment of \$5 million over four years will continue to ensure that parents have a high number of quality providers to choose from.

This government will continue to support our non-government sector while at the same time ensuring that our government school sector is strong, supported and continues to provide high-quality education.

MADAM ACTING SPEAKER: A supplementary, Mr Doszpot.

MR DOSZPOT: Can the minister explain to us, during all the functions that she attended during Catholic Schools Week, how she managed to explain away the fact that this government has been and still is the lowest funding government of any jurisdiction in Australia?

MS BURCH: In response to that question, I do ask those opposite how they went to all the events and held their heads high when they have historic lows in their funding. This is a government that has invested 80 per cent off the base that they left. And those opposite question our commitment to supporting Catholic schools and independent schools based on need! We have a history of investment, and a clear commitment through the ACT election to continue to invest in Catholic and non-government schools. That is in absolute contrast to those opposite, who left this place with historic lows in funding.

MADAM ACTING SPEAKER: A supplementary, Mr Gentleman.

MR GENTLEMAN: Minister, what engagement have you had with the non-government sector concerning their needs and priorities?

MS BURCH: I thank Mr Gentleman for his question. Since becoming Minister for Education and Training, I have enjoyed working with the many dedicated and professional people in our non-government sector. They play a very important role in our educational landscape here in the ACT. I do meet regularly with representatives of the sector. I have recently met with Catholic education—indeed, this month—to discuss their needs. Also I value the advice provided to me by the Non-government Schools Education Council, which includes representatives of independent schools, Catholic independent schools, Catholic systemic schools, as well as community members.

My engagement with the council through communication with the chair of the council and receiving their submissions gives me an insight into the needs and priorities of the non-government education sector.

I have made a very clear commitment that in a fortnight I will visit a government school but I will also visit a Catholic and independent school. I have visited a number and I will continue to visit them as I can. Neither hell nor high water will stop me from making that commitment because it is important that I go out and see all schools. It is the mums and dads in our community that are making choices about where they send their kids to school. We as a government have a responsibility to make sure that our investment is based on needs, and that we have a good quality, strong government system in place. It is also about having a strong regard for the independent schools.

Schools—ACT School Canteen Association

MR DOSZPOT: My question is to the Minister for Education and Training. The minister may be aware that one of the ACT school canteens task force members, the ACT School Canteen Association, is to hold their AGM tomorrow. It is likely that after nearly 30 years the association will be wound up, due in part to an inability to fund a manager to continue the work. Minister, has this association sought financial help from the government? If so, what was the government's response?

MS BURCH: This is really a surprise, Mr Doszpot. I have gone through my records and I have asked for checking of any emails or contacts with my office from the School Canteen Association. There have not been any, but I do have regular contact and communication with the P&C council. They have been very active in the space in support of school canteens. On radio this morning, Hugh Boulter was talking about our school canteens and spoke about the work being done by the school canteens task force, which will report to me in the first half of this year—May, June. He is on the task force; he has probably got a closer sense of the time of when it will report than I would, being here. I was quite happy with his response and his recognition that the task force is doing good stuff to support P&C canteens.

MADAM ACTING SPEAKER: Mr Doszpot, a supplementary.

MR DOSZPOT: Minister, over a month ago, when I alerted you to the possible closure of the association, which at the time you were unaware of, you did say that you might consider other options outside the budget process. What other options are you considering or have you considered?

MS BURCH: I think there was a media story about the concerns from the canteen association. Again I refer you to Hugh Boulter's comment. I am not hoping to misrepresent him but—

Mr Doszpot interjecting—

MADAM ACTING SPEAKER: Mr Doszpot, will you be quiet and listen to the answer, please? Minister.

MS BURCH: That is about the lack of volunteers willing to step up and take on a leadership role within the association. Can I remind members here that the ACT Labor Party went to the ACT election with a clear canteen policy.

Mr Doszpot: Why haven't you honoured it?

MS BURCH: Where was your canteen policy, Canberra Liberals? None! Where was your canteen policy? I have been asked are we honouring our investment and interest in canteens, and I am trying to tell that man over there that has not closed his mouth since I stood up that we are honouring it, that we have the task force in place, that it will report to me by mid-year end, that we have an election commitment around supporting P&C canteens. Can I tell those members here that the P&C association is

leading the charge on supporting canteens in schools, ensuring that there are healthy options for kids in our schools, ensuring that canteens work with Nutrition Australia for healthy options for our schools.

Mr Doszpot is a Johnny-come-lately. He is looking to one association, the canteen association. They cannot even muster up enough volunteers to stand up to their own governance structures. I am working with an association with a million bucks on the table to do as good as I can, and those opposite have done zip.

MADAM ACTING SPEAKER: A supplementary question, Mrs Jones.

MRS JONES: Minister, given the unfolding situation of concern about the association being able to continue, what prevents you from providing funding from the \$1 million election promise in your policy to address this urgent need?

MS BURCH: This is an interesting question. We have put a \$1 million commitment to work with the P&C council, showing a clear leadership role in supporting healthy options for school canteens. Those opposite, who never gave it a thought until there was a story in the *Canberra Times* that they can hang off, are now asking me—

Mr Hanson: A point of order.

MADAM ACTING SPEAKER: Resume your seat, Ms Burch. Stop the clock. On a point of order?

MS BURCH: Well, where was your policy?

Mr Doszpot interjecting—

MADAM ACTING SPEAKER: Mr Doszpot, a member of the opposition is on his feet with a point of order.

Mr Doszpot: My apologies, Madam Acting Speaker.

Mr Hanson: A point of order on relevance. The question was clearly about the government's policy and the \$1 million and whether any of that could be allocated to the association. Ms Burch's dissertation on what the Liberals would do is not really relevant to the point. I would ask her to address the question as to whether there is any possibility of providing money from the \$1 million available.

MADAM ACTING SPEAKER: She does have a minute and a half to do that, but I would ask her to return to the question.

MS BURCH: Thank you, Madam Acting Speaker. Our policy was around supporting the P&C and school canteens. It was not about hiving off money to an association that has not come to me and asked for it. It is an association that cannot find volunteers to fill its executive governance role. I do not know if that is a good use of public funds. I could go out to a school or a P&C association and say, "Do you want me to put some of this money into an association that has not been very effective to date or do you

want me to put that money into an online purchasing system, bulk buying and other arrangements that we are in discussions on through the task force and that were clearly articulated in the ACT election policy?” Given the absence of any policy, thought or any idea other than “there’s a million bucks on the table, we can think about it; that group over there’s a bit noisy; can you take some money from that over there” that is not very good policy making.

MADAM ACTING SPEAKER: Supplementary, Mrs Jones.

MRS JONES: Minister, is it a good outcome if the ACT canteens association shuts up shop?

MS BURCH: It would no doubt be unfortunate for some in our community that any association that has had a history of 20-plus years folds. There is no doubt about that. People have long personal attachments to some associations and connections. There is no doubt about that.

But if the point here is around working with school canteens and P&C associations around sustainability and healthy choices for kids in our schools, then that is the focus that I need to put on it. That is where I think the policy investment needs to be. The task force is looking at these opportunities. It is tasked, quite literally, with finding options for me to consider as we move through. In many ways there are quite generational changes. There are fewer volunteers than before within school canteens. Some schools are choosing to outsource their canteens to non-P&C run enterprises. There is change afoot, but we need to concentrate on what is the end game here. It is about choice for the school community and healthy choices for our kids.

Planning—supermarkets

MS BERRY: My question is to the Minister for the Environment and Sustainable Development. Minister, this morning you announced a draft variation that would make changes to the allowable retail space for supermarkets in our local centres. Can you provide to the Assembly details about this draft variation?

MR CORBELL: I thank Ms Berry for her question. Today I was pleased to release draft variation 304 to the territory plan for public consultation. This draft variation is the culmination of an overall review of the commercial zones development code in the territory plan. The major change proposed is that the retail floor space in supermarkets in local centres be restricted to 1,000 square metres.

This change is important because local centres cater largely to the residents of a single suburb and there is no doubt that some of our local centres in recent years have been suffering from decline, at least some of which can be attributed to competition from larger supermarket chains, affecting the viability of local centres.

The government acknowledges some of the problems faced by local centre retailers and we have been working hard on a number of fronts to address these issues. One of the issues identified has been the fact that until today there has been no restriction on

the physical size of shops and supermarkets, their gross floor area, in local centres. In regard to floor areas generally across commercial zones, draft variation 304 proposes to introduce a 1,500 square metre maximum on the gross floor area. In addition it is proposed that there is a restriction in relation to local centres and mixed use zones where the net selling area of shops selling food—and this includes supermarkets—is limited to 1,000 square metres. Under this provision there is a new definition of net selling area which means that part of the gross floor area of a shop that is used for the display and sale of goods and is ordinarily accessible to the public is limited to 1,000 square metres. This provision applies only to local centres, those which are zoned CZ4, and mixed use zones, CZ5.

It is important to emphasise that this proposal is not a limitation or control on ownership but a control on size in local centres. It is not the role of the planning system to seek to limit ownership. It is the role of the planning system to indicate where and to what scale uses occur. This is the proposal currently in draft variation 304.

Opposition members interjecting—

MR CORBELL: I am disappointed that those opposite seem to be critical of this proposal. This is a proposal which has been sought by small supermarket operators right across the city. It is a proposal that they have actively lobbied the government on and it is a proposal that Labor made an election commitment on prior to the last election. It is a proposal that we are now implementing.

Mr Hanson: You're lying. You are lying.

MR CORBELL: I ask Mr Hanson to withdraw his comment.

Dr Bourke: A point of order.

MADAM ACTING SPEAKER: Dr Bourke. Stop the clock.

Dr Bourke: The opposition leader has been using unparliamentary language to describe Mr Corbell. I ask that he withdraw it.

Mr Hanson: I withdraw.

MADAM ACTING SPEAKER: Thank you very much. Mr Corbell.

MR CORBELL: Thank you, Madam Acting Speaker. It is a commitment that the government made before the last election and it is a commitment that we are honouring. We are implementing the commitment because we recognise that protecting small-scale supermarket retailing in local centres is in the public interest. The fact is that local shops are for local supermarkets. This provision ensures that there is clear policy guidance on those questions.

MADAM ACTING SPEAKER: Supplementary, Ms Berry.

MS BERRY: Minister, what are the benefits to the community from this draft variation?

MR CORBELL: Madam Acting Speaker—

Opposition members interjecting—

MADAM ACTING SPEAKER: Members, you will remain silent while the minister is on his feet.

MR CORBELL: There is twofold intent to introducing the changes to floor area limits in commercial zones which will benefit local and group centres, their retailers and the customers who use them. By allowing the development of small to medium size shops—

Mr Hanson interjecting—

MADAM ACTING SPEAKER: Mr Hanson!

MR CORBELL: including supermarkets instead of limiting shops to very small corner store sizes, this removes barriers to competition and ultimately gives the community and consumers more choice when they go and do their shopping.

Secondly, the changes will ensure that commercial development in local centres is consistent with the role of these centres in the commercial centre hierarchy. As a general principle, development in local centres should not threaten the viability of nearby centres, including group centres. This will be accomplished by limiting the floor area of all shops, including supermarkets, in local centres.

These changes have come about following community feedback on a commercial zones policy review discussion paper which flagged a number of policy changes, including the floor area provisions. The proposal to put a limit on retail floor space in local centres was strongly supported in that review. By restricting the retail floor space to 1,000 square metres in local centres, the government is reinforcing the important role that local centres play in providing convenience retailing to their local communities.

As well as benefits to consumers and users of local centres, business owners also benefit. The variation protects the interests of smaller independent supermarkets in the ACT supermarket retail industry. Canberrans want to support local businesses that are close to their homes and provide them with the convenience that that offers. This variation provides clarity and certainty to local operators and will support vibrant and viable local centres.

MR HANSON: Supplementary.

MADAM ACTING SPEAKER: Supplementary, Mr Hanson.

MR HANSON: Minister, why did you not implement this proposal when it was first put forward by Mr Seselja as part of the supermarket inquiry last year?

MR CORBELL: The government made clear at the time that it was reviewing the operation of the commercial zones in the territory plan overall and that we wanted to hear the feedback through the community from that process. What has been very clear is that there is support for this through that consultation exercise, and that is why the government made the commitment before the last election to implement this territory plan if we were re-elected. I am very pleased to implement the commitment we made before the last election, and I know it is a commitment that will be widely welcomed by those in the supermarket sector, particularly the small independent operators right across Canberra.

MADAM ACTING SPEAKER: Supplementary, Dr Bourke.

DR BOURKE: Minister, what opportunities will the public have to comment on this draft variation?

MR CORBELL: Thank you, Dr Bourke, for your supplementary. With the release of the draft variation, the proposed changes are now on public notification for six weeks—that is, 30 working days. The part of the draft variation relating to changes to floor area limits in commercial zones does have interim effect from the date of the consultation notice, the date of release for public comment. The interim effect means that the proposed provisions must be applied in the determination of any relevant development application. This does not apply to development applications lodged before the date of public release, as is standard practice.

The draft variation is itself based on extensive consultation through the commercial zones review discussion paper and the 2012 Legislative Assembly Select Committee on ACT Supermarket Competition Policy. All development applications will, of course, be subject to the normal notification processes. This will provide the relevant local community with the opportunity to comment on proposed development in their local centre.

At the end of the consultation process, ACTPLA will provide me with a written report on the consultation and submissions. On receipt of the documents, I have the option of approving the draft plan variation, returning it to the authority with written directions or referring it to a relevant committee of the Assembly.

Ms Gallagher: I ask that all further questions be placed on the notice paper.

Supplementary answers to question without notice Schools—Duffy Primary School

MS BURCH: I wish to provide additional information to an answer I gave at a previous sitting, the day of 28 February. In question time Mr Smyth asked me about the procurement process for the construction of a modular relocatable building at Duffy Primary School. I did try and come down for the adjournment debate of the last

sitting, but it was the quickest adjournment debate. I do not think anyone actually gave an adjournment speech.

A report in *The Chronicle* incorrectly stated that the tender had already been let. For the information of members, procurement arrangements for the construction of the relocatable buildings at Duffy are as follows: an open request for expressions of interest has become pre-qualified. It was advertised in the ACT, New South Wales and Victoria on 13 February and closed on 28 February. Our select tender approach will be made up of a group of pre-qualified providers to bid for the work. The assessment of bids will occur using normal procurement processes.

Papers

Madam Acting Speaker presented the following papers, which were circulated to members when the Assembly was not sitting:

Auditor-General Act—Auditor-General's Reports—

No 1/2013—Care and Protection System, dated 7 March 2013.

No 4/2012—Development Application and Approval System for High Density Residential and Commercial Developments—Corrigendum.

Standing order 191—Amendments to:

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elected Body Amendment Bill 2012 (No 2), dated 1 and 4 March 2013.

Disability Services Amendment Bill 2012 (No 2), dated 5 March 2013.

Executive contracts

Papers and statement by minister

MS GALLAGHER (Molonglo—Chief Minister, Minister for Regional Development, Minister for Health and Minister for Higher Education): For the information of members, I present the following papers:

Public Sector Management Act, pursuant to sections 31A and 79—Copies of executive contracts or instruments—

Short-term contracts:

Carolyn Grayson, dated 28 February 2013.

Conrad Barr, dated 25 February 2013.

David Dutton, dated 25 January 2013.

Dennis Skerry, dated 15 February 2013.

Derise Cubin, dated 22 February 2013.

Jennifer Dodd, dated 28 February 2013.

Jeremy Logan, dated 7 December 2012.

Phil Canham, dated 25 February 2013.

Contract variations:

- Alison Playford, dated 8 and 14 February 2013.
- Benjamin Ponton, dated 27 February 2013.
- Bianca Kimber, dated 8 February 2013.
- Christopher Reynolds, dated 18 and 26 February 2013.
- Helen Pappas, dated 12 and 13 February 2013.
- Howard Wren, dated 26 February 2013.
- Ian Hill, dated 30 April 2012.
- Jancye Winter, dated 8 and 13 February 2013.
- Jeanette MacCullagh, dated 31 January and 12 February 2013.
- Mary Toohey, dated 8 February 2013.
- Moira Crowhurst, dated 8 and 11 February 2013.
- Nic Manikis, dated 8 and 11 February 2013.
- Sandra Georges, dated 8 February 2013.
- Sandra Kennedy, dated 8 February 2013.
- Stephen Goggs, dated 18 February and 4 March 2013.
- Thomas Gordon, dated 18 and 27 February 2013.

I ask leave to make a statement in relation to the papers.

Leave granted.

MS GALLAGHER: I present another set of executive contracts. These documents are tabled in accordance with sections 31A and 79 of the Public Sector Management Act, which require the tabling of all director-general and executive contracts and contract variations. Contracts were previously tabled on 12 February 2013. Today I present eight short-term contracts and 16 contract variations. The details of the contracts will be circulated to members.

ACTEW Corporation Ltd—annual report Paper and statement by minister

MR BARR (Molonglo—Deputy Chief Minister, Treasurer, Minister for Economic Development, Minister for Sport and Recreation, Minister for Tourism and Events and Minister for Community Services): For the information of members, I present the following paper:

Annual Reports (Government Agencies) Act, pursuant to section 13—Annual Report 2010-2011—ACTEW Corporation Limited—Corrigendum.

I seek leave to make a statement in relation to the paper.

Leave granted.

MR BARR: I have recently been notified by the Chairman of the ACTEW Corporation that an error has been discovered from its 2010-11 annual report. I am advised that the corporation discovered that it had understated the executive remuneration of the managing director in the order of \$234,417. The correct salary should have read \$855,588. This correct salary is consistent with the figure reported and tabled in the corporation's 2011-12 annual report.

Mr Assistant Speaker, I must say that I am surprised and disappointed to learn that the 2010-11 annual report had such a discrepancy from what was previously tabled in this place. The shareholders of the ACTEW Corporation, the Chief Minister and I, have asked the chairman to clarify the details of the circumstances surrounding this error and why it was not discovered earlier. As shareholders, we will continue to seek further answers regarding this error. However, as a courtesy to members I have tabled this document today, the first sitting day after I received this notification from the chairman. I will report back to the Assembly further information when I can.

Papers

Ms Burch presented the following paper:

Financial Management Act, pursuant to section 30E—Half-yearly performance report—December 2012—Community Services Directorate—Corrigendum.

Mr Corbell presented the following papers:

Subordinate legislation (including explanatory statements unless otherwise stated)

Legislation Act, pursuant to section 64—

Auditor-General Act and Legislation Act—Auditor-General Standing Acting Appointment 2013—Disallowable Instrument DI2013-10 (without explanatory statement) (LR, 21 February 2013).

Canberra Institute of Technology Act—

Canberra Institute of Technology (Advisory Council) Appointment 2013 (No 1)—Disallowable Instrument DI2013-19 (LR, 12 March 2013).

Canberra Institute of Technology (Advisory Council) Appointment 2013 (No 2)—Disallowable Instrument DI2013-20 (LR, 12 March 2013).

Canberra Institute of Technology (Advisory Council) Appointment 2013 (No 3)—Disallowable Instrument DI2013-21 (LR, 12 March 2013).

Education Act—

Education (Government Schools Education Council) Appointment 2013 (No 1)—Disallowable Instrument DI2013-26 (LR, 12 March 2013).

Education (Non-Government Schools Education Council) Appointment 2013 (No 1)—Disallowable Instrument DI2013-23 (LR, 12 March 2013).

Education (Non-Government Schools Education Council) Appointment 2013 (No 2)—Disallowable Instrument DI2013-24 (LR, 12 March 2013).

Education (Non-Government Schools Education Council) Appointment 2013 (No 3)—Disallowable Instrument DI2013-25 (LR, 12 March 2013).

Health Act—

Health (Local Hospital Network Council—Chair) Appointment 2013 (No 1)—Disallowable Instrument DI2013-15 (LR, 28 February 2013).

Health (Local Hospital Network Council—Member) Appointment 2013 (No 1)—Disallowable Instrument DI2013-14 (LR, 28 February 2013).

Land Rent Act—Land Rent (Discount—Registered Affordable Housing Providers) Determination 2013 (No 1)—Disallowable Instrument DI2013-18 (LR, 7 March 2013).

Public Health Act—Public Health (Community Pharmacy Ownership) Amendment Regulation 2013 (No 1)—Subordinate Law SL2013-4 (LR, 28 February 2013).

Race and Sports Bookmaking Act—Race and Sports Bookmaking (Sports Bookmaking Venues) Determination 2013 (No 3)—Disallowable Instrument DI2013-13 (LR, 25 February 2013).

Racing Act—Racing (Race Field Information) Amendment Regulation 2013 (No 1)—Subordinate Law SL2013-3 (LR, 28 February 2013).

Retirement Villages Act—Retirement Villages Regulation 2013—Subordinate Law SL2013-5 (LR, 1 March 2013).

Road Transport (General) Act—

Road Transport (General) (Vehicle Registration) Exemption 2013 (No 1)—Disallowable Instrument DI2013-27 (LR, 12 March 2013).

Road Transport (General) Application of Road Transport Legislation Declaration 2013 (No 2)—Disallowable Instrument DI2013-11 (LR, 19 February 2013).

Road Transport (General) Application of Road Transport Legislation Declaration 2013 (No 3)—Disallowable Instrument DI2013-12 (LR, 21 February 2013).

Road Transport (General) Application of Road Transport Legislation Declaration 2013 (No 4)—Disallowable Instrument DI2013-22 (LR, 7 March 2013).

Road Transport (General) CTP Regulator Levy Determination 2013 (No 1)—Disallowable Instrument DI2013-17 (LR, 7 March 2013).

Water Resources Act—Water Resources (Fees) Determination 2013 (No 1)—Disallowable Instrument DI2013-16 (LR, 7 March 2013).

Infrastructure planning

Discussion of matter of public importance

MR ASSISTANT SPEAKER (Mr Doszpot): The Acting Speaker has received letters from Ms Berry, Dr Bourke, Mr Gentleman, Mr Hanson, Mrs Jones, Mr Seselja, Mr Smyth and Mr Wall proposing that matters of public importance be submitted to the Assembly. In accordance with standing order 79, the Acting Speaker has determined that the matter proposed by Mr Smyth be submitted to the Assembly, namely:

The importance of good infrastructure planning in the ACT.

MR SMYTH (Brindabella) (3.43): This is a very important MPI. It is very important because what we have had over the time that the Labor Party have been in office is an ongoing litany, a continuing litany, an endless litany of the failure to deliver their capital works budget and capital works projects on time, on budget and on scope.

Indeed, on Friday Mr Hanson managed to extract details that show yet again that another significant project will now be delayed, in this case because of indecision by the Chief Minister and health minister on what should go ahead. You would think that when the government consider putting a budget proposal in to the capital works budget, they would have done the work to determine what would go ahead and, more importantly, the reasons why it should go ahead. And if something is changed, there should be significant reasons for it not to go ahead in the time frame that has been listed.

It is very interesting, Mr Assistant Speaker, to go to the mid-year review, the budget review for 2013. At page 14 the government now calls it “re-profiling”. It is a lovely word, re-profiling. It means “we have not delivered yet again, so we’re going to re-profile”. The third paragraph says:

The re-profiling exercise has resulted in \$249.4 million in net capital expenditure being moved from 2012-13. As part of the re-profiling exercise \$40.6 million of project savings were identified.

Let me read that again:

The re-profiling exercise has resulted in \$249.4 million ...

A quarter of a billion dollars of expenditure has basically been delayed or removed because this government cannot deliver. And it is because they do not have a commitment to delivering high quality capital works on time, on budget and on scope that this happens and we come back to this issue again and again. Ultimately, this is a question about leadership, and this matter rests on the leadership of the Chief Minister and her cabinet.

When this government makes a decision for the future of our cities—in this case of infrastructure—what do we get? We do not get delivery, we get massive delays and blowouts, not to mention decisions based on convenience.

What did we discover on Friday? On Friday we discovered that the government have frozen the \$41 million budgeted for the design work of a new block to replace the 10-storey tower at the Canberra Hospital. The Chief Minister’s excuses were “might be more appropriate for the government to be expanding services at Calvary hospital” and “not convinced that it should go ahead at this point in time”. Surely that work was done before the money was listed. Indeed, this is one of the projects that has been re-profiled. If you look at the spread of the \$41 million over the years, they had the \$41 million spent by the end of the 2013-14 year. That money has now been pushed out to 2014-15, with \$21 million next year and \$18 million in the year following.

If the money is in the budget, how is it now that the government is not convinced that it should go ahead at this point in time? Clearly, the reason is that the government does not have good process in regard to capital works. But apparently the real reason, and to quote the Chief Minister, she went on to say, “It will be easier to have more beds go to Calvary and the north side hospital before we focus on working on areas of core services at a tertiary hospital.”

It is a scary state of affairs when a decision on an \$800 million project is put on hold because it is easier to do something else. “Easier” leads to more health infrastructure—and you only have to look at the record of this health minister and the previous one in not delivering on health infrastructure. The list is long and sad. We saw the cost blowout of \$20 million for the women’s and children’s hospital, which delivered something that had no extra capacity and, in fact, was affecting the way that women were having their children in the ACT. We had complaints from both patients and staff about what a poor place it was to work.

We have seen the cancellation and the delay of the \$11 million secure adult mental health facility, also with a cost blowout now approaching something like \$30 million. It is an ongoing saga that has been running for something like seven years. We saw the hospital car park, which was \$29 million, blow out to \$43 million. Of course, then there is the sad saga of the bush healing farm. The Labor Party are the party that triumph and champion and say, “We’re the ones that look out for the Indigenous community.” Yet they are the ones that let the Indigenous community down so many times. We have got the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander residential alcohol and other drug rehabilitation facility, and, yet again, it is another victim of this government’s inability to deliver a project on time, on budget and on scope.

The bush healing farm was originally slated for opening about now. It was due to open in the next couple of months, and it is yet to be allocated a start or completion date. It has been plagued by lengthy hold-ups—indeed, since Mr Stanhope was Chief Minister—and also in the planning and approvals process. It is no surprise that the local community is disappointed by this. We see that instead of the bulk of the money for the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander residential alcohol and other drug rehabilitation facility, the bush healing farm, being spent predominantly in this year, 2012-13, when there should have been \$4 million worth of expenditure, it has now been pushed out to \$2½ million in 2013-14 and almost \$2 million in 2014-15. So much for the government’s ability to deliver on their commitment to this part of our community.

Of course, you have only to recall the independent study conducted by Deloitte Access Economics entitled *Evaluating ACT hospital development planning*, where they came to the following conclusion:

As with the ill-fated ACT power station proposal, lack of transparency regarding touted benefits, gross failings in analytical rigour, and inadequacy in consultation processes is not a recipe for consistent, sound policy formulation or for economically and socially desirable outcomes.

It is worth saying that again, Mr Assistant Speaker, because it really does summarise the litany of failures. And we all remember the power station: “Oh, that’d be a nice spot for a power station. Let’s locate it as close to the population as we can.” There was very little consultation. But I am pleased to say that the Canberra Liberals led the charge to stop that project in that location because it was ill-founded. What did Deloitte Access say? They said:

As with the ill-fated ACT power station proposal, lack of transparency regarding touted benefits, gross failings in analytical rigour, and inadequacy in consultation processes is not a recipe for consistent, sound policy formulation or for economically and socially desirable outcomes.

That paragraph is a summary of the last decade under those opposite and their inability to deliver.

If we had to do a top 10 failures on infrastructure, what would get into that top 10?

Mr Hanson: GDE.

MR SMYTH: There would be a fight for the top 10. There would be a top 10. I hear “GDE”. GDE would have to go to the top of the list. Here is a snapshot of the government’s record to date. It was some seven years late, and then we had the minister saying, “We’ve opened this a couple of weeks early.” This is the government that delivered a road project that was full before it was finished. What did Deloitte say? Let me just read that again:

As with the ill-fated ACT power station proposal, lack of transparency regarding touted benefits, gross failings in analytical rigour, and inadequacy in consultation processes is not a recipe for consistent, sound policy formulation or for economically and socially desirable outcomes.

The GDE says it all. The original budget that was there was \$55 million. I know it was there, because I put it there. It was in my budget. It was in the plan—a consistent plan to deliver better road outcomes for the people of the ACT, that this government blew. And how much has it cost? It is well over \$150 million. It is probably closer to \$200 million—four times the size and seven years late. That is an outstanding achievement! You could not plan to do it that badly, yet this government did.

Of course, we have the Cotter Dam, budgeted at \$140 million. The then Chief Minister was busting to get out and announce that he was going to build a dam, and, remember, this is the government that said, “We don’t need a dam.” When we announced in the lead-up to the 2004 election that we would build a dam because we understood the needs of the people of the ACT, this government said, “No, no, no. No dams required.”

Mr Barr interjecting—

MR ASSISTANT SPEAKER (Mr Doszpot): Mr Barr! I have given you some leeway.

MR SMYTH: Yet two years later, they have done the backflip. They have done the Andrew Barr half-pike—the master of backflips over there, who loves to change his policy on the run. We had a dam budgeted at \$140 million blow out to \$363 million and then \$404 million. That is a cost blowout of \$264 million, and it was labelled the aquatic GDE. So vying at the top of the list you have some pretty outstanding characters there.

One of my personal favourites is the north Weston pond, which was originally budgeted at \$20 million but managed to blow itself out to \$43 million, and then we built a pond that is not even half the size of what was originally proposed. This is because the government processes were unsound. They did not take the advice, they did not manage the risk and yet again the public end up paying the bill. This is the problem with this government. This is the problem. The taxpayer always pays. This government do not care.

Of course, there is the emergency services headquarters, originally budgeted at \$13 million and it blew out to \$75 million—\$13 million to \$75 million. And it is actually smaller than what was proposed. The building itself is well built. It is an excellent building. But it just happens to be much smaller than what was proposed. It does not have some of the utility that was to be built in, and I think there are real doubts about its capacity and whether we really needed a large facility that had the space to expand in the time of an emergency. I think we are yet to find the real cost of the emergency services headquarters in an event like that.

We have only to talk of the prison. It was not even finished and they opened it. They blew up the opening of the prison as an election stunt, but it is not the size that was promised. 374 beds were promised; it is now 300 beds. It does not have a gym. It does not have a chapel. It does not have, according to the prisoners, some of the lifestyle that they expect in other prisons, because it is a bit boring as well. But the problem is we were told again and again, and Minister Corbell promised, that there was capacity for something like 20 years in the new prison, and it is full. They built a prison that supposedly had capacity for 20 years and at the end of the first year of operation it was full. Again, a government that do not deliver.

If you live in Tuggeranong—indeed, if you live in any part of Canberra—and you enjoy getting down to Tidbinbilla, Tharwa, Cuppacumbalong or Namadgi, you would have travelled over that wonderful Allan truss bridge, the Tharwa bridge, that this government was going to abandon and build a concrete monstrosity. And why was it to be abandoned? Because they could not find the timber to replace it. Well, they did not look very hard. Again, because of the actions of the Canberra Liberals, we have managed to save the Tharwa bridge. It is still in operation. We got a great outcome for a community. It is a shame that they blew the price and the time frame. Yet again, it is this government's inability to deliver on time and on budget that should have people worried about what will happen in the future.

I think people should be worried because we have Minister Barr and light rail—the rail line to anywhere you want to go, because it does not matter what it will cost. The

incompetence continues. When we challenged Mr Barr in annual reports, there was this great exchange between the Treasurer and I:

MR SMYTH: You said that there is more work to be done before you go to procurement.

Mr Barr: That is correct.

MR SMYTH: So whatever the numbers turn up it is going ahead?

Mr Barr: Yes, we are committed to the project.

MR SMYTH: Whatever the cost?

Mr Barr: We are committed to the project.

So I then asked: “Whatever the cost? Is there a number at which the project will not go ahead?” Mr Barr said, “No.” That is not how you do capital works. The shame of it is that the building community already know this. There was an article published on 14 November about whether this could be done as a PPP. The government are suddenly now very keen on PPPs. They know they cannot deliver things themselves so “we’ll try and shift the risks to someone else”. The last paragraph on the first page of this article, headed “Engineers sharpen pencils over ACT light rail” says:

If the government elects to fund the project by PPP, it will likely take bidding consortia between six and 12 months to come with the financing. Steele says it is unlikely a PPP would work in the ACTs case, as revenue streams to fund the financing would not be strong enough.

“On light rail in Canberra it is not going to be that significant,” Steele says. “The PPP on the Gold Coast rapid transit was borderline and it’s probably carrying double the patronage a Canberra system could.”

The Gold Coast has double the patronage and it is borderline. But full speed ahead. Damn the torpedoes. “We’ll continue in our incompetence. We’ll continue to wallow in our inability to deliver. We’ll continue to burden the people of the ACT with our incompetence.” (*Time expired.*)

MR BARR (Molonglo—Deputy Chief Minister, Treasurer, Minister for Economic Development, Minister for Sport and Recreation, Minister for Tourism and Events and Minister for Community Services) (3.58): I thank Mr Smyth for raising this matter this afternoon. I am tempted to begin by continuing his list of fantastic infrastructure projects and commitments. For the benefit of Mr Wall, who may well have been in primary school when the Liberal Party were last in government in this town, need I remind the shadow treasurer of some fantastic examples of Carnell government infrastructure delivery, planning and execution. Of course, the most famous of those was the one described by the coroner as turning an implosion into a public circus that resulted in the death of a Canberra citizen. The Canberra hospital implosion would have to be the top of any list of infrastructure execution.

Let us also not forget the fiasco around Bruce stadium. It cost the then Chief Minister her job because of the dodgy overnight financing and breaches of the Financial Management Act. It also led to the fiasco of grass being imported from Far North Queensland into a Canberra winter and then, not surprisingly, dying and having to be spray painted green to cover up for that absolute fiasco.

Then let us not forget the futsal slab, another fine example of public infrastructure that gets a lot of use as a futsal facility now! I think it has hosted more circuses than a Liberal Party preselection fiasco. It has had possibly more use as a car park than for what it was designed and for the amount that was spent on such a facility. They are just three examples—

Mr Hanson interjecting—

MR BARR: of the quality infrastructure provision that we saw under the previous government.

Opposition members interjecting—

MR ASSISTANT SPEAKER (Mr Doszpot): Members! Mr Hanson! Mr Smyth had relative quiet—relative quiet, I say—during his speech. So please give Mr Barr the same courtesy.

MR BARR: Good infrastructure planning in the territory stimulates productivity, prosperity and growth in our community. The benefits of good infrastructure planning in the territory are evident in the wide range of programs and projects that are currently being implemented by this government throughout the city. I look forward to outlining those examples in the next 12 minutes. Safety, reliability, security and an increase in public amenity, and also equity and fairness, are some of the important values that guide infrastructure planning in the territory—a vibrant city with great neighbourhoods, high quality services, a fair and safe territory, a healthy territory that is educated and skilled, a prosperous and sustainable territory. These are the government's priorities in guiding our infrastructure planning.

Good infrastructure planning is about decision-making processes that give these values and priorities form and concrete expression. For this reason, good planning is inseparable from good governance. The governance of ACT infrastructure planning is achieved through robust flexible legislative arrangements and is supported by key strategies such as the ACT planning strategy and the transport for Canberra planning strategy, amongst others. Of course, they are annually updated in the territory's infrastructure plan itself.

Whenever a decision is made on infrastructure it is subject to the practices of good government, including performance and conformance criteria such as value for money, return on investment, use of new technologies to ensure efficiency, meeting regulatory requirements and harmonising with national infrastructure reform agendas such as those led by the Council of Australian Governments.

Good practice and infrastructure planning includes developing well-defined goals based on values and priorities. A strategic approach to planning looks at future challenges and develops options to meet these challenges. Good practice also includes ensuring accountability for decision making by linking roles and responsibilities through the achievement of goals. It includes the use of qualitative and quantitative measurement frameworks as well as tools such as the whole-of-life cost-benefit analysis.

Finally, good practice and infrastructure planning means ensuring physical sustainability through targeted investment using shared resources and ensuring the government's revenue base. All of this adds up to infrastructure planning that deals with risk and can provide the ACT community with assurance and confidence in the decision-making process. It adds up to a targeted approach to reducing costs, mitigating externalities and ensuring integrity and integration within infrastructure planning.

This stands in stark contrast to the record of the shadow treasurer who was a member of a government that brought us the futsal slab, the botched Canberra stadium upgrade and who was flat out delivering a \$100 million capital works program each year—noting, of course, that the program is now six to seven times larger than it was when Mr Smyth was in government.

I would now like to turn to some examples of recent significant infrastructure projects to be delivered for the ACT community. In relation to transport, the government is committed to transforming Canberra's transport infrastructure and services and improving ACT residents' transport choices. Better public transport services will help reduce the costs associated with multiple car ownership, traffic congestion and will assist in reducing Canberra's greenhouse gas emissions.

The transport for Canberra plan sets this policy direction from now until 2031. The plan links together all of the aspects of planning for an integrated transport system—public transport, roads, parking, cycling and walking as well as associated infrastructure needs. A good example of this current planning is the Gungahlin-to-city corridor. The corridor has been planned to enable transport-oriented renewal. Along the corridor the government is undertaking the first stage of the light rail network for Canberra, the Capital Metro. Roads will, of course, remain crucial to Canberra's transport future and construction has commenced on the Majura Parkway linking the Federal Highway to the Monaro Highway.

In August of last year the government won funding from the commonwealth to investigate future infrastructure needs for the CBD. Specifically, a grant of half a million dollars was awarded under the liveable cities program as part of the nation building infrastructure investment fund. This is a one-for-one grant with the ACT's funding contribution consisting of a combination of cash and in-kind support. The grant is being used to develop an integrated strategic plan for the CBD. This will address the role of the city as well as set other strategies and initiatives to improve public spaces and infrastructure within our central business district.

Previously, the government has delivered 17 specific infrastructure improvement projects as part of the city area action plan. A number of these are within the vicinity of this Assembly building, but this has also occurred throughout the CBD. The government recognises that beyond these particular projects and beyond education and health, other forms of social infrastructure are needed to ensure the vibrancy and inclusiveness of our city.

In recent years we have delivered a wide range of metropolitan, district and neighbourhood-oriented community facility upgrades. This includes four community hubs at Chifley, Cook, Holt and Weston that have been upgraded. Work is progressing on another community hub in Flynn. Three new neighbourhood halls have been provided in Bonython, Ford and Griffith.

A seniors centre has been established in the Tuggeranong town centre. A third child and family centre has been constructed in Holt, building on the success of the existing centres in Tuggeranong and Gungahlin. The existing facilities at the Mura Lanyon community centre and the men's shed at the Majura Community Centre have been expanded and improved. These infrastructure works have been developed in response to community demands and designed with environmental sustainability in mind.

Infrastructure investment also improves housing affordability, a key priority of the government. This can be done directly through investment in new housing stock as well as indirectly in support of the private sector's provision of new housing. Under the affordable housing action plan, phase 3, there are 14 innovative actions to boost the supply of affordable housing in the territory. This also includes a remission on various lease variation charges for owners of existing commercial office buildings who wish to redevelop them into affordable housing.

The government is also investing in its own public housing stock. In recent years 421 new social housing dwellings have been delivered under the nation building and jobs plan with the ACT being the first jurisdiction in the country to complete its commitments under this program. All new public housing dwellings are constructed to minimise future maintenance costs and to achieve a minimum six-star energy rating, in addition to being fitted with energy efficient appliances.

In closing, I thank the shadow treasurer for raising this issue. Good infrastructure planning is a core priority of the government. This is evident in the many-mentioned projects and programs that the government is delivering to the community so that our residents, our businesses and our community groups can continue to enjoy high quality facilities and services. *(Time expired.)*

MR RATTENBURY (Molonglo) (4.09): I thank Mr Smyth for bringing forward this topic—the importance of good infrastructure planning in the ACT. I am sure that no-one in the chamber actually disagrees with this statement, but it is interesting how many arguments we do end up having about it in this place. High profile capital works such as the Cotter Dam and the GDE seem to have dominated that debate, at the expense of infrastructure successes and even discussion about what might be required for the future.

It is true that large infrastructure projects are not always popular with the public, as they often incur big up-front capital costs, cause disruption to normal services and have ongoing recurrent costs. These reasons are not good enough to prevent good infrastructure planning from happening. Political leaders and government do have an obligation to look into the future and plan for the future and to take the community on that journey with them.

There are a number of very real pressures that we need to take into account when we look into the future and think about infrastructure development for our city. Certainly climate change and energy policy is one significant area. This century will be one of transitioning to a low carbon economy. We need to transition our energy source, and certainly there is a clear sense that the days of sourcing our electricity from coal-fired power stations are coming to an end.

We need to adjust our thinking about what an energy grid looks like. We need a grid that imports and exports energy from renewable energy generators, large and small, a grid that maximises the usage of available electricity for consumers. Our current energy infrastructure is highly centralised, yet the emerging growth of renewable energy generators is pushing us away from large, centralised generators. While in the ACT our grid is in good shape, in as much as it was built to service higher consumption than it currently does, we will need to invest in decentralised energy systems as we move towards increasing amounts of renewable energy on the grid and towards implementing smart grid technology for managing energy effectively.

A decentralised energy system will bring benefits of efficiency gains by minimising transmission losses. Currently the ACT loses around six per cent of all the energy it purchases from interstate through transmission, and this is not an insignificant figure when a dollar value is ascribed to it.

Of course, we need to change where we source our electricity, and I am certainly pleased to say that the ALP and the Greens have, through the parliamentary agreement, put forward a strong agenda of reform, with a 90 per cent renewable energy target and extension of the large-scale feed-in tariff that will drive large-scale renewable energy infrastructure. Whether this is built in the ACT or in the capital region, it will serve to deliver energy security in the ACT into the decades ahead.

As well as a shift to a low carbon economy, we need to consider building climate change resilience in our city. Infrastructures that support efficient use of water and that incorporate the retention of green spaces that help urban cooling are just a couple of examples. We need to think about sustainable office buildings that may easily be converted into residential space if required and make sure that each and every house is built to the best energy efficiency standards. Housing that is constructed with universal design principles in place will also ensure that we can accommodate our ageing population over the next decades.

When it comes to transport, the changing energy future, as well as the changing shape of our city, will also impact on our transport systems, and we need to build transport systems that will serve us for decades to come. We have heard Mr Smyth today repeat

the twisted message that light rail will go ahead no matter what the cost. It is quite clear that we need to build light rail for the city and we cannot keep postponing, hedging or waiting for some other day. We need to commit to the project so that in 20 to 30 years time we have a comprehensive transport system that can meet the needs of our population in the future.

The other point, of course, is that we already have a very good idea about how light rail would work and its costs. There has been considerable work done on light rail over many years in Canberra, and the various studies have provided ongoing, updated costs of light rail in different corridors of Canberra over a period of time.

We can certainly go to the most recent study on the Gungahlin to city transit corridor, which is from September last year. This estimates the construction of the light rail corridor from Gungahlin to Civic at \$614 million. This is a refined and cheaper costing from an earlier projection on the corridor. It outlines the expected design—that is, median strip light rail—and it also breaks down the expected cost, something Mr Coe failed to recall in his recent motion before the Assembly. For example, it spells out \$101 million for track work, \$13 million for enabling work, \$54.6 million for light rail rolling stock, \$9.7 million for signalling and on it goes.

So we have a decent scope of projected costs with which we are working. A benefit-to-cost ratio on the Gungahlin corridor was also completed by Deloitte Australia, producing a figure of 2.34 in a situation where employment and population on the corridor increased, and this is the way that any project of this nature would progress.

The Liberal Party in Western Australia recently announced a large light rail project for Perth, and the Liberal Party transport minister has not yet explained how his government will finance its light rail project. And likewise, technical and engineering details need to be finalised. But that is okay, because these projects naturally go through staging. The Western Australian Liberals understand this. The Canberra Liberals conveniently ignore this normal project development so that they can complain and criticise instead of putting forward what their actual policy position is on this project.

I guess it is indeed the case that naysayers classically go hand in hand with the development of big infrastructure. I am not sure many people here know the story of Sir Joseph Bazalgette, designer of the London sewerage system, which came about because of terrible public health outcomes that London was experiencing as a result of using the Thames as an open sewer. Bazalgette faced many obstacles on his journey to completing the project, not least of which was the mixed governance of the area he was working in. There was no London city council at that time. He was experimenting with new building materials and new ideas as he went.

His proposals were expensive, and he was frequently battling with parliament against funding restraints. It is interesting that even the thought of public investment caused outrage by conservatives who described it as an infringement of personal liberty and an offence against public property. And, even back then, there were powerful interests who were lobbying against investment in that lifesaving system of public sanitation.

Yet I imagine that none of us now would even entertain the notion that a major city should go without a sewerage system.

I tell this story because there are lessons in it for us as we think about infrastructure planning, lessons about the political push and shove that goes with it and the necessity to look at the long game when having these discussions. We are reminded that when governments do not proceed with infrastructure they are criticised, as they are when they do. We understand that no-one likes a cost impact today for a benefit in the future. Yet the public reap the benefits of previous investments made by decision makers in years gone by, benefits that we take for granted as we flush our toilets, have fresh water on tap or switch on a light.

Good infrastructure planning ensures that projects are commenced in a timely fashion and that they can be undertaken in a way that reduces the capital cost burden on taxpayers of the day. Good infrastructure planning is about building for the long-term future, to the best of our ability, for the challenges that we are likely to face. It might mean spending more in the short term for a better long-term outcome. And good infrastructure planning involves thinking creatively about the solutions to future challenges rather than just doing things in the same old way and about employing innovative technologies where they are warranted.

These are the issues that we need to reflect on when we debate the topic that Mr Smyth has put forward today about the importance of good infrastructure planning in the territory. There are a whole range of matters that we need to be taking into account, and that is what this Assembly needs to be focusing on.

MR HANSON (Molonglo—Leader of the Opposition) (4.17): I thank Mr Smyth for raising this matter of public importance today—the importance of good infrastructure planning in the ACT. I note that in his speech he raised a long list of examples of where that has not occurred under the Labor government. Sadly for the people of the ACT that is the case. Mr Barr only came up with three. I think he got a bit stuck. In returning fire he got a little bit stuck and ran out of ammo.

What we have seen under this government is a long list of failures. It is relevant that we are talking about infrastructure planning in light of Friday's health hearings where we heard about the latest confusion within health planning. And it is fair to say that there has been a lot of confusion and a lot of disappointment. This arose as I was going forensically through the health projects that are subject to delay or cost blowouts, and it is fair to say that it is just about all of them.

As I was going through the literally dozens of health projects subject to some sort of delay, we came across the \$41 million that has been put aside to build the tower block. Now, the tower block has been much touted by the Labor Party. It is all part of what they have been talking about for over a decade—their vision for rebuilding the health system, and it has all been part of that vision.

It is amazing what they tell us before elections and then what they tell us after elections. You might remember back in 2008 there was no mention of Calvary and the desire to take that over, even though they had the secret backroom deals. This is just

the same, the sort of stuff that drips out after an election. In the lead-up to the election, no such mention.

Some of the quotes we got from Ms Gallagher going back to 2008 included, “Creating a new tower block that will contain acute ward areas and operating theatres, intensive care.” All of that would be within a new tower block. “A key component.” “Once the new tower block is built, the helipad will be on top.” “The design of the enhanced facility for Canberra Hospital, including the replacement and redevelopment of infrastructure, is needed to support the sustainable health system to ensure the safety and availability and viability of quality health care in the ACT.”

This is the media release from the budget 2011-12:

This investment provides \$41 million to progress the next stage of planning and design for new infrastructure such as a new tower block at The Canberra Hospital which will be designed to accommodate the majority of all inpatient activity at the hospital in the future. This new tower block will ensure—

will ensure, Mr Assistant Speaker—

that our tertiary referral hospital is able to meet projected increases in inpatient bed numbers in a modern hospital setting able to provide health care in the safest and most efficient way.

Quite a bit of spin there, is it not? And then we have got, “Government rejects slash and burn approaches,” talking about this investment again. And then in a puff piece in the *Canberra Times* in 2011 repeating that, “The new tower block will ensure our tertiary referral hospital is able to meet projected increases in inpatient bed numbers,” and so on. In question time, or was it annual reports, “Including the design work for the new tower block which will be designing essentially the major new part of the acute system in which it is built.”

On and on it goes, Mr Assistant Speaker. “The complete rebuilding of the tower block at Canberra Hospital.” “It is required in order to enable expansion of digital information systems.” “The ageing tower block needs to be demolished.” “New hospital plans to address an alien system.” “Massive capital works, including plans for a new hospital.” “The agenda in the lead-up to the October ACT election.” “Planning to begin in earnest for the replacement of the hospital’s main building with a new tower block which will include an intensive care unit.” So, what you see there is a whole lot of spin—this is the plan; this is locked in; this is desperately needed in the lead-up to an election, but then not so much after it.

Remember Dr Peter Hughes from Curtin—he is the bloke who wrote to Jon Stanhope calling on Katy Gallagher to be sacked, saying she did not have the confidence of the visiting medical officers. What did he say in a letter of 2012? He said:

It is up to the ACT government to justify the expensive vandalism in its proposal to demolish the tower block of the 40-year-old Canberra Hospital.

Maybe Katy Gallagher is listening to Peter Hughes, which would be an interesting scenario, would it not? But on and on the government have been telling us they are

going to do this as part of their plan, and it is how they are going to essentially provide the modern beds and infrastructure that we need in our health system. And now we are finding this confusion. The minister does not know whether she is going ahead or not, in what form it is going to go ahead and whether the design is going to go ahead. It has all stopped.

What is quite ironic is that the government now, particularly this minister, are talking about doing it all at Calvary, because Calvary is going to be our saviour now. You probably remember, Mr Assistant Speaker, if you wind the clock back to 2009, that it was revealed that this government wanted to take Calvary over, and there were comments from the Labor Party about Calvary being left to wither and die on the vine. That is the regard they had for Calvary. They could not do things at Calvary because it was not part of the systems approach they had and they wanted to get it into public hands. It could not do the job. They had to do it all at TCH because they could not trust Calvary. And now it has all turned 180 degrees. It is a complete backflip on what they were saying before.

This is what we were saying in this place in 2009, 2010, 2011: you have got a perfectly good precinct at Bruce, you have got a great hospital there, you have got Little Company of Mary doing the job; let us do something there. And the government was resistant to that.

What the minister said today—and I do not think she said it on Friday—was that part of this is about pressure on the budget. We know there are deficits in the outyears of \$575 million. There is \$2.7 billion in borrowings, and she is looking at the available capital in the budget as a whole. So basically, she is saying, “Oh, dear, have we got enough money for this? Because we have got a lot of other stuff we want to do. What else do we want to do? Light rail at any cost.” So they have got their \$600 million for the first tranche of light rail—and I refer you to the Greens’ policy, because they want to have it all over Canberra; light rail everywhere. This is just the first tranche, which is \$600 million. God knows what the full cost of light rail is under this Greens-Labor coalition.

So what the government is saying now is, “Oops, we’ll look at what’s available because we haven’t got enough money in the whole budget if we are going to pay for light rail to keep Mr Rattenbury on side. We need Mr Rattenbury on side if we’re going to stay in government.” You can start to see a little bit of a pattern emerging here.

As Mr Smyth alluded to with some of his concerns about light rail, let us not think that this is about a transport system that we need, and the question I raise is: why are we doing this? This is why we are going to do so much work investigating light rail, because when you look at the Greens’ policy—this is a quote from Amanda Bresnan—“Light rail is convenient”—well, maybe, maybe not—“cost effective”—I doubt it—“quiet and low carbon.” Low carbon, Mr Assistant Speaker, and there you have it. If you want to be the greenest jurisdiction in Australia, which is what Shane Rattenbury wants us to be, then he has got to have light rail. And Simon Corbell and those on the Labor left who are desperate to out-green Shane Rattenbury—they want to be the most extreme government in Australia—have to have some low carbon

projects. And there you go. Let there be some doubt about whether we have available capital in the budget as a whole for our hospital system, but we know, because Andrew Barr told us, that it is light rail at any cost.

Sadly, that is not the only project that we have seen problems with in the health system—the secure mental health facility, the women and children’s hospital, the hospital car park, the bush healing farm, central sterilising services, the walk-in centre, all subject to cost blowouts and delays for years and years. Some of them have had extraordinary cost increases—I have been through them before and I will have a chance, no doubt, to go through them again—and have been subject to extraordinary delay. The secure mental health facility was promised by Simon Corbell in 2006, and where is it?

Do we have confidence in this government to do good infrastructure projects and planning? No, we do not, because the evidence says they have failed on every occasion. As we see in this place today, when it comes to one of the biggest parts of health infrastructure, this government again are in confusion.

Discussion concluded.

Adjournment

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

That the Assembly do now adjourn.

Model car racing Gold awards

MR GENTLEMAN (Brindabella) (4.27): I would like to inform the Assembly tonight of a couple of events I recently attended. A couple of Saturdays ago the 2013 Super Toyworld, Team Orion and ACT Remote Control Car Club road titles were held here in the ACT, in Kambah in fact. It was a fantastic opportunity for local participants and interstateers to race the latest remote controlled cars. It was the first time on the new track there at Kambah. We had over 70 participants, and that included a host of interstateers. At the event we talked about the centenary and the contribution that their racing was making to the ACT.

I would like to congratulate the ACT Remote Control Car Club, Super Toyworld, Team Orion, Robert Nunn and Auto Body Care on sponsoring the event and some of the winners. The F1 winner was Rodney Maslovsky. The 21.5A winner was Rodney Maslovsky again. The 2.15B winner was Rodney De Haviland. The M-chassis winner was Phillip Merrick. The stock A winner was Andrew Sienniak. The modified A winner was Jordan Cullis. The modified B winner was Keith Chui. The 1/12th scale winner was Mark Wallin.

It was great to see so many people stopping and watching the event too, including passersby. So congratulations to the club on that event.

More recently, yesterday, I had the great pleasure to represent the Chief Minister in presenting some ACT gold awards. Those, as you are aware, go to people that have contributed to the ACT for 50 years or more. This was at Morling Lodge over at Red Hill, and it was fantastic to see some of the recipients there. I had the opportunity to visit there with an ex-supervisor of mine, Ted Pearce from Foreign Affairs in the 1970s.

I would like to go through some of the recipients of those awards at Morling Lodge. They were Rino Trezza, Matteo Bortolussi, Clarice Ellen Pearce, Selwyn Day, Doreen Burn, Maxine Loveridge, Wendy Smith, Lucy Biernacki, Antonia Agius, Fredrick Richer, Zina Levics, Angelina Giorgio and Gwen Palmer.

Also congratulations to the staff at Morling Lodge: Nikki Van Diemen, the residential manager; Maria Hobbs, the care team manager; and Susan Jones, the activities coordinator. All are playing a very important role in the care of those people at Morling Lodge.

Workplace violence

DR BOURKE (Ginninderra) (4.30): Last month I attended the ACT launch of a booklet entitled *Keeping you and your job safe: information for workers experiencing family violence*. It is an initiative of Safe At Home, Safe at Work, which is a project of the Centre for Gender Related Violence Studies and the University of New South Wales. It is funded by the commonwealth Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations. Domestic violence can take many forms, including intimidation, coercion or isolation, emotional, physical, sexual, financial and spiritual abuse.

For some, violence continues in the workplace. Abusive phone calls and emails are the most common, followed by the abuser physically coming to their work. This is especially true for workplaces with easy public access like retail, hospitality, health care and community services. Domestic violence can create problems for other staff and managers who may also be targeted. It poses a workplace safety issue and, ultimately, a liability issue.

Domestic violence is likely to impact on work performance, causing distraction, tiredness, being late and taking time off. The Safe at Home, Safe at Work team are campaigning to introduce domestic violence clauses into Australian workplace conditions. They are able to brief and develop with unions and employers workplace information and training resources.

The Safe at Home, Safe at Work resource booklet *Keeping you and your job safe: information for workers experiencing family violence* is a valuable tool. It guides the employee through the practicalities of what to do to help protect them on both the home and work fronts. It points out that workplaces have a duty to ensure health and safety, and workers have a duty to take reasonable care to protect their own safety. The booklet has advice on getting a family violence protection order, checking OHS policy and checking whether the workplace has a policy on workplace violence.

A supportive workplace can assist in safety planning, including protection from abusive calls, texts and emails, providing a photo of the abusive person to the front desk, notifying relevant staff to not divulge private information about location and movements and having a colleague accompany you to your car or transport after work. There is also advice on what to do if your job is being threatened by warnings about performance issues and if the employer treats you unfairly.

According to Safe at Home, Safe at Work, over one million Australian workers are now protected, with over 90 organisations introducing domestic violence measures such as paid leave to attend to urgent matters such as going to court for a protection order, flexible working arrangements and confidentiality and safety measures. Although these measures will create costs to the employer, Safe at Home, Safe at Work state that evidence shows it makes better economic sense to support an employee suffering domestic violence via paid leave and safe workplace policies than to have them leave or terminate their employment.

An informed and supportive workplace is more approachable and more successful in reducing domestic violence in the workplace, something that we all want. More information is available at www.dvandwork.unsw.edu.au.

Arthritis Awareness Week

MR WALL (Brindabella) (4.34): I rise this afternoon to acknowledge Arthritis Awareness Week 2013, a national initiative aimed at raising awareness about arthritis, osteoporosis and musculoskeletal conditions. The theme for this year's event is "Osteoarthritis—Imagine what you could do without joint pain?" I was pleased to be joined by a number of my colleagues here, including Mr Doszpot, Dr Bourke, Mr Hanson and Mrs Jones yesterday at the Canberra Croquet Club, where they had a guest speaker, Dr Rob Reid, a sports medicine physician, who spoke at the function about sports injuries and other osteoarthritis issues and the importance of keeping active and not letting pain rule your life. I wish Arthritis ACT and all their volunteers success in promoting the campaign this week at various pharmacy locations throughout the ACT.

Arthritis ACT was initially established in 1977 and offers to clients a range of services which aim to provide information, as well as awareness and support, for those facing challenges of living with osteoporosis, arthritis and other musculoskeletal conditions. Arthritis Australia funds research to look into potential causes and cures, and keeps health professionals informed about these issues.

I would like to acknowledge the executive members of Arthritis ACT who continue to do the hard work in promoting this cause, including the CEO, Mrs Helen Krig; the president, Ms Anna Hackett; the vice-president, Mr David Graham; the secretary, Ms Kristine Riethmiller; the treasurer, Mr Andrew Fleming; and their board members, Helen Tyrrell, Helen Davies, Wendy Prowse, Leanne Bowen and Mr Scott Milne

I also wish to acknowledge the support that is shown throughout the year by their various volunteers and encourage everyone to support the activities that Arthritis ACT

are doing during their awareness week and also visit their website www.arthritisact.org.au to find out more information on how they can get involved and help.

Education—early childhood

MS BERRY (Ginninderra) (4.36): I rise today to talk about an announcement that was made by the federal government. I was very proud to join with early childhood educators, parents and United Voice to hear this announcement which related to early childhood educators' wages. And it was fantastic to be standing alongside educators like Liam McNicholas, Tameka Hicks, Avis Kerr and Anna Whitty and service providers, along with Simon Rosenberg from Northside Community Service, and representatives of Goodstart and KU. We heard the government's announcement relating to early childhood educators and their wages.

As you would know, Mr Assistant Speaker, I have spoken a number of times in this place about the big steps campaign and the work that educators have been doing through their union and alongside parents to raise the issue of recognition and the value that we place on the essential work that they do in our community, in allowing people like me to enter into full-time employment, work with United Voice and end up here in the Assembly. I do not think we have respected the work that they have done for a very long time but I know that the ACT government has always proudly supported the big steps campaign and the work that early childhood educators do.

Today, it was important that the federal government also acknowledged the important work that they do, and I quote Minister Kate Ellis, the Minister for Early Childhood and Child Care, who said:

We have come a long way since staff were considered as babysitters and they should be recognised as the qualified professionals that they are.

It could not have come any sooner from the perspective of early childhood educators. It was also wonderful to hear Peter Garrett, the federal Minister for School Education, recognising the important work that early childhood educators do in giving our children under five the best start in life and how important it is that the sector has a qualified and professional workforce so that they can deliver this professional care and education for our children. There was a third person there at the announcement today, federal minister Bill Shorten. Again, it was wonderful to hear from him of his recognition of the work of the sector, predominantly a female workforce, and that a task force will be set up to look at the work in the sector and the inequality of wages when compared to more male-dominated sectors where males have the same qualifications.

I think it is important today to acknowledge that this decision recognises not just the qualifications of early childhood educators but also the important emotional investment that they make every day to our children when we drop them off at their early childhood centres. I know how hard early childhood educators have been campaigning for these changes, and I think it is terrific that early childhood educators not only just here in the ACT but all over the country will be able to celebrate tonight

that this wonderful decision will make such a huge impact on not only their lives but on the lives of the children and families who build relationships over the years. So I just wanted to congratulate educators, parents and their union, United Voice, on the wonderful work that they have been doing during this big steps campaign, and I look forward to continuing to celebrate with them.

Canberra—centenary

MR DOSZPOT (Brindabella) (4.40): The last few weeks have been very busy for all of us as we have celebrated Canberra's 100th birthday, and, I guess, the celebrations will continue for quite a while. Last Tuesday evening my wife and I attended Yarralumla's party at the shops. This was one of many such parties that were held all over Canberra as a centenary of Canberra project. I would particularly like to thank the Yarralumla Residents Association for their organisation and planning that led to over 460 paying guests enjoying a fantastic, catered dinner, with samplings from all of the local restaurants on the evening. Many residents who were not able to buy tickets came along and held their own picnics on the grass, and it was a very interesting and convivial atmosphere for all concerned.

The YRA committee comprises president Maria Fatseas and her hardworking committee. They are David Harvey, vice-president, who was the master of ceremonies on the night; Janie Gillespie, secretary and volunteer coordinator; David Johnstone, treasurer, who was in charge of waste management and cleaning; Diana Wright, public officer, who also assisted with food service and was a stand-by first aider, luckily her assistance was not required; Kristy Bos, committee member, who was in charge of seating; Robin Brown, committee member; Anne Charlton-Bien, committee member, who was in charge of site management, and quite a slave driver to all of us volunteers who had to carry the chairs and tables to various locations, great work by Anne; Robyn Cooper, committee member, who was on the greeting desk, and that was a very busy task as well, well done; Peter Outteridge, committee member, traffic management, safety and first-aid provider as well.

The committee was assisted by many volunteers, including students from Canberra boys and girls grammar schools, who assisted with setting up the tables and the seating for 460 people—not a small task. They did this with a great deal of gusto and they doubled up in serving the food to all the seated patrons. They also helped clean up after the event. So I hope that helps them in their community involvement through their school.

The strong community spirit was also demonstrated by the tremendous contributions of all the sponsors, including many of the businesses based at the Yarralumla shops. They include ActewAGL, Aeoncademy, Beess and Co, Bentham Street Bar 'n' Pizza, Bravien Financial, Dwyer Dunn Property Consultants, Elyssium Beauty Therapy, Emperor's Court, Face2Face Recruitment, Farmers Daughter, First Choice Drycleaners, Heritage Nursery, Johns Skurr Consulting Engineers, McSpedden Harvey, Palace Electric Cinema, Regan Kennedy Photography, Rustics Haircutters, Sitting Ducks Catering, Sukothai Restaurant, Thor's Hammer, Turkish Halal Pide House, Urban Hair, White Apple Fine Gifts and Wares, Yarralumla Bakery, Yarralumla Gallery and the Oaks Brasserie, Yarralumla IGA Supermarket,

Yarralumla Meats, Yarralumla Pharmacy, Yarralumla Post Office and Flowers and Yarralumla Surgery.

For many of these businesses, Tuesday evening's road closure of parts of Bentham and Hutchins streets was a major inconvenience, and on behalf of the community I thank them all for their cooperation and understanding.

The evening also included a welcome speech from the president, Maria Fatseas, and an introduction to Robyn Archer, creative director of the centenary of Canberra. And after Robyn's informative speech, she led the community in a spirited rendition of *Happy Birthday* to Canberra. It was a great night where the community had the opportunity to catch up with old friends and make new friends and celebrate the 100th birthday of our capital city. Congratulations to all the contributors to this great community event.

Charity events

MR RATTENBURY (Molonglo) (4.44): I would like to acknowledge some of the community involvement over the weekend by staff of Corrections ACT and some of the broader JACS staff. On Saturday morning, I joined a bunch of Corrections ACT staff for a breakfast barbecue at the Alexander Maconochie Centre prior to wishing them well on their way before they embarked on their annual charity motorbike ride. The ride was in support of the Starlight Children's Foundation. It is a great charity and certainly many of the staff were resplendent in their yellow Starlight Children's Foundation T-shirts. The ride started at the AMC and finished at O'Brien's Hotel Narooma, which was followed by an evening of raffles, auctions and festivities, probably a few beverages, although I cannot actually confirm that, and then a ride back to Canberra the next day.

There were 39 riders in the convoy. Those riders included the superintendent of the AMC, Mr Don Taylor, who dusted off his old motorbike riding habits to make it for the occasion and also, perhaps to break the stereotype that some of us might have, there were quite a few female riders in the group heading down the coast as well, which was terrific to see. The group raised \$10,000 for the Starlight Foundation. Over the four years of running this event, they have raised a total of nearly \$50,000. So it is a tremendous effort by a relatively small team from the Alexander Maconochie Centre.

Later on the Saturday I also joined corrections staff as part of the JACS jolly joggers for the Cancer Council's 24-hour relay for life at the Australian Institute of Sport track. This is a community event to celebrate cancer survivors, to remember loved ones lost to cancer and to fight back against the disease. It is a tremendous community occasion, with many participants taking part over the full 24 hours of the event.

The JACS team had representation from ACT Corrections, the ACT Law Courts and Tribunals, the ACT Government Solicitor's Office, the Public Trustee for the ACT, JACS executive group, JACS planning and policy, the ACT Administrative Appeals Tribunal and the ACT Parliamentary Counsel's Office. So it was from right across the department.

I should also note that Mr Hanson was out there over the weekend, the only member of the Assembly that I did see there, and I saw him on the track briefly. I did not get a chance to chat to him, but I appreciate the cheer that he gave me from the sidelines.

The corrections team, as part of the broader JACS team, is a small but valiant crew of just three, but I would like to make a special mention of John Croker from policy development in corrections who toughed out a contribution of 21 straight hours and approximately 30 kilometres, before the reported offer of a hot shower and some shut-eye became too much to pass up. I would also like to acknowledge Emma Hotham and Jess O'Connor from the corrections team.

The weekend, of course, was a family affair, and many JACS staff members brought down their partners and kids to participate in the festivities, which were well received. Certainly when I was down there on Saturday with them, a number of kids of staff of JACS were wandering around the track with us, and it was great to have them involved.

The ACT corrections transport unit provided their barbecue for a fundraiser held by the ACT Law Courts and Tribunals which raised over \$500 for the relay. The total amount raised by the JACS jolly joggers was just over \$2,000. I would like to thank James McQuillan from the ACT Law Courts and Tribunals for organising the JACS team and certainly making me very welcome as a bit of a participant in the JACS team in the Relay For Life.

Question resolved in the affirmative.

The Assembly adjourned at 4.48 pm.