



Debates

WEEKLY HANSARD

Legislative Assembly for the ACT

EIGHTH ASSEMBLY

19 MARCH 2015

www.hansard.act.gov.au

Thursday, 19 March 2015

Ageing—Seniors Week (Ministerial statement)	895
Housing—homelessness (Ministerial statement)	899
Government Procurement (Notifiable Invoices) Amendment Bill 2015	904
Statute Law Amendment Bill 2015	907
Capital Metro—Select Committee	909
Planning, Environment and Territory and Municipal Services— Standing Committee	922
Executive business—precedence	922
Public Pools Bill 2014	923
Disability—inclusion	930
Questions without notice:	
Asbestos—loose-fill insulation	932
ACT Policing—staffing	933
Transport—light rail	935
Health—mental health	938
Canberra Institute of Technology—Auslan	941
Education—parental engagement	941
ACT Ambulance Service—alleged bullying	944
Transport—registration inspections	946
Community services—social inclusion	947
Supplementary answers to questions without notice:	
Greyhound racing—live baiting	950
Domestic Animal Services—dogs	951
Paper	952
Canberra Olympic pool (Ministerial statement)	952
Education—tertiary (Matter of public importance)	958
Adjournment	968
Public Accounts—Standing Committee	968
Adjournment:	
Clean Up Australia Day	970
Canberra Malayalees Association	970
Gungahlin Community Council	971
Roads—Copland Drive	973
Schedules of amendments:	
Schedule 1: Public Pools Bill 2014	975
Answers to questions:	977
Legislative Assembly—presentation costs (Question No 364)	977
ACTION bus service—passengers (Question No 366)	978
Roads—street lights (Question No 367)	978
Capital metro—productions (Question No 368)	979
ACTION bus service—passengers (Question No 369)	979
Housing—first home buyers (Question No 370)	980
Environment—former petrol station sites (Question No 374)	981

Thursday, 19 March 2015

The Assembly met at 10 am.

(Quorum formed.)

MADAM SPEAKER (Mrs Dunne) took the chair and asked members to stand in silence and pray or reflect on their responsibilities to the people of the Australian Capital Territory.

Ageing—Seniors Week Ministerial statement

MR GENTLEMAN (Brindabella—Minister for Planning, Minister for Roads and Parking, Minister for Workplace Safety and Industrial Relations, Minister for Children and Young People and Minister for Ageing) (10.03), by leave: As members may know, this week is ACT Seniors Week. As Minister for Ageing, I am pleased to provide members with a statement on the initiatives currently being progressed by the government to support seniors in our community. I also wish to talk about the progress that we are making in our journey to develop Canberra as one of the great age-friendly cities in the world.

As members will be aware, the term “age-friendly” best describes a city or community that is constantly evolving, being shaped and refined to become an environment that provides older people with an exceptional quality of life where access, personal security and the right to feel socially included, valued and respected are woven into the social fabric. In a planning context, an age-friendly city incorporates design features and recreational facilities that encourage older people to remain physically and socially active, maintain a healthy lifestyle, be socially engaged and explore opportunities that provide new life experiences as they age. The ACT government values its older Canberrans and it recognises their lifelong contribution to the urban and social development of our city.

Older Canberrans have worked with purpose and passion to build not only a national capital that we can all be proud of but also a living and vibrant cosmopolitan city. More than ever, Canberrans continue to make a major contribution to our community into their senior years—supporting family members, acting as carers, continuing to work or taking an active role in community life. Seniors are an essential part of the team that keeps our community strong, focused, vibrant and inclusive.

As part of the ACT’s membership of the World Health Organisation’s global network of age-friendly cities, we have made a commitment to continuously improve our age-friendly status. Part of this commitment is not only to plan for older Canberrans but to plan with older Canberrans. We know that the ageing population of Australia will continue to provide numerous challenges for our economy and our community.

The Australian government released the *2015 Intergenerational report* last week. The report contains some long-term projections which include increases in our aged workforce participation rates for those over 65 years old. Over the next four years the

aged workforce participation for those 65-plus will rise from 12.9 per cent to 17.3 per cent. Australians will also live longer and will do so in better health. We will continue to lead active lifestyles and we will remain in the workforce after reaching the current traditional retirement age.

It is against this backdrop that the ACT government is keen to ensure that all Canberrans have the opportunity to participate fully in the social and economic life of our city. Employers and businesses have an important role to play in supporting this agenda of inclusion and equality. In partnership with the ACT government, the Canberra Business Chamber was instrumental in showcasing age-friendly employment best practice as part of last year's inaugural ACT age-friendly awards. I am pleased to inform members that we will again hold the ACT age-friendly awards this year.

Increasing the employment participation of seniors in our city provides tremendous benefits, not only by retaining valuable knowledge and skills within our workforce but also by providing solutions that address some of the economic impacts of an ageing population. With this in mind, I am pleased to announce that tomorrow I will be hosting an ACT mature age workers ministerial roundtable which will provide an opportunity for peak bodies and seniors to identify local barriers, opportunities and solutions for the mature age workforce in our city.

This is part of the ACT government's ongoing conversation with businesses and the broader community to understand the issues affecting mature age workers and to identify further opportunities to build a fairer, more equal and inclusive Canberra for our seniors. I am happy to advise that I have invited Mr Doszpot to attend as well.

I am focused on providing older people with avenues to remain working, as I recognise the importance of economic engagement to the ongoing health of our economy, and social inclusion for seniors. I look forward to providing members with feedback on the outcomes and actions arising from the ACT mature age workers ministerial roundtable.

I would like now to turn to the work the government has done following our second older persons assembly in October last year. Members will know that there were over 50 recommended actions from the older persons assembly. As the Minister for Ageing, I was impressed by the informed discussions by delegates, including one example which highlighted that some older Canberrans find it difficult to use pedestrian pathways in their local community because of a fear of possible physical collision with fast-moving cyclists. In response to this action and as a consequence of the findings from the 2014 report by the inquiry into vulnerable road users, the government is developing a community education strategy which will include a cyclists code of conduct and address the particular issue raised by the delegate.

The older persons assembly delegates also called for action to ensure safer roads for older people and our community generally. We listened to this advice, and new pedestrian or refuge islands will continue to be built on new and existing roads, based on an assessment of local need.

Delegates also called for additional bus seats within bus shelters, and as a result the Territory and Municipal Services Directorate will continue the task of upgrading or installing new seating and shelters based on the community need. All of this work in the infrastructure context will continue to help our seniors to lead a safe, healthy and socially connected life.

Following budget funding in 2014, Roads ACT has commenced work on an age-friendly suburbs project in Ainslie and Weston. One of the areas of focus is how to make travel through these suburbs easier and safer for our seniors in terms of active travel—that is, anything which is not car travel, of course. The Territory and Municipal Services Directorate and the Council on the Ageing ACT are currently undertaking community consultations to identify the most cost-effective infrastructure improvements and to examine the broader aspects of what would make these suburbs more age friendly.

The ACT government is also undertaking work to improve the delivery of a range of services so that they can be better accessed by older Canberrans. An example of this is the support and assistance that can be provided to older Canberrans so that they may become more connected through modern communication technology. ACT libraries already provide our seniors with internet and computer training, and an excellent example of this important work is the ACT digital hub at the Gungahlin library. The hub provides a number of training sessions that cater to older Canberrans with little or no previous computer experience. CIT also provides special courses for seniors with no previous computer knowledge.

Transport also plays an important role in helping older people stay connected. To further complement the bus services for older Canberrans, ACTION has introduced a flexible bus service for those who have limited access to public transport. The flexible bus service provides a home pick-up service throughout the suburbs with localised zone areas in the territory, and delivers passengers to their local shopping centre. Again, it is the right services at the right time. Public transport is the easiest and most convenient way for seniors to travel around the capital. The ACT government has also made travel easier, with the provision of free travel on ACTION buses, which has been reduced from 75 years to 70 years of age. I am also looking forward to working with my colleague Minister Corbell regarding the capital metro initiatives to ensure that age-friendly considerations are taken into account in developing light rail in our city.

We have been celebrating the role and contribution of seniors through ACT Seniors Week. The week provides an opportunity not only to celebrate but also to acknowledge our older Canberrans and their lifelong contribution to the ACT community. Seniors Week encourages all older Canberrans to find out about what is currently available in Canberra in terms of social or special interest groups, activities and services. It also provides an incentive for seniors to get out and about and to make some new friends, to stay socially connected and active and to maintain a healthier lifestyle. There are hundreds of events going on, and I encourage members to visit the Council on the Ageing website at www.cota.act.org.au to find out more.

We recognise that our seniors do not form a single group, and their diversity is no different from that of other groups within our community. We know that seniors want to be valued and included, they want to participate and they want to be treated equally. Older Canberrans include people who were born in Australia and those born overseas who represent a multitude of cultural backgrounds, different life experiences, different levels of education, different levels of personal financial security and vastly different family structures and support networks.

I was therefore pleased to launch in the Assembly last year a report into LGBTIQ and HIV-positive issues in aged care in the ACT. The report called for a better focus on developing safe, appropriate and affordable aged-care options that are free of discrimination, eliminate social isolation and incorporate a level of awareness and understanding of the LGBTIQ and HIV-positive community. This government is committed to making Canberra the most LGBTIQ-friendly city in Australia, and that includes our seniors.

In conclusion, the government are committed to improving the lives and wellbeing of older Canberrans. We shall continue our support and our important work to improve the livability of this city for older Canberrans and to continue our significant efforts to make Canberra a truly great age-friendly city of the world where our seniors feel included and valued members of the community.

I present the following paper:

Ageing—Ministerial statement, 19 March 2015.

I move:

That the Assembly takes note of the paper.

MR DOSZPOT (Molonglo) (10.15): I too welcome the opportunity to acknowledge Seniors Week. In Canberra this week it is a very packed program for seniors, and I acknowledge the work that COTA has done in bringing some of these activities together. Last week I attended a national seniors conference and was pleased to see so many people interested in their future and wanting to remain actively engaged within their community. I discovered that there is some resentment at the term “seniors” and the perception that people over a certain age should sit at home and vegetate and not remain active and outspoken on a range of issues. The federal government’s *Intergenerational report* highlights clearly that the paradigm is changing—that people are wanting to remain in the workforce longer than their parents did. They are living longer than their parents did and their expectations for their later years are higher than previously.

The government is also encouraging people over 65 to remain longer in the workforce, and it would be interesting to note our ACT government’s response to these initiatives. I have received complaints from older Canberrans about difficulties when they are seeking employment, and this applies to people from 55 years of age on. It would be interesting to see Mr Gentleman address some of these concerns. I will be speaking to some of these issues at his conference.

I welcome the initiative of free travel during Seniors Week for seniors card holders. I acknowledge the value of flexible bus services. Public transport is of great importance to senior Canberrans, as many choose to give up their cars and rely on public transport to get to meetings, appointments and other events. Such things as better signage at bus stops and on buses, better design and more comfortable bus shelters do not just benefit older Canberrans; they make Canberra an easier and more pleasant city to live in and to get around.

On the issue of footpaths, I am only too aware of how many of them are unsafe. It is probably the most consistent complaint I get when I travel around my electorate and talk to constituents. It is especially difficult for Canberrans in older suburbs with trees so often uprooting old paths and making them even more dangerous than having no path at all.

I thank Minister Gentleman for including me in Friday's roundtable. It was a rather late invitation but I do appreciate it and I will fit it into the busy schedule that I have tomorrow. It is unfortunate also that it clashes with a similar event being hosted by Senator Seselja. I know there are many people who would have wanted to attend Minister Gentleman's event as well, had it been held at another time. Similarly, as it is a sitting week, I was unable to attend the Seniors Expo at Thoroughbred Park on Tuesday. I am sure from what I have heard that it was another successful event.

The older persons assembly last year was a great success and it is pleasing to hear that some of the recommendations are being seriously considered by the government, but I also note that there was some concern among the ageing community that the health issues of our older community were not taken into account in last year's older persons assembly. I understand that Mr Gentleman has also received some correspondence on this issue, and I hope that it will be an agenda item at the next older persons assembly.

It is important that this Assembly continues to take note of its older Canberrans. They have contributed to Canberra and they continue to make a significant contribution to the ACT in so many ways.

Question resolved in the affirmative.

Housing—homelessness

Ministerial statement

MS BERRY (Ginninderra—Minister for Housing, Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs, Minister for Community Services, Minister for Multicultural Affairs, Minister for Women and Minister assisting the Chief Minister on Social Inclusion and Equality) (10.19), by leave: I am pleased to have the opportunity to continue the discussion around both the importance and the effectiveness of our public and community housing and other homelessness services here in the ACT. In response to a motion on 18 February this year the Assembly agreed that as Minister for Housing I should provide a further update on key housing issues and the provision of services to those experiencing or at risk of homelessness. There is a danger in this debate of jumping to conclusions or making sensational claims based on one or two statistics and it does a great disservice to those whose lives we are talking about.

No-one should seek to make political mileage on the back of those in our community who often suffer from the greatest hardship. With that in mind, I want to paint a full picture of Canberra's public and community housing sector and its importance for inclusion, equality and fairness in our community. In 2013-14 a total of 22,605 Canberrans lived in public housing across 10,724 tenancies. In the current financial year, the government is spending more than \$20 million on homelessness service delivery. The Productivity Commission's recent *Report on government services*, ROGS, highlighted the persistent demand which exists for public housing but also showed the effectiveness of allied services in responding to pressing need, for example, in those accessing supported accommodation services, where the ACT rate is triple the national average.

Through the work of the government and the community housing providers across the service network we have a strong understanding of the forces which can lead people to homelessness. For example, women and children escaping domestic violence, young people and families on low incomes who are battling to make ends meet, people living with a disability, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, seniors, and recently arrived migrants and refugees are also more heavily represented among those who need housing assistance, and I will come to the particular services geared to supporting those groups.

For some, the factors behind their homelessness are compounded by other complex issues such as mental illness, drug and alcohol misuse, intergenerational homelessness, long-term unemployment, poverty and chronic illness. Those experiencing multiple forms of disadvantage can find it incredibly difficult to exit what is a vicious cycle. They do, however, receive multiple layers of support from our homelessness services.

Another finding of ROGS was that public housing in the ACT is more effectively targeted at low income households than in any other jurisdiction: 98.9 per cent through our priority housing process. Priority housing status is granted for those applicants who demonstrate the most urgent and critical need for public housing, as determined by a multi-disciplinary panel skilled in assessing complex needs. In 2013-14 over 97 per cent of new allocations were from the priority and high needs housing categories. Identifying and placing those who have greatest need for our housing is a difficult but vital task, and I have seen the work of the multi-disciplinary panel firsthand. Some of the key factors considered in assessing eligibility for priority housing reflect the key groups that I have mentioned.

Sadly, domestic violence continues to be the main cause of homelessness among women in our community and is the largest cause of homelessness nationally. In 2013-14 ACT domestic violence services in the ACT supported more than 500 women. In the same year just over \$4 million was allocated to eight community sector organisations to provide specialised domestic violence support, including immediate crisis assistance, crisis accommodation, trauma counselling and support for women in the judicial process.

While we welcome the greater profile of the domestic violence issue on the national agenda, tackling its cause will be a generational effort, during which we must

continue to support those who experience it. The demographic profile of public housing tenants demonstrates the effectiveness of Housing ACT in housing those most in need. It also highlights other key groups who access housing and homelessness services as well as valued targeted programs.

The following data is from 2013-14: almost one in five public housing households, 19 per cent, had a main tenant aged 65 or older, and 14 per cent of tenants had the aged pension as their main source of income. Sixty-eight per cent of single-tenant households are home to women over the age of 65. Sixty-five per cent of main tenants in public housing were female. Approximately 25 per cent of all households were single-parent households, and overwhelmingly these households were headed by women, 85 per cent. Almost 40 per cent of tenancies had at least one member of the household with a disability, a total of 4,035 tenancies at 30 June 2014.

I have touched on the representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in the ACT's homelessness population, which is why the government has funded a supported accommodation service for families and a boarding house network for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families managed by Inanna Inc. The program includes accommodation for mature age students, student couples with children, families from interstate who have relatives in hospital or are visiting relatives in an ACT correctional facility, transgender and gay people, and parents requiring intensive parent support with care and protection involvement. In 2013-14 there were 83 new Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander public housing tenancies created, providing homes to a total of 175 people, including 158 from the priority housing list. At 30 June 2014 there were 780 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander public housing tenancies, housing a total of 1,643 residents.

I have also mentioned the value in providing concerted responses to young people experiencing homelessness. Seven services which commenced operation in April 2012 under the youth housing and homelessness services reform continue to support young people across early intervention, crisis and stabilisation. The services and their providers are: housing support service, CatholicCare; crisis mediation service, conflict resolution service, youth emergency accommodation network, the Salvation Army; Canberra Youth Refuge; friendly landlord service, Barnardos; youth identified accommodation and support program, Barnardos; mentoring, life skills and social enterprise service, Ted Noffs Foundation; and parent accommodation support program, St Vincent de Paul.

In 2013-14, 142 young people were at risk of homelessness because of family conflict and were diverted from entering crisis accommodation. The youth housing program assists young people to sustain long-term tenancy and to engage with education, employment and the community. The program specifically targets young people aged 16 to 25 years who are transitioning from the community youth justice system, care and protection, or homelessness services. ROGS acknowledged the high level of success in more than 80 per cent of young people in the homelessness system going on to access education and training services, some 15 per cent above the national average. This is one key indicator as we look to provide the pathways to a permanent exit from the public housing system for as many young people as possible.

A central component of the suite of homelessness services is case management, the tool through which support is provided to help people identify and achieve goals and address the issues that cause their homelessness. This can include connecting or reconnecting to education, training and employment. In the ACT in 2013-14 there were 125 more people in employment and 196 people engaged in education and training after receiving case management support from homelessness services. The government also works to ensure that people with disabilities and older people have access to services.

We know the importance of ageing in place. For older persons who have been in their home for a number of years it is central to their networks and lifestyle. We want to help older public housing tenants maintain those networks by supporting them to stay in their home with community support and out of the aged-care and health systems. We seek to support these preferences through modifications to properties and responding to changing tenants' needs, such as disability requirements. In 2013-14 Housing ACT carried out disability modifications to 680 homes based on the advice of occupational therapists. This included \$1.2 million on major disability modifications such as wheelchair ramps or major bathroom modifications and \$300,000 on minor modifications such as grab rails, lever taps and hand-held showers.

By way of just one example, one of our tenants is an 81-year-old woman who has lived in her current home since the door was first opened 60 years ago. She has many fond memories in her home, including raising her family of six children. She was referred to Housing ACT occupational therapy service to assess difficulties she had been having with accessibility. She had reported recent falls. She was met by an occupational therapist, and multiple improvements to the home were subsequently made to enable her to age in place: a rear landing, handrails on both sides of her steps, a concrete path to the clothesline, safety improvements to her bathroom and a ramp to the front entrance. These modifications have made it possible for this woman to remain in her home. She is able to remain in her community, among friends and family and the familiarity of the local services, shops and her doctor. She is able to maintain her independence in meaningful occupations at home and to continue to have a voice and control as she ages. This example is repeated many times over.

We continue to invest in maintenance and upgrade of the ACT's public housing stock because of the quality of life which relies upon it. Yet maintenance alone for our public housing stock is not the only thing. We must look to renewal, and we are. The government recently announced a renewal program for public housing in the ACT. This program will replace our stock roof for roof, initially involving the replacement of 1,288 properties. It is the largest renewal of public housing in the history of self-government, replacing stock which has reached the end of its useful life with modern homes far more suited to the needs of our tenants.

As an investment in renewal and equality, this process will also reduce concentrations of disadvantage in the larger multi-unit complexes and improve safety and amenity. It will be a staged and consultative process. As buildings are sold we are talking with tenants and responding to their wishes about their future homes. The linking into new communities task force, LINCT, a reference group of peak bodies and service

providers, has been established to guide the overall tenant relocation program. A tenant relocation strategy has been developed to assist tenants to move to their new accommodation and will be backed by funding to assist with relocation costs. The Housing ACT joint champions group will also serve as a forum for residents to express their needs and concerns.

Finally, on the issue of the Canberra South Motor Park, which Ms Lawder expressed concern over during the February sitting, it is a small but important part of the housing continuum in Canberra. Recent commercial interest in the sale of the site had led some residents to raise concerns about their future at the site. I can inform the Assembly that the government has now received advice that the offer for sale has been formally withdrawn. It should also be noted that in all discussions about the future of the site, the government has clearly identified the long-term future of residents as a primary consideration. This is the starting point for all our services and all those who need them.

But for all the value of these services, the ACT's housing sector remains in real need of funding certainty. The year by year negotiation of commonwealth funding under the national partnership agreement on homelessness creates great uncertainty for service providers. It undermines their ability to plan, to retain staff and to provide reliable services. Numerous representations made to me by peak bodies and service providers have highlighted the precarious state some important community services find themselves in. I have reiterated to them, as I have to the Assembly, my ongoing commitment to advocate for them at the federal level and seek the funding assurances so clearly needed.

I thank members for the largely bipartisan position taken in relation to this and I urge the opposition also to continue to lobby for greater funding certainty and transparency in crucial service sectors such as housing.

I present the following paper:

Public Housing and Homelessness Services in the ACT—Ministerial statement,
19 March 2015.

I move:

That the Assembly takes note of the paper.

MR RATTENBURY (Molonglo) (10.33): I have a few brief remarks in support of the minister's statement. As Minister Berry said, there is a danger in the discussion of housing and homelessness of jumping to conclusions based purely on statistics and it does a great disservice to those whose lives we are talking about. I would add that it also does a disservice to those who work in this important area of vulnerability.

In my time as housing minister I was greatly impressed by the skill, dedication and passion of those working in both government and non-government agencies. Providing housing and responding to those experiencing homelessness is a difficult task and one that is getting more difficult and complex as demand grows and services

are stretched. But as Minister Berry has said publicly, and I must say I wholeheartedly agree with, we need to not just talk about the problem but also talk to the people we are here to help.

I was certainly gladdened to hear that the linking into new communities task force is continuing to guide the overall tenant relocation program that is essential to the housing renewal underway. I attended the first meeting of this task force and was greatly impressed by the collaborative approach taken by the various agencies represented. And I think these agencies provide a perfect link between the organisations—as I guess the acronym stands for—government and many of the tenants.

Of course Housing ACT will talk directly to the tenants, but having the advocates also there to make the case on their behalf, where things fall between the cracks or perhaps someone does not articulate an issue so well, reinforces and amplifies the confidence we can have that tenants are being well heard by Housing ACT and the government. So I thank those members of the community who have taken on that role in the task force because it is vital that we get this transition right.

There is real opportunity here for the tenants to move to properties that are more suitable, more modern, have better energy efficiency and perhaps are in a neighbourhood that even suits them better or end up being back in the neighbourhood where they started. But these are challenging works. I have expressed my frustration publicly before—and I know the minister has also said it—about the way so many of the tenants are talked about rather than talked to directly. I think that is an area we must continue to focus on and make sure that we continue to provide good opportunities for those people in our community who do need public housing both in terms of the ongoing consultation but also in ensuring that we continue to build them new housing stock that actually is an improvement on the stock they are currently living in.

I thank Minister Berry for the statement and look forward to further updates as we move through this exciting phase of renewal of some of the ACT's public housing.

Question resolved in the affirmative.

Government Procurement (Notifiable Invoices) Amendment Bill 2015

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

Title read by Clerk.

MR BARR (Molonglo—Chief Minister, Treasurer, Minister for Economic Development, Minister for Urban Renewal and Minister for Tourism and Events) (10.37): I move:

That this bill be agreed to in principle.

Today I am introducing the Government Procurement (Notifiable Instruments) Amendment Bill 2015. This bill will build upon transparency and government contracting provided by notifiable contracts provisions of the Government Procurement Act by requiring the government to publish information about payments it makes on invoices.

It is important that the government pays its bills on time. A large proportion of suppliers to government are small and medium-size enterprises. Those that are not often have such businesses who subcontract to them. It is important to the ACT economy that cash keeps flowing to these businesses, and the government takes seriously the significant part it has to play in this. For this reason the government is making a range of reforms that will support the sustainability of regional businesses, and this bill is one of those reforms.

The bill requires the government to publish information about invoices with a value of \$25,000 or more, to be known as notifiable invoices, on the public register. Members are likely to be aware that the government is required to notify contracts with a value of \$25,000 or more on a contract register. The \$25,000 threshold is also established as the threshold for seeking a minimum of three quotations when undertaking procurement. It therefore makes sense for the notifiable invoices threshold to be set at \$25,000. The following information about each notifiable invoice will be published: what the invoice is for, the territory entity responsible for the invoice, the value of the invoice, to whom it has been paid, the date the invoice was received and the date it was paid.

The contracts register includes a copy of the public text of each contract—that is, the contract with any confidential text removed. Text that is deemed to be confidential must fall into one or more of the definitions in the Government Procurement Act and must be agreed by the relevant director-general.

Last year Mr Coe presented the Government Procurement (Transparency in Spending) Amendment Bill. We have been waiting for months for him to bring it on, but he has not done so. The government supports the intention of that bill, but the matter of confidentiality is a major problem. And there are a couple of other major problems with Mr Coe's bill that I will discuss in a moment.

Mr Coe's bill requires a notifiable invoices register to include a copy of the invoice in addition to the details of the invoice. However, invoices may contain confidential information such as the supplier's BSB and bank account details or hourly rates of pay, which would be inappropriate to disclose. An officer would need to examine each invoice for confidential text which would need to be deleted, and the public version of the notifiable invoice would need to be approved by a delegate for publication.

The government issues payments on about 14,000 invoices with a value of \$25,000 or more per year. The government has estimated that it would need to resource approximately 1½ full-time equivalent administrative officers, and this does not include the cost of a senior executive to approve the publication of the invoice. Given

that information about each notifiable invoice will be available, the government considers that publishing a copy of the invoice would have questionable benefit to the community. Access to full invoices is available through the freedom of information process.

Mr Coe's bill also required that information to identify the contract for a notifiable invoice be published. Unfortunately, the government system does not allow this information to be easily identified. Invoices generally do not include a reference to the related contract, so an administrative process would need to be established to find this information. Again, with approximately 14,000 invoices, this would pose a substantial administrative burden. Individuals can search the contracts register, for example, by entering the supplier's name and territory entity if they are interested in seeing the contract for a given invoice.

Another issue with Mr Coe's bill is the requirement to publish the date an invoice was raised. One problem with this is that the meaning of "raised" is unclear. It could mean, for example, the date of the invoice, the date the invoice was received by the government, or the date the invoice was approved for payment and presented to the accounts payable unit. The bill I am introducing instead requires publication of the date the invoice was received. As well as not needing a definition, this will ensure that the government is only reporting on matters within its control. For example, it is not unusual for invoices to take up to 10 days to be delivered, so the date of an invoice being issued or raised could distort measures of the government's performance on timeliness of payments.

The government's bill meets the open government objective whilst dealing with the many shortcomings in Mr Coe's bill. The government system does not currently allow for the date an invoice is received to be readily captured. Shared Services Finance has funding to implement an invoice automation system, and it is expected that this will be in place within the next 12 months. The new system will capture the date an invoice is received, so the bill sets the relevant provision to commence on 1 July 2016 or earlier by commencement notice if the system is in place for that date. The other information about invoices contained in the bill is available without changing ICT systems and can be readily recorded.

The provisions in the bill, except for the date the invoice is received, will commence on 1 July 2015. The bill requires that the information about notifiable invoices be published within 21 days at the end of the month in which the invoice was paid and remain on the register for at least two years.

Openness in government is important, and it is right and proper that the territory's citizens are able to see where their money is spent. However, the cost of implementing new transparency measures must be kept to a reasonable minimum. Therefore, the notifiable invoices register will consist of a monthly report uploaded to the procurement website. This process means the relevant information will be available for interested individuals within existing funding.

Some jurisdictions publish information about all their payments, including salaries and intergovernmental payments, such as where the Government Solicitor invoices a

directorate for legal advice provided or the payment that Shared Services ICT receives for installing a new software system. The bill does not include these kinds of payments in its definition of a notifiable invoice. The objective of the bill is to demonstrate the government's timeliness in paying its suppliers. The bill also means the community will be able to see and judge how the government pays its suppliers of goods, services or works, who are entitled to be paid in a timely manner.

Having introduced the bill today I intend to have the Assembly debate it in the May sittings, a much shorter time frame than we have been forced to wait for Mr Coe to bring on his private member's bill, which the government would have sought to amend anyway. In the context of getting an outcome on this issue, my process I have outlined today will see the timely introduction of the intent of Mr Coe's bill done in a way that will not cost the taxpayer additional money. In my view, that is the best way to proceed. I commend the Government Procurement (Notifiable Invoices) Amendment Bill 2015 to the Assembly.

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

Statute Law Amendment Bill 2015

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

Title read by Clerk.

MR CORBELL (Molonglo—Deputy Chief Minister, Attorney-General, Minister for Health, Minister for the Environment and Minister for Capital Metro) (10.46): I move:

That this bill be agreed to in principle.

The Statute Law Amendment Bill 2015 makes statute law revision amendments to ACT law under guidelines for the technical amendments program approved by the government. The program provides for amendments that are minor or technical and noncontroversial. They are generally insufficiently important to justify the presentation of separate legislation in each case and may be inappropriate to make as editorial amendments in the process of republishing legislation under the Legislation Act 2001. The program is implemented by presenting a statute law amendment bill such as this in each sitting of the Assembly, including further technical amendments in other amending legislation where appropriate.

These bills serve the important purpose of improving the overall quality of the statute book so that our laws are kept up to date and are easier to find, read and understand. A well-maintained statute book greatly enhances access to ACT law and is a very practical measure to give effect to the principle that members of the community have a right to know the laws that affect them. Statute law amendment bills also provide an important and useful mode for continually modernising the statute book. For example, laws need to be kept up to date to reflect ongoing technological and societal change. As the ACT statute book has been created from various jurisdictional sources over a long period, it reflects the various drafting practices, languages, printing formats and

styles throughout those years. It is important to maintain a minimum consistent standard in presentation and cohesion between legislation coming from different sources at different times so that better access to and understanding of the law is achieved.

This bill, therefore, deals with three kinds of matters: schedule 1 provides for minor noncontroversial amendments proposed by a government agency that require the approval of the Chief Minister; schedule 2 contains amendments of the Legislation Act 2001 proposed by the Parliamentary Counsel to ensure the overall structure of the statute book is cohesive and consistent and is developed to reflect best practice; and schedule 3 contains technical amendments proposed by the Parliamentary Counsel to correct typographical or clerical errors, improve language, omit redundant provisions, include explanatory notes and otherwise update or improve the form of the legislation.

The bill, as usual, contains a large number of minor amendments with detailed explanatory notes. It would not be useful for me to go through all of them now, but I will mention a few matters. Schedule 1 of the bill amends section 14 of the Road Transport (Third-Party Insurance) Act 2008 to enable the minister to appoint a public servant as the ACT's compulsory third-party insurance regulator for a term of up to five years. Currently, section 14(2) of the CTP act states that the director-general administering the act is the CTP regulator. This is the currently the Director-General of the Chief Minister, Treasury and Economic Development Directorate.

When section 14(2) was first enacted, the administering directorate was the Treasury. However, these two directorates were combined in 2012 and consequently the CTP regulator is no longer a Treasury executive with working knowledge of third-party insurance issues. Although the CTP regulator's functions under the act are delegated to Treasury staff, the director-general remains fully accountable for the administration of the act. This is not an entirely satisfactory arrangement because insurance policy is the responsibility of the Treasurer, and the CTP act and compulsory third-party insurance policy and arrangements are the responsibility of the Under Treasurer as head of agency rather than the Director-General of the Chief Minister, Treasury and Economic Development Directorate.

In order to improve the alignment of administrative arrangement responsibilities, section 14(2) of the CTP act is therefore proposed to be amended to remove the director-general as CTP regulator and enable the minister to appoint a public servant with appropriate knowledge and expertise as the CTP regulator. This will also enhance practical administrative efficiency and ensure that insurance policy expertise remains in one agency.

Consequential amendments are also made in schedule 3 to ensure that the CTP regulator is responsible for regulatory and administrative matters under the act instead of the director-general. Schedule 2 contains minor noncontroversial structural amendments to the Legislation Act initiated by Parliamentary Counsel. Structural issues are particularly concerned with making the statute book more coherent and concise and, therefore, more accessible. Strategies to achieve these objectives include avoiding unnecessary duplication and achieving the maximum degree of standardisation of legislative provisions consistent with policy requirements and operational needs.

In this bill the Legislation Act is amended in schedule 2 by omitting redundant references to the ACT gazette in sections 28, 61, 65A and 69. The references are in examples that refer to the gazette as a place the Parliamentary Counsel considers appropriate for notifying various matters if it is not practical to do so in the ACT legislation register. These matters are the notification of, the making of proposed laws, the making of legislative instruments, the disallowance of subordinate laws or disallowable instruments and the amendment of subordinate laws or disallowable instruments by resolution of the Assembly. These examples are redundant because the gazette is now published in the ACT legislation register

Schedule 3 includes amendments of acts and regulations that have been reviewed as part of an ongoing program of updating and improving the language and form of legislation. These amendments are explained in the explanatory notes and are routine, technical matters, such as the correction of minor errors, improving syntax and omitting redundant provisions.

In particular, amendments are made in schedule 3 to a standard provision in all the infringement notice regulations made under the Magistrates Court Act 1930 to improve clarity. The standard provision states that an authorised person may serve an infringement notice and a reminder notice for an infringement notice offence under a particular act. This section is recast to remove a possible ambiguity by making it clear that an infringement notice for an infringement notice offence and a reminder notice for the offence do not have to be served at the same time. Thirty-five infringement regulations are therefore amended.

Amendments are also made in schedule 3 to various acts and regulations to reflect the change of name of ACTEW Corporation Ltd to Icon Water Ltd. The names of other associated entities—for example ACTEW Distribution Ltd and ACTEW Retail Ltd—are also updated to Icon Distribution Investments Ltd and Icon Retail Investments Ltd respectively. Although section 183 of the Legislation Act 2001 covers a change of name of an entity, it is preferable to change the name itself throughout the statute book to avoid confusing readers with references to the old name.

Finally, in addition to the explanatory notes in the bill, the Parliamentary Counsel is, as always, available to provide any further explanation or information members would like about any of the amendments made by the bill. I commend the bill to the Assembly.

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

Capital Metro—Select Committee Establishment

MR COE (Ginninderra) (10.57): I move:

That:

(1) a Select Committee on Capital Metro be established;

- (2) the Select Committee shall consist of two members nominated by the Government and two members nominated by the Opposition, to be nominated to the Speaker by 5 pm on this sitting day;
- (3) the Chair of the Select Committee will be an Opposition member;
- (4) the Select Committee shall inquire and report into the financial, economic, social and environmental aspects of the Capital Metro Light Rail project;
- (5) the Select Committee shall report no later than the last sitting week in March 2016; and
- (6) the Government must not proceed with light rail prior to the Select Committee reporting.

Madam Speaker, it is with much anticipation, obviously, from Minister Corbell and others opposite that I seek to establish a select committee on capital metro.

Mr Corbell: Again.

Mr COE: Minister Corbell interjects, “Again.” That is a very good point, because for years now the opposition has been calling for additional scrutiny of what will be the biggest expenditure item ever in the history of the ACT. It is for that reason that we believe instituting the highest level of scrutiny that this Assembly can establish would be a worthwhile step for us to take.

There is considerable doubt about this project from many members of the community, and I think even those opposite would accept that fact. Even those opposite would surely accept that this is a controversial project. Even those opposite would accept that there is concern about how the route was chosen, or about the patronage fears, or about how it will be financed. How will it be funded? Will it be up-front? Will there be an availability payment model? How will the consortium work with the ACT government? What will be the nature of the PPP? And there are many other questions.

We would be foolish if we thought that we in this place had all the answers. Therefore, why don’t we have a select committee that can get to the bottom of this issue? A select committee can provide genuine advice along the way—to the government, to the opposition and to the community at large. I would envisage that a select committee that looked into light rail would be able to, of course, hear from Capital Metro Agency experts and from the minister and other relevant ministers. It would also give an opportunity to members of the community to be able to contribute to the committee process.

To date, whilst we have, on the back of a previous motion that I have moved, more interaction with the Capital Metro Agency and with the Minister for Capital Metro, we are yet to have members of the community being given an opportunity to contribute to an Assembly committee or even an inquiry concentrating on light rail.

The proposal I have put forward as listed on the notice paper suggests the membership should be two members from the government and two members from the opposition.

Given that is the form of this Assembly, we believe it would be consistent to do that again for this inquiry. Really, this is not an unreasonable request. It is not unreasonable to give members of the community an opportunity to have their say, and to actually allow members of this place to provide commentary to the government, on many issues.

I note that the planning committee is doing an inquiry into the draft plan of management for the Albert Hall—a very worthwhile inquiry. I find it interesting that we are doing an inquiry into the draft plan of management for the Albert Hall, yet the government does not think it is appropriate for us to do an inquiry into the biggest capital works project that the ACT has ever embarked upon.

It is a \$783 million project. And who knows; if the expansion or the extension to Russell goes ahead, this project will perhaps tip a billion dollars—2½ times the final cost of the Cotter Dam, nine times the original cost of the Cotter Dam, and many times more than the cost of most other capital works that this government undertakes.

It is for that reason that the opposition believe it is appropriate that we raise the bar when it comes to this capital works project and that we, in the absence of a public works committee, in the absence of automatic triggers for capital works to go to committees, establish a committee that looks into this massive project and its ramifications, be they good or bad, for our community.

The consequences of light rail are going to be vast. They will be vast for people living on the corridor or beyond the corridor; they will be vast for people who pay taxes, rates, fees and charges. They will be vast for people who have an interest in transport, be it private or public transport. These are all serious questions and they are worthy of discussion. It is for that reason that I have moved that a select committee be established, and I call upon members of the Assembly to support the motion.

MR CORBELL (Molonglo—Deputy Chief Minister, Attorney-General, Minister for Health, Minister for the Environment and Minister for Capital Metro) (11.03): The problem for the Liberal Party with their motion today, moved by Mr Coe, is that their rhetoric does not match their actions. There have been a series of very deliberate and extended periods of time available for the Liberal Party to ask detailed questions about this very important infrastructure project, and they have failed. They have failed comprehensively to capitalise on them. Mr Coe refers—

Opposition members interjecting—

MR CORBELL: They do not like it, do they, Madam Deputy Speaker? They want their arguments heard but they are prepared to talk over anyone who puts a contrary view.

There is already a standing referral from this place to the Standing Committee on Planning, Environment and Territory and Municipal services, providing two opportunities every year, for a minimum of three hours on each occasion, for detailed questioning on the capital metro project by that standing committee, of which Mr Coe is a member.

So pressing has been the committee's desire to take up this questioning that the committee has only recently and welcomingly confirmed the second three-hour session earlier this week. I thank the new committee chair, Ms Fitzharris, for facilitating that, because I am very willing to appear before that committee with my officials and answer any questions that members of the opposition and indeed members more generally have about this very important project.

So there is already a standing referral to the Standing Committee on Planning, Environment and Territory and Municipal Services; therefore there is already an opportunity for that committee to call for submissions and hear evidence from community members who have an interest in and want to have a say about this project. That opportunity already exists.

The question is: why hasn't it been taken up? Why hasn't Mr Coe suggested to the committee that they call for submissions? Why hasn't he said, "Let's have public hearings and invite other stakeholders to have their say on this project"?

Mr Coe: How do you know I haven't?

MR CORBELL: Why hasn't he done it?

Mr Coe: How do you know I haven't?

MADAM DEPUTY SPEAKER: Mr Coe!

MR CORBELL: Well, it has not happened. Equally, in the first hearing that was held, on 27 August last year, Mr Coe ran out of questions. He had three hours but we were struggling to get to the end of three hours, and it was the Labor members of the committee that kept the questioning going when Mr Coe apparently ran out of interest, questions or ideas. So his rhetoric does not match his actions.

The bottom line is that there is a dedicated referral already in place for the Standing Committee on Planning, Environment and Territory and Municipal Services to have this agency, and me as the responsible portfolio minister, appear on two dedicated occasions for three hours on each occasion.

That is, of course, in addition to the other opportunities for scrutiny that are normally available for this project. It is in addition to the dedicated hearings for the annual report of the Capital Metro Agency, which was recently concluded by the same standing committee. It is in addition to the estimates committee process, where the expenditure of the Capital Metro Agency and all related matters are available to be scrutinised at length by the Select Committee on Estimates. Of course it is in addition to every question time we have in this place, where questions can be asked of me as the capital metro minister about any aspect of the project. And it is, of course, in addition to the ability to put questions on notice in this place.

If this was such a pressing and important issue, I note that I did not get any questions from Mr Coe yesterday in question time on capital metro. I do not think I got any on

Tuesday as well, although I may stand to be corrected on that. So if there are all of these pressing unanswered questions, why isn't he pursuing them? Why isn't he taking every opportunity available to him? The fact is that he is not, and that is because his actions cannot match his rhetoric.

We will not be supporting this motion today because the Liberals' actions do not match their rhetoric. This Assembly and this government have been very supportive of providing additional opportunities for scrutiny to take place by members of this place when it comes to this project. We have a standing referral to the Standing Committee on Planning, Environment and Territory and Municipal Services. We have the normal opportunities through the annual reports process, through the estimates process, through questions in this place, and those avenues, quite frankly, are not being fully exercised by the opposition already. There is clearly no case to do even more when they are not even matching their rhetoric with their actions currently.

MR RATTENBURY (Molonglo—Minister for Territory and Municipal Services, Minister for Justice, Minister for Sport and Recreation and Minister assisting the Chief Minister on Transport Reform) (11.09): I thank Mr Coe for yet again bringing the issue of light rail to the Assembly because it is both his favourite topic and mine as well. The light rail project is progressing very well. Members would have seen this week the announcement of two shortlisted consortia who are bidding to build and operate the project.

The consortia contain some of the world's most experienced companies in light rail projects, including operators, architects and engineers. This is a very exciting time for Canberra. We are making excellent progress on a world-class project that will change our city for the better and set us up for a future of quality public transport, urban improvement, and do so with the all-important framework of environmental sustainability.

In addition to this, of course, are the significant social and economic benefits that come with the project. Canberra will be a light rail city and our residents and visitors will enjoy all of the benefits that come with that: better transport options, better planning, public transport that can use renewable energy, the attraction of tourists and events, increased use of public transport, investment and development, jobs and options for extending the light rail to further parts of Canberra.

It is not a very long time until construction begins. Next year is the expected start date. A couple of years after that and the light rail will be operational. I think many residents will be surprised at just how sleek and modern new light rail technology is. People use the term "tram", which perhaps conjures up images of rattling Melbourne trams or San Francisco streetcars. The realisation of capital metro will make the vision clear to a lot of people in the community who possibly have not imagined just yet what light rail and the first light rail corridor will look like.

We have talked before about the business case and its patronage estimates. Those estimates are certainly done with great care. The professionals who do those calculations are careful not to succumb to optimism bias. The estimates are still good

but, of course, I remain cautiously hopeful that in a few years from now those patronage estimates will be exceeded.

This is what occurred on the Gold Coast. The light rail service there is carrying many more passengers than anticipated. It is very popular. The Queensland government has just announced the beginning of work on a second stage of Gold Coast light rail. Canberra could, I hope, live this same story: the first stage of light rail from Gungahlin to Civic is successful and popular and our attention turns to bringing this great public transport mode to other parts of our city.

I turn to the details of this particular motion. It seeks the establishment of a select committee on capital metro and for light rail to not proceed before the committee reports on March 2016. I have to say that it is a nice try by Mr Coe but I am not going to support this obviously political and partisan stunt. Just to put this in context, and this is important in considering this motion, I will quote the very clear position of the Liberal Party, which they trumpet repeatedly all around the Assembly and all around town: “The Canberra Liberals do not support light rail and will take every opportunity to try and stop this project.” Those are words from Mr Coe.

Nothing could be clearer. The Canberra Liberal Party will do anything they can to stop the progress of light rail in Canberra. They announced it repeatedly and proudly. It is why they attempted to block money through the budget going to the Capital Metro Agency. It is the basis of their opposition to the capital metro facilitation bill.

It is the subject of repeated motions in the Assembly. In case members have forgotten, I will remind them of a few. The Liberal Party’s May 2014 motion called on the government to abandon the light rail project.

Opposition members interjecting—

MADAM DEPUTY SPEAKER: Members on the opposition side, keep the noise down, please.

Mr Hanson interjecting—

MADAM DEPUTY SPEAKER: Mr Hanson!

MR RATTENBURY: Their August 2014 motion called on the government to delay the project until some uncertain date in the future. In October 2014 we had another motion asking that the project be delayed. Then in November 2014 there was a new approach, with the motion calling on the government to cancel the project.

The February 2015 sittings brought an innovative approach, with two motions appearing from Mr Coe, one calling for the project to be delayed and another calling for it to be cancelled. Here we are today with a motion attempting to set up a committee to try to delay the project until it reports next year, just before the election.

This motion will, of course, be dressed up as being about transparency. We have heard those comments this morning and any opposition to it—

Mr Doszpot interjecting—

MADAM DEPUTY SPEAKER: Mr Doszpot!

MR RATTENBURY: would be described as a failure of accountability. But it is obvious to me and I think everyone that this is simply another anti-light rail badge for the Liberal Party members to pin to their chests. For the party who, as they say themselves, will take every opportunity to try and stop light rail, this is just another opportunity.

I will not be supporting that attempt. The best approach is for the government to continue on its well-known time line for building—

Mrs Dunne interjecting—

MR RATTENBURY: light rail in a responsible way—

Mr Doszpot interjecting—

MADAM DEPUTY SPEAKER: Mr Doszpot!

MR RATTENBURY: and in a way that minimises delays. That is now four members of the opposition who have interjected, including Madam Speaker, in the course of my attempt to make my remarks, whilst Mr Coe was heard in silence.

MADAM DEPUTY SPEAKER: I will ask again that members of the opposition cease interjecting.

Mr Coe interjecting—

MADAM DEPUTY SPEAKER: Mr Coe!

MR RATTENBURY: The government has been very transparent on this project. It released the full business case on the project for the community to assess and scrutinise. You do not see this occur on other similar projects. This has been accompanied by the full release of feasibility studies and project updates. There has been extensive community engagement and consultation. Most recently consultation has been occurring on the urban design elements for the light rail project and light rail was a prominent issue before the last election.

Then, of course, there are the comments that Minister Corbell just made about the estimates and annual reports processes, where there are significant opportunities for discussion and for scrutiny of the project, and questioning of both the minister and the Capital Metro Authority.

It does seem to me that the motions are so frequent and the anti-light rail sentiment so enthusiastic from the Canberra Liberals because they are determined that this will be their political campaign to bring to the next election. If the government and the Greens support light rail then the Liberal Party feel that they must oppose it.

This is certainly the wrong way to achieve good outcomes for Canberra and to ensure a positive and healthy future for our city. But even in terms of political campaigning, the anti-light rail hyperbole really paints the Liberals into a corner. People actually like light rail. What will the Canberra Liberals say in a few years from now when the light rail is built, when it is operating, when thousands of people are using it? Will they continue to damn it? Will they quietly let it slide and find a new project to oppose?

I will use my remaining time to note some of the spurious arguments that have been spread in recent times. This is a continuing trend and it is important to continue to challenge these issues as they arise. One argument Mr Coe has been using repeatedly is that apparently 99 per cent of Canberrans will not use light rail in the morning peak. I find that a very strange thing to put forward as an argument. Gungahlin to Civic is the first stage of a potential Canberra-wide network. How does light rail ever expand across Canberra to a broader population if we never take the first step? The implication is that we must either put down an instant complete light rail network or never do it at all.

You could use the same argument in respect of each individual bus route or many other services. You could make the same argument about the Gungahlin Leisure Centre, because it is predominantly used by the people of Gungahlin. Or you could make the same assertion about, say, the Ashley Drive upgrade, because mainly Tuggeranong residents will use it. But that is not how as a city, as a community, we operate together.

We actually do these things because as a community we invest in various parts of the city for various needs that are required. It is an entirely parochial argument to say that if an initiative does not serve all of Canberra or the majority of Canberra then we should not be doing it. A vast array of Canberra services are actually for specific groups, for specific users or for specific geographic regions. Yet we go ahead and build those projects on a regular basis.

I also hear Mr Coe say that apparently Infrastructure Australia rejected the light rail project. It is probably time to correct that. It did not reject it. It did not agree to provide funding at this point in time—

Mr Coe interjecting—

MADAM DEPUTY SPEAKER: Mr Coe!

MR RATTENBURY: which is what it does in respect of numerous projects that remain on its list for future consideration. Look at the infrastructure priorities list and you will see that the Canberra transit corridor is still listed on Infrastructure Australia's early stages initiatives list. The description of this category is:

Initiatives in this category address a nationally significant issue or problem, but the identification or development of the right solution is at an early stage.

The same thing happened with the Majura parkway. It spent many years on Infrastructure Australia's list without receiving funding. As we know, it was eventually funded. In any case, we might note that the federal government has seen fit to provide money to the light rail project through its asset recycling scheme, an excellent choice by the federal government. It is great to see that some of this asset recycling money will go to a sustainable public transport project, particularly as the federal government has typically pumped most of the money into roads infrastructure.

To conclude, I simply say that I will not support this motion. It is yet another example of the Liberal Party's self-professed strategy of stopping light rail in any way they can, and I will not be party to it.

MR HANSON (Molonglo—Leader of the Opposition) (11.19): I commend Mr Coe for bringing this motion before the Assembly today. I note that in his speech Mr Rattenbury highlighted the significant body of work that has been put together by Mr Coe and the opposition, which debunks Mr Corbell's myth that we have not asked the questions; we have. The problem is not the questions that have been asked; it is the answers that we are getting. That is why we need to shine a light.

The reality is that Mr Coe is making the point clear. We need to have scrutiny. Mr Corbell and Mr Rattenbury are scared of scrutiny. They do not want it—they really do not. They want to have it in the Labor-controlled planning committee, where they know that Mr Gentleman and Ms Fitzharris will make sure that we keep light rail.

Mr Gentleman interjecting—

MR HANSON: You were previously the chair, I understand. You will make sure that there is nothing that is going to come forward that might embarrass the government on light rail. I am sure, because I know Mr Coe and Mr Wall well, that they would have been pushing for stronger action from the planning committee, with recommendations and so on that they just would not get past the ever-compliant Mr Gentleman and Ms Fitzharris while they were chairs of the committee.

They do not want an inquiry where people might come forward and tell the truth. They do not want David Hughes coming forward and explaining how it is a fantasy, that it is a folly. They do not want the head of the economics department of the University of Canberra coming forward; he recently described it as "silly". I think was his word. They do not want to hear from Infrastructure Australia, which rejected the bid, or the Productivity Commission.

Certainly they fear having members of the community come forward. I am not just talking about a narrow band of people here. Many people we talk to in the community who are Labor Party members or Greens members are outraged by light rail. They are outraged by the fact that this government, without a mandate, is going to be spending hundreds and hundreds of millions of dollars of taxpayers' money on a project that they do not support, that they do not want. The vast bulk of this community is saying no. They do not want to have that. They do not want to see so many members of the

community come forward, either individually or represented by members of community councils, who I note are equally outraged.

For the government, the line seems to be, “Don’t worry. We’ve got the experts in charge. We’ll put the experts in charge of this. It’s all right. You don’t need to ask questions.” Going back to the good old days, it reminds me a bit of when Mrs Dunne was asking questions about the dam. I remember the arrogance that we would see back then, particularly from Mr Stanhope, and the dismissal: “Don’t question us; we know better. How dare you question us! We’re going to put a consortium in charge that know what they are doing. How dare you question it.” That dam went from \$120 million, the original price, to \$409 million. It more than tripled in price. With all of the questions that Mrs Dunne and the opposition were asking then, if only we had had the correct answers, if only we had had the opportunity for proper scrutiny for that project, we may not have ended up with the sorts of problems we saw.

With light rail, the line from this government is, “No, we know what we are doing.” But look at the experience with the dam. The Labor Party, Mr Stanhope, went to the 2000 election saying, “We’re going to build you a dam. It is going to be \$120 million.” He delivered a dam for \$409 million. That is the record of this government on a project less than half the size of capital metro.

That is the experience of this mob. They say, “Trust us. We don’t need a committee to look at this. We’ll put some experts in charge. Trust us. Don’t worry. We are doing the consultation; we are doing the community engagement.” Community engagement? Has anyone been along to one of these community engagement sessions and seen the cardboard tram? This is what the government thinks is community engagement. It is not having a proper inquiry, providing an opportunity for people to put submissions in, to appear in a professional way before a committee of this place. No, it is: “Get down to Cooleman Court and have a look at the cardboard tram.”

I know that Mr Corbell refuses to get in the tram, which is disappointing. There were big calls for him to get in there so that we could have a look at him riding his cardboard tram. He would not do it. He is too tall, he says. That is the reason he would not get in the cardboard tram. Maybe the planning minister, who may fit, might get in the cardboard tram—or others—but Mr Corbell is too tall for his cardboard tram. I hope his design of the actual tram is not so flawed that it does not accept people of Mr Corbell’s stature.

Mr Corbell: We will give you an invite.

MR HANSON: You will give me an invite? Let us hope that the design of the real tram is better.

If you are engaging with capital metro on Twitter, watching the YouTube videos and all of the slick production that is being put out there or turning up to see Mr Corbell try and squeeze himself into the cardboard tram that he does not fit into, that is community engagement; that is consultation with this government.

What if you actually want a proper inquiry, where people might be able to put submissions in, where we might want to hear from the experts, where we might want to hear from the members in the community who are paying the rates, who are going to pay for this tram? Do not think that it is Mr Corbell or Mr Rattenbury paying for it. The ACT ratepayers are going to pay for this—and the ACT ratepayers' children and grandchildren. This is a project and this is just phase 1.

If you extrapolate the cost for this, we are talking about billions and billions of dollars that the government are signing up to. They have said that they are going to roll this out across Canberra. They have committed us to billions of dollars of expenditure. A reasonable request from Mr Coe that there be an inquiry to have a look into this is rejected. Why? Because this government is scared of the scrutiny. And well they should be.

Madam Deputy Speaker, as you know, people in Belconnen do not like this, do they? I know that you conduct mobile offices, Madam Deputy Speaker. You have people coming up to you. I would love to hear many of those conversations about light rail. I have spoken to people who have spoken to you who have told me, “We have expressed dismay at this project to Madam Deputy Speaker.”

Mr Gentleman interjecting—

MR HANSON: I am sure Mr Gentleman now interjects because he knows that this stinks down in Tuggeranong.

Mr Gentleman: I was just talking to my colleague.

MR HANSON: He is talking loudly to Ms Berry, who comes from Belconnen as well. They are locked into the tram. We always know that Mr Gentleman and Ms Berry will do what Mr Corbell asks of them. I think we know that that is the way that they operate in this cabinet.

Anyway, the fact of the matter is that this tram is not viable. Mr Rattenbury said, “Let us look at the Gold Coast and the projections there; it has exceeded projections.” It depends which figures you use, doesn't it, Madam Deputy Speaker? The original projection put forward by the Labor Party, when they put forward the Gold Coast tram, was 50,000. That was revised down to 17,000. There are more than 17,000 people using it, but the reality is that the usage is significantly less than the original 50,000 estimate. Even if it was close to that, the point I would make is about the government's own projections, comparative to 50,000, with—what is it?—3,500 in peak hour or something like that. It might stack up on the Gold Coast. I do not think it was a wise investment up there, but 50,000 compared to 3,500 is a reasonable contrast.

We will not rest, Madam Deputy Speaker. We will continue to look for every mechanism here in the community to shine a light on this project, which simply does not stack up. The government's decision to prevent what I think is a quite reasonable level of scrutiny of what is Canberra's biggest ever infrastructure plan is arrogant. It is causing more division in our community. The number of people who are against this

project compared to the number supporting it is increasing day by day, not only because of the flawed nature of this whole program but because of the arrogant attitude of Labor and the Greens towards it.

MR COE (Ginninderra) (11.29): We have heard some mixed messages from those opposite. We often talk about them being on the one page, but on this issue they seem to be slightly at odds. We have Minister Corbell telling me I am not doing anything and then we have Minister Rattenbury telling me I am doing too much. If Mr Corbell wants more—if he wants more FOIs, more QoNs, more questions without notice, more motions—we will happily oblige.

This is an important motion. If you do not have an Assembly committee to scrutinise the biggest capital works project ever, when do you have an Assembly committee? When do you initiate the highest standard of scrutiny that we as a chamber can initiate?

This project would have to be about the only project ever in the ACT of perhaps over \$20 million, \$30 million or \$40 million where the government is not letterboxing. The government members are not actually telling Canberra what they are doing. I long for the day when Ms Porter letterboxes a piece about the capital metro project to Belconnen. I long for the day when Ms Berry puts down a piece about how good capital metro is for the good residents of Macgregor, Charnwood, Flynn, Dunlop, Scullin or Page—it goes on and on. I urge you to do that. I urge you to do that, because we have not seen it yet. Isn't it amazing? There is a \$783 million commitment and they do not even want to tell the good people of Canberra about it. I hope Ms Berry is going upstairs right now to frantically pen a piece of literature that they can pump out of the printer and have delivered to the good people of Belconnen.

Perhaps we will see Minister Gentleman—Mick Gentleman, Mr Gentleman—put something down and go door to door in Richardson, Chisholm, Gilmore, Macarthur and Lanyon, or down in Gordon or Bonython, and tell people just how good capital metro is going to be for them, just what they are getting in exchange for their higher rates. I long for that day when Minister Burch is there at the Calwell shops with an A-frame saying, “We’re bringing capital metro to Gungahlin.” That is what they did with the \$11,000 tram. It was a very good exercise when they took it out to Kippax to show the good people at west Belconnen what they were not getting!

What about this master plan? Where is the tram going to go? I have a feeling that the tram is going to go everywhere. Perhaps we are going to have a spur line out to Kippax; we will have a spur line out to Charnwood; we will have a spur line up to Evatt shops—everywhere. We are going to have this extraordinary grid network. It is going to be absolutely superb. The reality is that only three per cent of Canberra’s population live within walking distance of the proposed tram site, three per cent of Canberra’s population—

Mr Corbell: Jobs—3½ thousand jobs.

MR COE: Minister Corbell interjects “3½ thousand jobs”. We all know that traditional construction develops far more jobs per dollar than does light rail, a point

that has been adequately made by many experts. That is why we have such a marginal BCR. Even the business case says that under minor adverse circumstances the project will slip below one—minor adverse circumstances. We are going to see a situation whereby we are not even getting the money back. And that is including the fanciful assumptions that Minister Corbell has included in this business case—the fanciful assumptions or, worse still, fantasy.

This is a project which should be scrutinised. This is a project which the government should want to talk about. Yet they do not want a committee; they do not want more questions. Madam Deputy Speaker, we very well know that nobody in Belconnen has ever received a piece of literature from you that mentions capital metro; not once has there been a letterboxed item from your office which mentions capital metro. That is a telling point. I have not seen a piece from Dr Bourke. I have not seen a piece from Minister Burch, Minister Gentleman or Minister Berry—not once. How many people in Weston Creek have received a piece letterboxed from Minister Corbell to say, “I am bringing capital metro to Canberra”? The fact is that the only time they seem to talk about this beyond the corridor is in the ACT government-wide update, the community notes. That seems to be the only time.

The government does have a real problem with this issue. Only three per cent of Canberra’s population are going to be within walking distance of a tram stop. Therefore, rather than creating modal shift, it is going to increase the amount of multimode trips. At best we are going to see people parking and riding. At worst we will probably see more people driving as a result of light rail. I actually think we are going to see more people driving as a result of light rail. We will be saying much more about that over the coming months.

I am disappointed but not surprised that those opposite are not supporting this motion to bring a level of scrutiny. We will keep moving motions; we will keep putting in MPIs; we will keep asking questions; we will keep trying to get a fair level of scrutiny in the committee process; and we will keep putting in FOIs. The challenge to the government is to actually respond to those requests. To date, many of those have gone begging. I urge members to support the motion.

Question put:

That the motion be agreed to.

The Assembly voted—

Ayes 6

Mr Coe	Ms Lawder
Mr Doszpot	Mr Wall
Mrs Dunne	
Mr Hanson	

Noes 7

Mr Barr	Mr Gentleman
Ms Berry	Ms Porter
Dr Bourke	Mr Rattenbury
Mr Corbell	

Question so resolved in the negative.

Planning, Environment and Territory and Municipal Services— Standing Committee Report 7

MS FITZHARRIS (Molonglo) (11.40): I present the following report:

Planning, Environment and Territory and Municipal Services—Standing Committee—Report 7—Report on Annual and Financial Reports 2013-14, dated 4 March, together with a copy of the extracts of the relevant minutes of proceedings.

I move:

That the report be noted.

I am pleased today to present the seventh report of the Eight Assembly for the Standing Committee on Planning, Environment and Territory and Municipal Services. The annual and financial reports were referred to standing committees on 25 September 2014. The following annual reports, or sections of annual reports, were referred to the Standing Committee on Planning, Environment and Territory and Municipal Services: Economic Development Directorate, including Sport and Recreation Services and Venue and Event Services; Environment and Sustainable Development Directorate, including the ACT Heritage Council, the ACT Planning and Land Authority, the Conservator of Flora and Fauna, and the Environment Protection Authority; the Land Development Agency; the Office of the Commissioner for Sustainability and the Environment; Territory and Municipal Services Directorate, including ACTION, the ACT Public Cemeteries Authority and the Animal Welfare Authority; and the Capital Metro Agency.

The committee held five public hearings and heard from 53 witnesses from the relevant directorates as well as the Commissioner for Sustainability and the Environment. Fifty-six questions were taken on notice, which were all responded to promptly and are available on the committee's webpage. The committee made 11 recommendations. During its deliberation, a majority of the committee could not agree on proposed recommendations, but these have been included in the extract of minutes.

Finally, on behalf of the committee I would like to thank ACT government ministers and directorate officials, the Commissioner for Sustainability and the Environment, and agency officials for their contribution to this inquiry and for their timely return of answers to questions taken on notice. I commend the report to the Assembly.

Question resolved in the affirmative.

Executive business—precedence

Ordered that executive business be called on.

Public Pools Bill 2014

Debate resumed from 27 November 2014, on motion by **Mr Rattenbury**:

That this bill be agreed to in principle.

MR DOSZPOT (Molonglo) (11.43): The Public Pools Bill, as its name suggests, is concerned with the regulation of the ACT's public swimming pools. Given that it replaces legislation that is nearly 60 years old, it is probably not before time. In the ACT there are six territory-owned assets, at Dickson, Manuka and Civic and pools within the leisure centres at Tuggeranong, Erindale and Gungahlin. These public pools are managed under facility management agreements—in effect, management contracts to allow the operators to run these facilities on behalf of the government and for the benefit of Canberra families.

In truth, the existing legislation did not support today's agreements and probably made management of the pools somewhat restricted. This new bill reflects modern facility management practice, sets minimum standards based on current national best practice and allows operators to respond to changing safety standards. That means that, if an operator sees that urgent maintenance is required, the bill provides the flexibility needed to immediately close the pool.

It also accommodates a more sensible approach to disciplinary matters such as antisocial behaviour at pools. Previously, any misdemeanour had to be dealt with under the Crimes Act. With this new bill, pool managers can better manage bad behaviour and simply get the person to leave, or perhaps discourage them from entering in the first place. More serious crimes can still be addressed by police intervention or licensed security guards. That said, after speaking with pool operators, bad behaviour is not a major problem in ACT pools, but it is just as well to have a more streamlined approach in keeping with other less interventionist clauses in the legislation.

The bill also includes two consequential amendments. The Public Baths and Public Bathing Act 1956 is proposed to be renamed the Public Bathing Act 1956, as it will now regulate only public bathing areas outside of public pools, such as Casuarina Sands, and also make some amendments to the Uncollected Goods Act 1996 relating to lost property and items left in public pools.

I advise that the Canberra Liberals will be supporting this bill and the consequential amendments. In doing so, I note that, while it is good to see that we now have modern legislation to manage our facilities, it is regrettable that half of the pools that this bill covers are, indeed, as old and outdated as the previous legislation, and some even predate the legislation!

The Civic pool, or more formally the Canberra Olympic pool, has for many years been a popular and important part of Canberra life. It is used year round, on weekdays and weekends by a cross-section of Canberra's population. But it is not only recreational swimmers and families that use this facility. The Canberra Amateur

Swimming Club was established in 1930 and, not surprisingly, is Canberra's oldest swimming club. It started swimming in the Molonglo River in the early 1920s, long before the existence of Lake Burley Griffin and even before the opening of the original Parliament House. Its home now, and for many decades, has been Canberra Olympic pool, and the club was probably a key driver in the pool's original construction.

The Canberra Olympic pool was built in 1955 by the commonwealth Department of Works. It was built with an Olympic-size swimming pool, a children's wading pool and a diving pool and tower within a post-war international-style building complex and modern, family-orientated landscaping. It won the 1955 Royal Australian Institute of Architects New South Wales Chapter Sir John Sulman Award for meritorious architecture.

The place has had several additions and alterations over the years, including an outdoor kiosk in the 1960s, a temporary dome over the main pool in 1991, followed by a permanent dome in 2008, beach volleyball courts, various internal changes, upgrades to filtration systems, surrounding buildings and significant changes in the main building. But it is a huge loss leader.

The Canberra Olympic pool was nominated for heritage listing, and the ACT Heritage Council considered the nomination at its meeting in November 2014 but rejected it at this stage. Perhaps, given its state of repair, that is just as well. This year it celebrates its 60th birthday and it is showing its age.

I understand the pool is inefficient by any standards. It is costly to fill and to heat and to keep heated. It loses water, and reportedly has done so for almost as long as it was built. Its operator has lost money each year because it is not well patronised, despite the increase in local population, and its operating costs are high because of its inherent inefficiencies. I suspect a facility this old is a maintenance nightmare for the government.

It is an old facility; it is under significant pressure. It is used year round and its enclosed pool is popular in winter with those keen Canberrans who want to keep up their aquatic fitness. But the gas heating is not cheap. The skin over the pool is not the best insulated and it loses heat. Add this to lower than profitable patronage and the problems and costs start to grow.

How long this facility can keep going on is questionable. It is also questionable as to what the government should do with it, given the Chief Minister's grand plans for the area. However, I know that the current operator, who has had a five-year contract, has had his contract terminated early at three years, effective 30 June this year. I would be interested to hear what the minister intends to do with this pool and its tender going onward.

Who will take on such a loss maker is an interesting question to ponder. Swimming pools in the ACT are expensive. If you take water costs alone, filling a pool in Canberra is over twice the cost of doing so in Queanbeyan. Water charges, I am told, are around \$5.30 a kilolitre, while across the border in Queanbeyan it is \$2.20.

Perhaps the Chief Minister hopes no-one will take it on and he can force Canberrans to use the yet to be developed lakeside beach. If only he had the money to develop the area and provide an international standard stadium with modern energy technology and associated support infrastructure, just like a modern swimming pool should be. If only he did not have to support the construction of a tram line, imagine what we could have there instead.

The same can be said for the Manuka pool. Manuka pool is listed on the ACT heritage register of significant 20th century buildings. It is described on the register as:

... a significant example of an Art Deco style building in Canberra. The swimming pool is historically and socially significant as an example of public baths in the early 1930s in Canberra, and in its time a great innovation, being the only one of its kind within 330 kms. The pool has retained its original form, details, Art Deco decoration, and the character of its period, and is a valuable example of its building type.

The significant siting of the building contributes greatly to its prominence, centred opposite Telopea Park and now surrounded by mature trees. The building, historically and socially significant, has been a focal point of social activities in Canberra for over 50 years.

Manuka pool has been carefully renovated and updated on that basis. It is probably in better shape than the Civic pool. It certainly looks more refreshed than the Civic pool does and its operating costs would need to be more affordable than Civic pool's or inner south residents would be in trouble. But, again, it is old, and in years to come it will become increasingly in need of more and more maintenance. And it is very close to the Chief Minister's favourite oval, which we know he now wants to develop. Just ask the Services Club. The pool's heritage listing might save it from other uses.

The Dickson pool was opened in the 1960s, and when it was built it was virtually sited in a paddock. Today, Dickson Aquatic Centre offers a wide variety of excellent facilities and speciality programs for everyone, as well as three heated pools and swimming lessons. There is currently expansive free car parking and barbecue areas. The pools are set amongst beautifully shady trees, beach volleyball courts, a massage centre and cafe. Each year I get representations from people asking why it has to close for the winter and whether it could remain open. It closed last Thursday and will not reopen until October. So those families that want to keep their children's swimming lessons and fitness going will have to travel into Civic or go to Gungahlin or the AIS at Bruce.

Just like the Civic and Manuka pools, its future is also under pressure. Like Manuka and Civic pools, the Dickson centre is becoming a target for redevelopment and infill. Canberra prides itself on its level of participation in recreational activities, and we should all be proud of that. But as Canberra grows, we will need to ensure that our older suburbs, like Civic, Manuka and Dickson, continue to be well served by well-maintained facilities, and that includes pools that are safe to use, pleasant to be at, reliable in availability, and affordable to maintain.

MR RATTENBURY (Molonglo—Minister for Territory and Municipal Services, Minister for Justice, Minister for Sport and Recreation and Minister assisting the Chief Minister on Transport Reform) (11.53), in reply: I am pleased to debate the Public Pools Bill 2014, and I thank Mr Doszpot for his contribution to the debate. The Public Pools Bill 2014 will establish an administrative framework to support management practices for territory-owned public pools, and involves the repeal of parts 2 and 3 of the Public Baths and Public Bathing Act 1956.

This new administrative framework will provide modern, efficient and effective governance arrangements for the territory's six publicly owned pools. These include the Canberra Olympic pool, the swimming pools in Manuka and Dickson, and pools at the Gungahlin, Erindale and Tuggeranong leisure centres.

I am sure that members of the Assembly here today will agree with me that our public pools provide quality facilities for all Canberrans. Access to safe and clean facilities helps our citizens to lead active and healthy lives, with residual health benefits for the whole community.

Public pools in Canberra are an important part of the history of our community and city. Many of you may recall for yourselves fond memories of summers spent in places such as Manuka pool. Over the decades of that pool's operation, many Canberrans have enjoyed this facility in safety and with ease. That is precisely why the government has brought forward this bill for debate today. We want to continue to provide the public with a positive atmosphere and a safe environment in our public pools, now and into the future.

The bill will bring the administration of public pools into the modern era by providing new arrangements to support contemporary water safety standards set by the Australian Royal Life Saving Society. The amendments will also bring public pools into line with today's workplace health and safety principles.

While public pools in the territory are currently managed to a high standard under facilities management agreements, these agreements will be better supported by the legislative amendments brought forward in the bill.

As the Minister for Sport and Recreation, I want to provide updated and less arduous administrative arrangements for pool operators and the government. Madam Deputy Speaker, as you know, red tape reduction is a high priority for this government. Red tape can interfere with innovation and service delivery, and of course create administrative inefficiencies.

Under this bill the territory will utilise a light-handed approach to regulation and in doing so reduce unnecessary red tape for both pool operators and officials. It will allow for innovation and changes in water safety initiatives to be addressed through a streamlined regulatory approach.

The new legislative framework set out in the Public Pools Bill 2014 will provide me, as the Minister for Sport and Recreation, and the Director-General of Economic

Development with the power to set and enforce minimum standards based on national best practice principles. In particular, the bill will see the introduction of a facility classification system to better enable pool operators to be regulated based on the risk that they represent to the territory.

The bill will also bring the legislation into line with today's community expectations. For instance, the 1956 act currently requires that each person involved in coaching or training at a pool facility be approved by the minister. The bill modernises these regulatory arrangements by removing this onerous process and replacing it with a statutory instrument that will specify the minimum qualifications, skills and training for all persons involved in the operation of territory pools.

Furthermore, the bill which I bring to the Assembly for debate today introduces an early intervention approach to managing possible antisocial behaviour. Currently, pool operators may only have a patron charged with a criminal offence when antisocial behaviour occurs. Under the Public Baths and Public Bathing Act 1956, the operators and their staff are also required to remove patrons, placing their safety and wellbeing at risk.

The bill seeks to rectify this rigid regulatory regime and bring it into step with today's processes by introducing a proactive focus. The bill will allow operators to issue a warning to a patron and ask them to leave before they are removed by police or licensed security guards. This gives the patron an opportunity to correct their behaviour as opposed to issuing them with a long-lasting criminal penalty.

This approach improves safety in the workplace environment for operators and their employees by providing alternative mechanisms for patrons to be removed, while preventing an unnecessarily harsh punishment being placed on patrons who exhibit undesirable behaviour.

The bill will also reduce criminal sanctions and implement self-regulation principles so that pool operators can tailor their business to the needs of the market without reducing safety. This is another example of the way in which this government is reducing red tape to support innovation and provide flexibility to operators.

However, the safety and wellbeing of Canberrans remain paramount. The bill will allow the territory to intervene where necessary to protect the safety of our citizens, as the government may order the immediate closure or maintenance of a facility that is deemed unsafe for public use. This is to minimise the potential risks to public safety, as well as damage to property or the environment.

The regulatory framework is to be applied through the use of statutory instruments which clearly articulate the responsibilities and obligations for pool operators, the public and the territory.

In developing this bill, the government has consulted with territory-owned pool operators and will continue to do so as the changes are implemented. This is yet another example of the government's commitment to fit-for-purpose policy that meets the needs of operators and upholds the objectives of community safety and wellbeing.

The government has inserted two mandatory provisions in the bill that will require consultation with industry participants where there are standards to be introduced that affect how the operators conduct their business.

The bill will also repeal part 2 and part 3 of the Public Baths and Public Bathing Act 1956. This act will be renamed the Public Bathing Act 1956 and will retain those provisions that concern public bathing in our waterways. There will also be consequential amendments to the Uncollected Goods Act 1996 to reflect the new terminology in the bill.

I would like to thank the Standing Committee on Justice and Community Safety, in their legislative scrutiny role, for their review of the Public Pools Bill 2014 and their kind comments on the overall standard of the bill's explanatory statement. I have carefully considered the comments made by the committee and will not be proposing amendments based on those specific comments.

The committee raised concern that the bill's exemption powers under clause 11 replaced the authority of the Assembly by virtue of the principles raised in the High Court case of O'Donoghue and Ireland in 2008. The matters in that case specifically related to inter-jurisdictional issues where the authority of state parliaments was replaced by the state executive. That is not the case here as, firstly, the Assembly is considering this bill today and, secondly, an exemption is a disallowable instrument and therefore will have the oversight of this Assembly.

Furthermore, the committee commented on the two standards, clauses 13 and 14, which include legislative consultation provisions while others do not. While I appreciate the committee's view that extending consultation to clauses 12, 15, 16 and 17 would not be onerous, the request must be viewed in the context of the overall policy framework. Mandatory consultation is not proposed for these clauses as these are areas that either relate to national standards or adopt industry best practice.

As I mentioned earlier, the government is committed to developing fit-for-purpose policy that meets the needs of operators and upholds the objectives of community safety and wellbeing. This can only be achieved with the assistance and input of stakeholders and the community. The government does consult frequently on many issues without specific legislative requirements to do so.

Although I am not proposing amendments as a result of the committee's comments, I am tabling today two minor and technical government amendments to the bill. The first government amendment revises clause 2 to provide that commencement of the bill will occur on a day fixed by written notice, and not on the day after notification. I am sure members will agree that it is imperative that there be no lapse in time between the bill commencing and the regulatory framework being implemented. This amendment will allow a smooth transition for operators, including the ability to train operators and staff on the new early intervention powers of removal.

Secondly, government amendments 2 to 4 relate to clause 17 and provide further clarity relating to an operator's ability to set fees for a pool facility if none are set by me as minister.

Page 54 of the explanatory statement that I tabled in November explained that the intent of clause 55 was to support the continuation of flexible contracting arrangements, especially concerning the making of fees for a territory-owned facility. The amendments that I am tabling today for clause 17 are necessary to avoid any potential doubt in relation to the fee-setting process and procedures for territory-owned pools. Government amendment 5 is consequential to those amendments and will remove note 2 from clause 55 as the application of the pool fee guidelines is now expressly provided for under clause 17.

The government amendments are supported by a supplementary explanatory statement which I will also table today.

The government is committed to ensuring the continued health and wellbeing of Canberrans as they utilise our high quality pool facilities in the territory, while simultaneously reducing unnecessary red tape. I now commend the bill and the government amendments to the Assembly.

Question resolved in the affirmative.

Bill agreed to in principle.

Detail stage

Bill, by leave, taken as a whole.

MR RATTENBURY (Molonglo—Minister for Territory and Municipal Services, Minister for Justice, Minister for Sport and Recreation and Minister assisting the Chief Minister on Transport Reform) (12.04): Pursuant to standing order 182A(b) I seek leave to move amendments to this bill that are minor and technical in nature together.

Leave granted.

MR RATTENBURY: I move amendments Nos 1 to 5 circulated in my name together [*see schedule 1 at page 975*]. I table a supplementary explanatory statement to the amendments.

MADAM SPEAKER: You are not going to speak to the amendments, Mr Rattenbury; you have already spoken to them?

MR RATTENBURY: No, Madam Speaker. I spoke to them during my earlier comments.

Amendments agreed to.

Bill, as a whole, as amended, agreed to.

Bill, as amended, agreed to.

Disability—inclusion

MS BURCH (Brindabella—Minister for Education and Training, Minister for Police and Emergency Services, Minister for Disability, Minister for Racing and Gaming and Minister for the Arts) (12.06): I move:

That this Assembly:

(1) notes:

- (a) the Minister for Disability's recent statement to the Assembly concerning the development of the ACT Disability Inclusion Statement;
- (b) the ACT's record of achieving positive outcomes for people with a disability;
- (c) the commitment of the ACT government to implementing the National Disability Strategy;
- (d) that the ACT Disability Inclusion Statement will foster a united movement of people with disability, families, government, community and business to work towards a more inclusive and equal society;
- (e) the five priority areas for development for the statement, namely, housing, employment, justice, accessible communities and improving health; and
- (f) the ongoing commitment for the ACT government to ensuring people with disabilities and their families can achieve to their full potential; and

(2) calls on the ACT government to continue to:

- (a) work with people with disabilities, their families and carers as well as businesses and the community sector in developing the ACT Disability Inclusion Statement; and
- (b) provide further updates to the Assembly on the continued development of the Statement and again on its release

The ACT government has a strong record of improving outcomes for people with a disability, their families and carers. Through our five-year strategic policy framework, Future directions: towards challenge 2014, we implemented the national disability strategy 2010-20. The ACT government has worked in collaboration with the business, sports, arts and community sectors towards a shared vision where all people with a disability achieve what they want to achieve, live how they choose to live and are valued as full and equal members of our community.

We have signed up to the national disability insurance scheme and created more opportunities for people with a disability to exercise more choice and control in their lives. Through the future directions policy we have implemented innovative models of housing such as homeshare and intentional communities. Homeshare is a way of

bringing together a person with a disability who needs someone in the home to offer them support and a person without disability who needs somewhere affordable to live. It offers a simple but effective way to meet the housing and support needs of people with a disability in our community. A young woman stated that the homeshare program is a great opportunity for people with a disability to be included in society and that it assisted her to move out of her parents' home and enjoy newfound independence with the support and bond she shares with her housemate.

The intentional community is another innovative approach to supporting the housing needs of people with a disability. Several years ago the families of Jackson, Daniel and Ben, three young men in their 20s, started planning and designing a place for their sons to live, each in their own homes. The plan was to build and then create a community of intent—a place where all residents, including Daniel, Jackson and Ben, could feel a sense of belonging in a safe, welcoming and friendly neighbourhood. The young men and other residents in the intentional community are now settled in a supportive environment. They all know each other, greet each other and socialise at barbecues, music sessions, afternoon teas, working bees and parties.

The initiatives of future directions lead a strong platform for the ACT to implement the national disability insurance scheme. My Choice ACT was a self-directed funding pilot preparing participants to exercise greater control over supports and services they receive and how they are provided and managed. The evaluation of the pilot highlighted that giving people with disability control over how they directed their funds was a positive and a beneficial experience. One participant said:

Being in charge of my own destiny ... being in control of my care ... it gave me the direction of where I am now, at this very moment.

What an empowering place to be when preparing to transition to an NDIS environment of choice and control.

Another achievement is the everyone, everyday disability awareness program that was implemented in partnership with the Education and Training Directorate. This program is about fostering and promoting tomorrow's leaders. Thousands of children and their teachers across Canberra have taken individual and collective action to create an inclusive environment. The calibre of this work was recognised nationally through the improving education outcomes category in the 2014 national disability awards. The program is an example of what can be achieved when portfolios work together.

Boundless Canberra is another example of what can be achieved when the government, business and community sectors work together towards the common goals of inclusion. Together we have built a world-class playground where there is no barrier to play or inclusion. At Boundless, children with disability and those without fly on the giant swing, spin together on the carousel and get soaked in water play. Through this play they make new friends.

These are just some of the achievements in improving outcomes and opportunities for people with a disability. Future directions has provided a strong foundation from

which we can seize new opportunities and address future challenges. We have come a long way, but the journey does not end here. There is considerable work to be done to reverse the sobering findings that, compared to those without a disability, people with disability are less likely to be employed, more likely to be living in poverty, have lower income levels, are more likely to experience homelessness and are less likely to attain their year 12 qualifications. That reality, in a decent, inclusive society, cannot stand. The ACT disability inclusion statement will provide a framework to address some of these issues and drive change in mainstream services for better outcomes for people with a disability. The priorities of the ACT disability inclusion statement align with the priorities of the national disability strategy and reflect the feedback we have received from the community as well as the advice of the ACT disability expert panel.

We will use diverse engagement strategies to bring together people with disability, critical thinkers and subject matter experts on solutions to address the priority areas such as employment, housing, accessible communities, justice and health. A steering group will be created for each outcome area to provide guidance and facilitate ongoing community conversations and garner broader community support. The disability inclusion statement will create an online campaign to drive collaborative efforts across our community. The inclusion statement will have a website developed as a campaign and reporting hub.

I will update the Assembly in the coming months on the progress of the development of the disability inclusion statement and on how we are working in partnership with people with disability, their families, carers and the broader community as a whole. The development of the disability inclusion statement offers a unique opportunity for transformation and change and to explore truly innovative approaches for improving outcomes for people with disability. Inclusion matters and it is important. For me, “inclusion” means a community and society where everyone has respect and regard for one another. We are determined to create a more inclusive community and are ready to take the next steps to ensure that Canberra lives up to its promise of being the most livable city for all our citizens.

Debate (on motion by **Dr Bourke**) adjourned to the next sitting.

Sitting suspended from 12.13 to 2.30 pm.

Questions without notice

Asbestos—loose-fill insulation

MR HANSON: My question is to the Chief Minister, as the minister with responsibility for the Asbestos Response Taskforce. The ABC news reported on 9 March that “elderly residents had been given special treatment from the ACT government allowing them to stay in their homes until 2020”. Chief Minister, what is the special treatment from the ACT government that will allow elderly residents to stay in their homes?

MR BARR: The terms of the government’s buyback scheme allow for people to register their interest and receive a valuation from the territory government but then have an extended period before settlement, and that can be up to five years. So that

stretches the period out from 30 June 2015 all the way through until 30 June 2020, provided of course that asbestos management plans are in place for the individual property.

MADAM SPEAKER: A supplementary question, Mr Hanson.

MR HANSON: How is that approach different from what was announced late last year as part of this scheme?

MR BARR: It is not different.

MADAM SPEAKER: A supplementary question, Mr Doszpot.

MR DOSZPOT: Chief Minister, what is the health rationale for the current cut-off date of 2020?

MR BARR: On advice from the asbestos task force, where it was appropriate to manage the asbestos contamination within individual homes on a case by case basis, it was recommended that a five-year period would be the appropriate time where asbestos could be managed but also we could respond to individual circumstances. That is the basis on which we have sought to balance both the interests of householders and the broader community interests, particularly the interests of those who might be required to undertake work on those particular properties.

MADAM SPEAKER: A supplementary question, Mr Doszpot?

MR DOSZPOT: Minister, are there any circumstances under which you would consider residents living in their Mr Fluffy homes beyond 2020?

MR BARR: I am not going to speculate on that at this time.

ACT Policing—staffing

MR WALL: My question is to the minister for police. Minister, in February and March there have been three murders in the ACT and a spate of suburban shootings. The Australian Federal Police Association have expressed concern over “a plunge in ACT police numbers” and noted that they were “concerned that the capacity to investigate crime would be hampered”. They say that the ACT efficiency dividend of 1.5 per cent is “biting hard on ACT Policing resources”. Minister, will the level of police resources investigating murders and suburban shootings hamper investigations into other crimes?

MS BURCH: I do thank Mr Wall for his question. As I understand, the Chief Police Officer was on 666 yesterday morning talking about this and assuring the community that the police do have the resources and the capability to respond to these quite devastating incidents that are going on across our community. There has been no reduction in front-line services, and police resources are adequate to manage. In particular, with regard to your comment about those three homicide investigations, they remain agile. They are able to shift resources around internally as needed, and

the Chief Police Officer has therefore given assurance to the community that they have the resources required.

MADAM SPEAKER: A supplementary question, Mr Wall.

MR WALL: Minister, has your government's efficiency dividend reduced ACT Policing's capacity to deal with the recent murders and shootings?

MS BURCH: The short answer is no. I refer to the CPO's comments, and my comments just then, that the police have all the resources they need to address and deal with—rightly, as they ought to—the three homicides that this community so sadly has gone through over the last short while.

MADAM SPEAKER: A supplementary question, Mr Hanson.

MR HANSON: Minister, what are you doing to ensure that ACT Policing maintain efficient response times to other crimes in our community?

MS BURCH: This is a matter that the Chief Police Officer and his executive and management team would deal with as different spikes in their activities and their resources happen.

Mr Hanson: Point of order.

MADAM SPEAKER: Point of order. Stop the clock, please.

Mr Hanson: The minister may be getting to it, but the question was specifically about what the minister is doing. She started referring to the action being taken by the Chief Police Officer. I just want to see if she is taking any specific action herself.

MADAM SPEAKER: I think that, under standing order 118, the minister needs some time to get it. I do not know how much time she had to get to it because—

Mr Hanson interjecting—

MADAM SPEAKER: Hang on. Because we had not started the clock. But it was not very long.

MS BURCH: That is how quick it was. If you jump in—

MADAM SPEAKER: It was not very long. Members do need to be reminded that standing order 118(a) requires them to be directly relevant, but I think the minister was getting there. Minister Burch.

MS BURCH: As much as the delegation of being minister for police gives me a range of responsibilities, I will leave the decisions about police resourcing to the Chief Police Officer. He has assured me that things are in train, they are moving, and there are resources around to accommodate their needs.

MADAM SPEAKER: A supplementary question, Mr Hanson.

MR HANSON: Minister, can you assure this Assembly that Canberra has enough police?

MS BURCH: I can assure the Assembly that ACT Policing is adequate to respond to the demands of this community. Should there be need, as the ESA go to the support of other jurisdictions in times of extreme need, I am sure that other jurisdictions—and I am not saying that that is the case; I am not saying that that is the case at all, Mr Hanson—

Mr Hanson: So that is your response, is it?

MS BURCH: My response is that we—

Mr Hanson: Call for help.

MS BURCH: No, it is not. I was saying that we have adequate resources, but also I was just trying to answer at some other level of depth. I was saying that across ESA and Policing, particularly as we are part of the AFP, it is not the case. We do not need it. But it is right for these services, as we know, to step in and help, should that be needed.

Transport—light rail

DR BOURKE: My question is to the Chief Minister and Treasurer. Chief Minister, can you update the Assembly about progress made towards delivering capital metro as a public-private partnership, including details about the bidders who have proceeded to the next stage and what that means for confidence in Canberra as an investment destination?

MR BARR: I thank Dr Bourke for the question. It is fair to say that light rail has been part of Canberra's future since our very first days. The people of Canberra elected us to finally end the talking and the tiptoeing and to get this project done. In September last year Minister Corbell and I hosted an investment industry forum on the project, with over 370 industry representatives and 257 companies—local, Australian and international. In December last year four consortia submitted expressions of interest to work with us in a public-private partnership to build and run a light rail line.

Yesterday Minister Corbell announced that two of these consortia have been shortlisted—ACTivate and Canberra Metro. Both consortia have experience in delivering national and international projects, and it is a sign of just how confident investors are in our city that we have received such high quality bids from such world-class bidders.

The members of the ACTivate group are an impressive group and are well-known and respected businesses. These include: Keolis Downer, the largest light rail operator in Australia and part of the largest operator of light rail in the world; Bombardier, the

world's biggest builders of light rail vehicles; the Plenary Group, who have overseen \$9 million worth of projects in Australia; Downer EDI, Canberra's largest civil construction firm, which has been delivering projects in the territory for 30 years; and Cox Architecture, who have designed iconic buildings in this city, around Australia and the region. Between them, the companies in ACTivate have built, managed and run a range of major projects, including light rail in Adelaide and on the Gold Coast, as well as Yarra Trams, and in Dijon and Bordeaux in France as well as projects in Canada and Turkey.

The members that make up the Canberra Metro bid are just as impressive and include: the Bank of Tokyo Mitsubishi, Japan's largest bank; Leighton contractors, one of Australia's leading infrastructure companies; and John Holland, who construct railways and maintain transport infrastructure around the country. These companies are world leaders in delivering and operating rail projects like the north-west rail link and the inner west light rail extension in Sydney, Stockholm light rail and the London Overground.

Light rail will be a transformational project for our city. I am confident that both of these bidding consortia have the skills and experience to deliver this transformation. We are continuing our work consulting with the community to help us shape this change in our city. We are asking the community what they want in a better transport system, how light rail will look, the landscaping and shape of the light rail corridor, the walking and cycling options that Canberrans want, what they would like in their light rail stops and what they want them to look like. These are important and significant infrastructure priorities for a better transport system for Canberra. *(Time expired.)*

MADAM SPEAKER: A supplementary question, Dr Bourke.

DR BOURKE: Chief Minister, what are the economic benefits to the territory of the capital metro project?

MR BARR: The project not only reshapes our city; it is a significant investment in our economy. It will expand the economic productivity of our city, create jobs and increase diversity and the sustainability of our local economy. During the construction stage alone, the project will support around 3½ thousand jobs. These are jobs that will be filled by Canberrans—from Melba to Monash, from Gilmore to Gowrie, from Charnwood to Chisholm.

Opposition members interjecting—

MR BARR: I know that creating jobs is something that the Liberal Party find abhorrent. They can never support a Labor government creating jobs and supporting jobs in this city, but that is not going to stop this government from investing in the infrastructure that this city needs—infrastructure that supports our long-term economic development and also ensures that Canberra is a better place to live.

For every dollar that we invest in our transportation systems, not only do we reduce congestion and give people more time to spend with their families but we are also

adding to the economic diversity of this city, making it an easier place to get around. Reducing our reliance on cars, reducing congestion, is a priority for this government. Better transport for Canberra is a priority for this government, and light rail is an important part of a better transport system for Canberra—one that supports economic growth, supports urban renewal and is more socially inclusive.

MADAM SPEAKER: A supplementary question, Ms Porter.

MS PORTER: Chief Minister, what are the views of investors about the project? Are there any risks to investment in Canberra's economy?

MR BARR: The government's infrastructure program is attracting national and international attention. We are becoming a real magnet for some of the largest infrastructure players in Australia and in the world to come and invest in our city. There is a major threat to investment, a major threat to confidence, and that is the amateurish and reckless behaviour of those opposite. Not only are they intent on destroying this city's reputation as an investment destination but they will damage our country's reputation as an investment destination. By threatening to tear up the capital metro contract—

Opposition members interjecting—

MADAM SPEAKER: Order, members!

MR BARR: a long-term contract, they are putting at risk our city's reputation as a place to do business. The global infrastructure community has told us that if this happens, if the Liberals are reckless enough to trash our reputation, there will not be investment of this kind in this city again. When I meet with business leaders across Australia and around the world, they are stunned at the recklessness of those opposite.

Brendan Lyon, the CEO of Infrastructure Partnerships Australia, a body that represents this nation's investment community, said today in the *Canberra Times*:

... it is very important that politicians don't debase the infrastructure program with discussions around sovereign risk.

Madam Speaker, just think for a moment. How do you think we will go as a jurisdiction trying to attract private sector investment and partners for a new convention centre if the market in which we—

Opposition members interjecting—

MADAM SPEAKER: Order, members!

MR BARR: would be conducting such a transaction has just witnessed the tearing up of a contract? How would we ever seriously procure a new major project? (*Time expired.*)

MADAM SPEAKER: A supplementary question, Ms Fitzharris.

MS FITZHARRIS: Chief Minister, how has the capital metro project been received by the community?

MR BARR: There is majority support for the project—three sets of research comprehensively outlining the support for this project. There are some who are opposed, including the Deputy Leader of the Opposition, who intends to campaign in Gungahlin, it would appear, and be the only candidate there saying, “No, you don’t deserve better transport. You deserve to spend an hour in transit every day to get to work.”

I want to take the opportunity today to mention two Canberrans, one new and one longstanding, and what they have had to say about light rail. Kirk Coningham, the new Executive Director of the Master Builders Association, said on ABC Radio yesterday that light rail is:

... the start of something big, rather than the end, and I think it’s like the skeleton around which a city-state can grow. I’ve just come from Sydney, and you know, I cross the Harbour Bridge all the time. That would never have been built if the naysayers—

at that time—

had their way.

He went on to say, Madam Speaker, that light rail was a vision for the future.

The business community wants this to happen. There is one other Canberra resident who said:

Canberra was originally designed for light rail. The claims in favour are very strong.

This eminent Canberran goes on to point out that light rail lines carry about four times as many people as a road and that many comparable cities have run light rail projects of a similar size. This eminent Canberran pointed out the best way to proceed was through a PPP.

Madam Speaker, I could not agree more with all of these points. This Canberran was, indeed, your good self. You said that when you were allowed to speak the truth. Now you are handcuffed to those opposite. *(Time expired.)*

Health—mental health

MS LAWDER: Madam Speaker, my question is to the Minister for Health, concerning criticism by Alzheimer’s Australia ACT of Canberra hospitals. Minister, the peak body for Alzheimer’s in the ACT has criticised Canberra hospitals for failing to provide designated dementia specialists, despite the number of diagnosed cases climbing close to 5,000. Alzheimer’s Australia ACT chief executive Jane Allen described the condition as a developing “tsunami” and called for across the board

training at the Canberra and Calvary hospitals, with nurses and doctors often having little knowledge of the condition. Minister, do you accept that medical staff often have little knowledge of Alzheimer's?

MR CORBELL: It was a very general question, Madam Speaker. I guess it will depend on which medical staff Ms Lawder was referring to. We have very capable, experienced and specialist staff that deal with Alzheimer's, but I am sure there are other members of the medical profession whose experience is not specialised in that area. It would depend very much on the individual circumstances of the staff involved.

MADAM SPEAKER: A supplementary question, Ms Lawder.

MS LAWDER: Minister, do we have sufficient designated dementia specialists in our hospitals?

MR CORBELL: I thank Ms Lawder for the question. I think this is an issue that warrants closer examination. The issues raised by Alzheimer's Australia are legitimate and the government will be following through on the issues that they raise. Do we have, as a health system, all of the steps in place that we need to respond to the growing level of demand due to an ageing population? No, we do not. But I think that here in the ACT we are better prepared than most, because this government has invested in an \$850 million health infrastructure program initiative, the largest single investment in health services in the ACT since self-government, to make sure that we are better prepared for this enormous increase in demand that is coming towards us as a result of a growing and an ageing population.

The issues that Ms Lawder raises are not unfamiliar to the territory or indeed to health systems more generally across the country. Dealing with the consequences of an ageing and growing population brings particular challenges. But here in the ACT this Labor government has made the investments to be better prepared than most for those challenges. Whether it is investment in areas like our new cancer centre, investment in our new emergency department, investment in our new adult mental health facilities, investment in the new University of Canberra public hospital—these are all investments in making sure that we are better prepared for this change in our demographics as our city grows and ages.

It is worth highlighting that the designs I released earlier this week for the University of Canberra public hospital include dedicated dementia facilities to help meet that growing demand.

MADAM SPEAKER: A supplementary question, Mr Hanson.

MR HANSON: Minister, why is it that you have spent less on health infrastructure in a decade than you are about to spend on one single tram track?

MR CORBELL: This government is making a record spend on health infrastructure—more than the Liberal Party ever put into health. We have grown the number of beds in the health system dramatically. We have dramatically expanded the

capabilities of our health system. An \$850 million-plus build across the health services in our community is a major commitment.

Mr Hanson: It's still not as much as your tram track. These are your priorities.

MR CORBELL: These are the priorities of the Labor government—investing in better health. The only health policy of those opposite is the policy of their federal leader, who wants to charge people more to go and see the doctor. That is the policy of the Liberal Party. But here in this city, with this Labor government, we are investing in health services at a level and scale unprecedented in the history of self-government. We will continue to do so because that is what Labor governments do. Labor governments look at enabling communities and at supporting them with the health services they need, not asking them to pay more when they go and see their GP.

MADAM SPEAKER: A supplementary question, Mr Hanson.

MR HANSON: Minister, is it true that only a Labor government has brought in a co-payment and that you currently charge a co-payment for emergency dental treatment?

MR CORBELL: Mr Hanson can make whatever assertions he likes, but he cannot escape the fact that it is his federal leader that is interested in a GP co-payment, not the Labor Party.

Mr Hanson: Madam Speaker—

MADAM SPEAKER: Have you got a point of order?

Mr Hanson: I do: a point of order on relevance. The question was very specific. It really requires a “yes” or “no”—whether it is only Labor that has brought in a co-payment ever and whether the minister currently charges a co-payment for emergency dental treatment, including for the most disadvantaged in our community, I add.

Dr Bourke: On the point of order.

MADAM SPEAKER: On the point of order, Dr Bourke.

Dr Bourke: It is not for the opposition to direct the minister on how to answer his question. The minister has the discretion to answer as long as he is relevant to the question.

MADAM SPEAKER: The question was about a co-payment. It was in two parts: it was about the introduction of what I presume is a Medicare co-payment, which is probably outside the minister's ministerial responsibility, and about a dental co-payment. Reminding the minister that he should be directly relevant, I will ask him to answer the question in 49 seconds.

MR CORBELL: I have concluded my answer, Madam Speaker.

Canberra Institute of Technology—Auslan

MR DOSZPOT: My question is to the minister for education. Minister, yesterday, 18 March, in a debate on a motion on social inclusion you spoke of the availability of Auslan courses at CIT. You said that CIT was offering cert II and cert III courses in Auslan. Given that CIT is not accepting new students for entry into cert II, is not your reference to the availability of cert II misleading, and why is CIT the only TAFE institution in Australia not offering new enrolments in certificate II?

MS BURCH: Cert II is being taught out and cert III is on offer for new enrolments. But there are very limited numbers enrolling in that. I know that a number of those opposite have a keen interest in Auslan and opportunities for learning it. I made some comment on it yesterday and I have on previous occasions. I think there is a need to better promote it. If Mr Doszpot and those opposite think that there is greater interest in this then they should rally those people with an interest and have it realised in enrolments.

MADAM SPEAKER: A supplementary question, Mr Doszpot.

MR DOSZPOT: Minister, is it your intention to constrain the training of Auslan so that it is increasingly difficult for students in the ACT wishing to train in Auslan to access appropriate level training at CIT?

MS BURCH: No.

MADAM SPEAKER: A supplementary question, Ms Lawder.

MS LAWDER: Minister, does the ACT have an obligation to make Auslan training available for people who wish to work in the disability sector?

MS BURCH: Auslan training is available in the ACT through CIT, through CIT Solutions, and I think I made mention of other providers that have training on offer for members of this community as well.

MADAM SPEAKER: A supplementary question, Ms Lawder.

MS LAWDER: Minister, does your government have any interest in providing communication access for deaf people?

MS BURCH: I find that question an insult to the interpreters in this city, to the training providers in this city and to the disability support services in this city. Clearly, the answer is: yes, we have an absolute, keen interest in providing that support.

Education—parental engagement

MS PORTER: My question is for the minister for education. Minister, you recently announced a definition of “parental engagement” as well as a guide to how parents can appropriately engage with their children’s education. How will this definition renew education in the ACT and improve student outcomes for all students?

MS BURCH: I thank Ms Porter for her question. The ACT government is committed to delivering the best schools and the best education, and it is my mission to ensure that families and students are at the centre of the education system. We know parents are children's first teachers and play a critical role in their learning. We also know when schools and families work together there are significant and long-lasting positive impacts—children improve academically and are more engaged in their learning, have better relationships with others and are more confident learners.

My commitment to putting families and students at the centre of the education system was prioritised in the progressing parental engagement in the ACT project. This project brings together research undertaken by the Australian Research Alliance for Children and Youth, in partnership with the Education and Training Directorate, the Catholic Education Office and the Association of Independent Schools. I am very pleased to have recently launched a suite of resources including: the *Progressing parental engagement* publication, parent and carer and teacher fact sheets, and the *EDUCATION CAPITAL: our evidence base defining parental engagement* report.

The *Progressing parental engagement* publication was based on local, national and international evidence and provides a definition of what parental engagement is and the behaviours that best support learning outcomes for children. It is intended to be used by families, schools and communities across the ACT in supporting a shared understanding of what parental engagement is, why it matters, how it works and how best to foster it.

The resources, including a fact sheet specifically for parents and carers, outline the simple things a parent can do at home, and with the school, to help their children do their best. The definition provides a strong, shared understanding based on solid research of why parental engagement matters, how it works and how best to foster it. It outlines what parental engagement is and what it is not. Consistent understanding between schools and parents about what parental engagement is and how best to do it is critical to enabling positive, long-term outcomes for children.

We know that effective parental engagement is happening in our schools. The definition promotes, formalises and evaluates the significance of parental engagement and provides a roadmap for the future. We now have more than a notion, through this ARACY work and its definition, that parental engagement yields results. We have a strong evidence-based foundation to lead us forward. The definition and suite of resources provide the evidence base for future and ongoing policy and practice across our schools.

Critical future work includes developing a framework for measuring parental engagement. Four pilot schools will trial a survey to measure the current levels of engagement and track changes over time. Resources and strategies to support schools and families to strengthen the engagement will be available this year. This is nation-leading work and it is significant in shaping our policies, renewing education in the ACT and improving outcomes for our students.

MADAM SPEAKER: A supplementary question, Ms Porter.

MS PORTER: Minister, what are parents saying about this project, and how do they want to be involved in schools more generally?

MS BURCH: I am pleased to be asked what parents are saying about this exciting and innovative project, since they are indeed at the centre of it. Through the consultative process and the launch of the publications, I have had many opportunities to speak with parents directly. The message from parents is that they want to be actively engaged in their children's education. As one ACT parent said:

I think of it as a triangle—the student, the school, and the parents/family.

This project makes the important distinction between parental involvement and parental engagement. Parental involvement refers to parent participation in activities at school. Parental engagement highlights the broader roles that parents play in supporting a child's learning. It elevates the role of parents by recognising the rich contribution that parents make as partners in children's learning and wellbeing. It acknowledges that parental involvement is valuable but parental engagement is critical.

With clear information about the key behaviours and attitudes that positively influence a child's learning, parents can be actively engaged. The purpose of this project is to stimulate the conversation. It is my strong desire that the school boards and parent associations will see this document as generating a conversation about this engagement and what it looks like in their local school. I hope that these conversations will energise the already high level of engagement that we have in existence across our community—and that is because parents in our city recognise the value that they add to their child's education and learning.

MADAM SPEAKER: A supplementary question, Ms Fitzharris.

MS FITZHARRIS: Minister, what are the next steps in this program? How is it helping to guide the national discussion about parental engagement?

MS BURCH: Our work, as I have indicated, is not yet complete. The project commenced last year and will continue throughout this year. We will continue to work with all the sectors of schooling, as well as parent groups, to identify important strategies to build parental engagement. This project puts the ACT at the forefront of a national discussion about the importance of engaging parents in their child's education from the very beginning.

As a project with valuable input from all education sectors, parents and teachers, it has enormous reach within and beyond the ACT. Last year I was very proud to outline to my Education Council colleagues—that is, the education ministers from around the country—the work done on parental engagement here. I understand that there is a keen interest in this nationally.

I undertook to share the outcomes of the first phase of this project with my state and territory counterparts. In the coming weeks I will provide the suite of resources to all jurisdictions when I meet with my ministerial colleagues in the near future. This

provides an opportunity for other jurisdictions to engage in the work of the ACT and share in the results of this important project.

In leading the first conversations at a national level, I am committed to sharing the ACT focus on parental engagement. We will continue to engage nationally, through the Education Council, to share best practice and to collaborate with other jurisdictions to maximise the outcomes. I look forward to future opportunities for the national conversations on this important issue.

MADAM SPEAKER: A supplementary question, Dr Bourke.

DR BOURKE: Minister, could you tell us more about these next steps for parental engagement in the ACT?

MS BURCH: I thank Dr Bourke for his interest. The progressing parental engagement in the ACT project has had a terrific beginning. It is the basis from which we can maximise the impact of engagement partnerships between parents and schools in a systematic, integrated and sustained way. The next focus of the project includes the development of resources that will support teachers, schools and parents to implement what is considered best practice.

We will review effective practice and key approaches to improving parental engagement and identify what works and the kinds of strategies and supports that are most likely to be effective across our schools. This will allow the identification of short-term changes in a school's practice and parental knowledge, attitudes and behaviour.

Later in the year we will develop and test a parental engagement survey for families and teachers. Four primary schools have been selected, as I have said, to pilot the survey—two public schools, a Catholic school and one independent school—because it is critical that we get this right across all our sectors. By piloting the survey we will be able to determine the effectiveness in gathering, measuring and monitoring the levels of parental engagement in schools, and the final approach will allow us to gather baseline data on levels of parental engagement across our schools.

When implementing evidence-based strategies to improve this engagement, it is important to measure and monitor the effects. I am looking forward to working with these four schools as we progress this.

For the information of members, the report, the fact sheets and the information that has been released is available on ETD's website. That is available for those with an interest in parental engagement, which is something that I think every family is part of. I encourage people to have a look and promote it.

ACT Ambulance Service—alleged bullying

MR SMYTH: My question is to the Minister for Police and Emergency Services. Minister, what did O2C determine to be the management problems within the ACT Ambulance Service?

MS BURCH: I was expecting a question from Mr Smyth on this. O2C has provided a draft report to me. I have considered it and we are moving forward with the necessary change, through the blueprint for change. What needed to be captured from the findings and the recommendations of the O2C report is indeed held within the blueprint for change.

MADAM SPEAKER: A supplementary question, Mr Smyth.

MR SMYTH: Hopefully, the minister will be more relevant. Minister, what did O2C determine to be the extent of the problems within the ACT Ambulance Service?

MS BURCH: As Mr Smyth would appreciate by reading the blueprint for change, which is where we are going, we are looking forward here. What Mr Smyth wants to do is wallow in negativity. He quite clearly is not happy until he has got a bad news headline to talk about. The findings and recommendations that were held within the O2C report are reflected within the blueprint for change. If that was not the case, those that have the two reports would be telling us by now that they are miles apart. That is simply not happening.

Mr Smyth: Point of order, Madam Speaker.

MADAM SPEAKER: You have a point of order. Stop the clock.

Mr Smyth: I did not ask what was in the blueprint. I asked the question: what did O2C determine to be the extent of the problems with the ACT Ambulance Service? I ask that, under standing order 118(a), the minister be concise and directly relevant to the subject matter of the question.

MADAM SPEAKER: The minister is talking about the blueprint, which I presume is an offshoot of the report, but I do remind the minister what the question was. It was, as I have written it here: what did the report determine to be the extent of the problem? I remind her of standing order 118(a) and ask her to be directly relevant.

MS BURCH: I have answered the question.

MADAM SPEAKER: A supplementary question, Mr Wall.

MR WALL: Minister, what did O2C determine to be the severity of the problems within the ACT Ambulance Service?

MS BURCH: In reply to Mr Wall on this matter, the findings and the recommendations from the O2C report are held in the blueprint for change. Look at that; read that. That is the substance that we need to focus on. We need to focus on the change in the organisation that is clearly outlined in the blueprint for change.

MADAM SPEAKER: A supplementary question, Mr Wall.

MR WALL: Minister, given the O2C inquiry was into the toxic management culture, have the managers responsible for that culture now been charged with reforming the system?

MS BURCH: They are not happy over there until they can stand in this place and diminish the value of our—

Mr Smyth: Point of order, Madam Speaker.

MADAM SPEAKER: Actually, I do not think so. Minister Burch, I was about to remind you of the terms of standing order 118(a). The question was: are the same staff who are accused of the problem now charged with solving the problem? Could you answer the question in accordance with the standing order.

MS BURCH: A key recommendation of the blueprint, which reflects the recommendation in the O2C report, is that there is a strong leadership framework, that all the levels of executive and leadership will have a 360 review, and that they will all have a responsibility for and a role in changing ACTAS culture so that its internal culture can reach the high standards of its operational and capability performance.

Transport—registration inspections

MR COE: My question is to the Attorney-General. Minister, ACT registration inspections are subject to a fixed pricing model. I have been informed that the current price does not cover the actual cost of providing the inspection. Attorney, why is the price of registration inspections fixed by the government?

MR CORBELL: I am not the responsible minister for the road transport legislation.

MADAM SPEAKER: A supplementary question, Mr Coe.

MR COE: I ask the Minister for Roads and Parking: why is the price of registration inspections fixed by the government, and what is the process used to determine the appropriate cost?

MR GENTLEMAN: I am not the minister responsible for this.

MADAM SPEAKER: A supplementary question, Mr Wall.

MR WALL: I will try the Minister for Territory and Municipal Services. Minister, why is the price of registration inspections fixed by the government? What is the process used to determine the cost, and will the government consider removing the fixed price to allow approved inspection stations to set their own pricing?

MR RATTENBURY: As the Minister for Justice, I am responsible for this area.

Members interjecting—

MADAM SPEAKER: Order, members! Come to order!

Dr Bourke: A point of order, Madam Speaker.

MADAM SPEAKER: Stop the clock, please.

Dr Bourke: Mr Hanson has repeatedly ignored your rulings to come to order during question time, including laughing—

MADAM SPEAKER: Sit down, Dr Bourke. I have called members to order, I have stopped the clock, and the answer that only Mr Rattenbury will be able to provide will be heard in silence. Mr Rattenbury.

MR RATTENBURY: Given the confusion in the chain of questions, it will be better if I take this on notice, go back and look at Mr Coe's original question and provide an answer to members on notice.

MADAM SPEAKER: A supplementary question, Mr Wall.

MR WALL: Minister, have you received any feedback from operators about the actual cost to business of administering the inspections?

MR RATTENBURY: I cannot recall any, but I will check my records and provide a confirmed answer to Mr Wall and the Assembly.

Community services—social inclusion

MS FITZHARRIS: My question is to the Minister assisting the Chief Minister on Social Inclusion and Equality. Minister, could you outline the importance of social inclusion and equality as underlying principles in the work of this government?

MS BERRY: Thank you to Ms Fitzharris for the question. The principles of social inclusion and equality are at the heart of the work we do as a government. At its simplest, social inclusion occurs in a community where people feel valued, where differences are respected and where they experience equality with others in their community. It is about freedom for all Canberrans to belong and get involved in the communities they choose.

While Canberra is ranked highly in terms of jobs, income, health, access to broadband and education, safety and civic engagement, we know that there are people who face unfair challenges in their daily lives. We know that there are Canberrans who do not or cannot access the high quality education, health services and transport of our city and who battle daily with stigma, isolation or denial of rights. These people are left out and, in the worst instances, pushed out of the life of our community.

For me, there are three key things that we need to do to respond: we support people experiencing social exclusion; we listen and value their experiences; and we let their experiences shape our community's and the government's responses to exclusion. As

a government, we have a strong base to progress this work. We have a clear purpose and shared objectives across government and with our community partner sectors.

We want to listen to people who have experienced exclusion and model our response on their words. This is the only way we can offer the supports they need to have equality with all other Canberrans. This approach drove the development of the human services blueprint. The blueprint changes the way human services are developed and delivered and puts the principles of social inclusion and equality into practice through a systems reform approach to the delivery of health, education, justice and community services.

We are listening to the voices and experience of people who access services and we are shaping the way we deliver services so that they are more person centred, strength based and inclusive. Essentially we want to make it easier for people to get the right support at the right time for the time that it is needed.

The government's approach to social inclusion and equality is a long-term commitment. We have some way to go before we can say we are there. By this I mean we have a community where every single Canberran is able to join in our community.

This agenda is shared across government but it is also one we share with the community. For members of this place who need some help with online research, you can find information on our agenda embedded across government, in our commitment to removing barriers to inclusion by improving and renewing our transport, housing and urban design. You can also find it shaping the quality services we deliver to support people who are pushed out or locked out by barriers beyond the ACT government's control. Outside the human services blueprint you see it informing the way we support tenancies in public housing, our therapeutic interventions for children and young people that have experienced trauma, and the collective development of the new common ground facility.

The government is committed to working alongside Canberrans so that we can all share equally in the benefits of this wonderful city we call home. If any member would like to have a chat with me about this social inclusion and equality approach, I would be happy to talk with them about how it is shaping the government's responses to problems as they arise in our community.

MADAM SPEAKER: A supplementary question, Ms Fitzharris.

MS FITZHARRIS: Minister, what has been the reaction in the community services and housing sectors to the establishment of the social inclusion and equality portfolio?

MS BERRY: The ACT government has a strong track record of delivering on its commitment to improving the equality of outcomes for all Canberrans, particularly for people in our community struggling to get a fair go.

When I talk to people in the community services and housing sectors, they are excited that government is recognising and valuing their work for Canberrans through the establishment of this portfolio. The sector is seeing this decision as an opening up of

opportunities for greater collaboration in the delivery of services. There are possibilities for shared practices around the assessment and referral of clients to reduce duplication, maximise resources and, importantly, get the best outcomes for people.

Our community sector leaders have said that the sector is excited by the establishment of this portfolio. I am also told that the sector believes that an inclusive and equitable community now and into the future should be recognised as being more than just partisan politics. There is an appreciation of the connection between the portfolio and the reforms that are underway, including changing the way that human services are developed and delivered in the ACT human services blueprint, reducing regulatory red tape in the community sector and the transition to the NDIS.

The community services sector sees the new portfolio as an opportunity to take a more cohesive approach to responding to violence against women and children, homelessness and greater inclusion of people experiencing isolation and exclusion.

Looking ahead in the community and housing sectors, we will be well placed to address these challenges and we will continue to engage and work with the sectors.

MADAM SPEAKER: A supplementary question, Dr Bourke.

DR BOURKE: Minister, which key policy initiatives will contribute to inclusion and equality in our community?

MS BERRY: Services are how we help people overcome barriers that we have not removed or cannot remove. We are committed to delivering them in a way that meets the needs of the community and builds pride in the life of our city. This includes better services, the human services blueprint. The framework of the human services blueprint is changing the way human services are developed and delivered. The three key initiatives under the better services brand reflect the principles of social inclusion and equality. These are the local services network in west Belconnen, the strengthening families program and the one human services gateway.

The national disability strategy 2010-20 is supported by the new ACT disability inclusion statement, to unite people with disability, families, government, community and business in working towards a more inclusive and equal society.

In housing and homelessness, social housing continues to have a critical role in creating pathways out of long-term disadvantage and towards social inclusion. Almost 25,000 housing tenants are now in a better position to improve their social and economic participation.

In community harmony, our city is a place where multiculturalism and harmony coexist. However, we understand that issues can arise when people in specific groups are excluded and marginalised. Government is working hard with community leaders to ensure that Canberrans continue to live in a safe and socially cohesive community. This is supported by programs that engage young people to engage in pro-social behaviours.

MADAM SPEAKER: A supplementary question, Ms Porter.

MS PORTER: Minister, are there examples of other governments being active in this area?

MS BERRY: We are committed to continuous improvement so that we can make the best use of limited resources and get the best outcomes for our whole community. As we look at what is happening both here and in other places, there are two things that stand out. One is the value of having a joined-up and consistent approach to developing and delivering services and the other is to work with the community in real coalition.

The size of the ACT has meant that we can be innovative in the way we work with our citizens and communities. We have some terrific resources right here, and this has enabled change to be built on sound evidence and collaborative relationships with the community sector. The ACT human services blueprint and the better services initiatives that I have referred to are innovative and ground-breaking approaches to human services design.

But we are learning from the experiences of other jurisdictions across Australia and in New Zealand. Given the work around the ACT blueprint, I am most interested in the progress of the establishment of the New Zealand better services reform program that sets ambitious targets and focuses efforts on achieving greater equality for everyone in our community.

Ambitious targets that look beyond immediate results have been used in New Zealand and highlight opportunities for new, innovative ways of working. In just a short time, New Zealand is seeing positive results in terms of reducing the number of people left out of good, safe and secure work; the support of children who need significant early intervention; a boost to the availability of work opportunities; reduced crime; and improved government practices in relating with the community we represent.

This New Zealand experience has used some innovative approaches to data to develop a detailed understanding of the drivers of exclusion and inequality in society. The lessons we have learnt from the experiences of others have informed, and will continue to inform, our approaches here in the ACT.

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

Supplementary answers to questions without notice Greyhound racing—live baiting

MS BURCH: Yesterday, in regard to greyhounds there were a number of questions from those opposite. While the ACT Gambling and Racing Commission is responsible for the regulation of gambling activities, the Canberra Greyhound Racing Club, under the auspices of Greyhounds Australasia, is responsible for the conduct of greyhound racing and the registration of owners and training.

In December 2013 the government signed an MOU with the Canberra Greyhound Racing Club so that we can maintain strong integrity in relation to the code of conduct and the discharge of their duties. The commission has been working with the Canberra Greyhound Racing Club to ascertain whether any identified or banned owners or trainers from other jurisdictions have attended race meetings held by the club. It has also initiated inspections of the venue and attended race meetings and training sessions to monitor that.

The commission has ascertained that one trainer currently under investigation in New South Wales previously raced in the ACT, back in 2013, and that person is currently suspended in New South Wales, pending an investigation. Earlier in March this year the commission then received further advice that one suspended Victorian trainer had raced in the ACT. The Greyhound Racing Club have advised that that trainer had attended cup meetings but there is a watch on that future activity.

Racing Queensland announced that an additional 23 trainers have been suspended, and the Canberra Racing Club are looking to see if there is any connection back here to Canberra, but nothing as yet. The commission is continuing to liaise with the Greyhound Racing Club, and no complaints have been received by the commission in relation to live baiting in the territory.

There was a question over letters. I am quite happy to table the letters that I have written to my counterparts in regard to greyhound racing. I present the following paper:

Greyhound Racing Industry Standards—ABC's *Four Corners* program—
Correspondence to State and Territory Ministers for Racing, dated 2 March 2015.

Domestic Animal Services—dogs

MR RATTENBURY: Yesterday in question time I was asked a series of questions about the seizure of some dogs in Macquarie and Ainslie and I would like to respond to the question Mr Coe asked. Firstly, there is currently a case before the courts about a matter where the keeping of a large number of dogs and their welfare is at issue. In order to ensure maximum opportunity to prosecute, I have been advised not to provide members with information that may jeopardise the case.

However, I can advise members that DAS and the RSPCA have attended premises associated with this case on four separate occasions since 2010 and prior to the execution of search warrants on both premises on 10 December 2013. I note that the dogs had also been seized on a number of occasions prior to December 2013. On each occasion the keeper of the dogs was advised of his obligation to comply with legislation, including verbal advice, written directions and infringement notices. The keeper of the dogs failed to comply with any requirement or direction. As a result of complaints from neighbours, animal nuisance orders were placed on both properties in November 2013. Eighteen dogs were seized in November 2013.

Mr Coe then asked me what happened to the 27 dogs. As I have just alluded to, the number of dogs seized in December 2013 was 18, not 27 as reported in the *Canberra Times*. Of those 18 dogs that were seized, six were re-homed by the RSPCA, one was euthanased by the RSPCA, four were euthanased by DAS, three were released to local rescue agencies to be re-homed through their organisations and four were re-homed through DAS.

I was asked by Mr Wall whether any dogs had perished. I can advise that I am not aware of any incidents of dogs perishing at any of the properties in question. However, please be assured that if the directorate receives allegations of neglect, cruelty or any other breach of animal welfare laws or the death of animals due to poor treatment, investigations are undertaken under the Animal Welfare Act 1992.

Finally, Mr Wall asked me had I received a briefing from the directorate since the story related to the issue was published in the *Canberra Times*. I can advise the Assembly I have not had a detailed briefing from my directorate on this issue in particular since the story was published, but my office has received regular updates, as the matter is ongoing. I was advised by the directorate prior to the seizures taking place in late 2013 and, as I indicated yesterday, subsequent to this incident I have been discussing with the directorate and the RSPCA possible changes to the legislation.

Paper

Mr Corbell presented the following paper:

Gene Technology Act, pursuant to subsection 136A(3)—Operations of the Gene Technology Regulator—Quarterly report—1 July to 30 September 2014, dated 21 November 2014.

Canberra Olympic pool Ministerial statement

MR RATTENBURY (Molonglo—Minister for Territory and Municipal Services, Minister for Justice, Minister for Sport and Recreation and Minister assisting the Chief Minister on Transport Reform) (3.32), by leave: I present the following paper:

The future of Canberra Olympic Pool (COP)—Ministerial statement, 19 March 2015.

I move:

That the Assembly takes note of the paper.

As the Minister for Sport and Recreation I would like to provide members of the Assembly with an update on Canberra Olympic pool, better known as Civic pool. As members may be aware, the Canberra Olympic pool was constructed in 1955 during the lead-up to the 1956 Melbourne Olympic Games and holds a special place in the

hearts of many Canberrans. For the past 60 years it has served us well as a valued facility for the general public and sporting groups alike. The Canberra Olympic pool is a valued community facility and I understand that it means a lot to many people.

Many of us have fond memories of growing up and spending summers at the Civic pool—the initiation of jumping off the top tower, school swimming carnivals, and in 1992 the construction of the air support dome that allowed use of the 50-metre pool all year round, the day the bubble was put on. The pool has a personal, iconic history for many Canberrans. I could not tell you how many thousands of laps I have done there as a member, and there are many sporting groups who train there regularly.

While Civic pool maintains a loyal membership base, is enjoyed by casual users and has generally been well maintained, the substantive infrastructure of the facility is ageing. The pool is old, old beyond its design life of 50 years. Over the course of the current management contract and following a series of detailed investigations, it has been established that water consumption for this facility has become excessive due to leaks that are a manifestation of the ageing infrastructure.

Since August 2013 Sport and Recreation Services have been aware of excessive water leakage beyond what was reasonably expected, and evidence provided by the pool operator suggests that water loss significantly worsened from 2012. SRS have made various attempts to identify and repair the source of the leaks. This included closing the pool for public use for two days in February 2014 to complete investigation work into the source of the leak. However, the report was inconclusive in terms of the exact origin of the leak and recommended further testing and inspection of the pool reticulation system.

SRS engaged ABA Construction Managers to complete a revised set of remediation works that did not involve any closure of the pool, which commenced on 20 August 2014 and was completed in November 2014. Unfortunately, given the age and condition of the facility, the consultants could not provide any guarantee that the leaks could be totally repaired. Despite subsequent investigations and remediation work and some reduction in water leakage, monitoring has revealed that water leaks persist and significantly increase during the summer months when the outdoor pools are also in use. I am advised that the remediation works undertaken to date have been at a cost of nearly \$260,000.

It is certainly not uncommon for facilities of this age to have water leaks and, in fact, it would be considered unusual for the pool, tank or plant systems to not have leaks, given their age. However, it is clear to me that the current leaks are far beyond what any in the community would consider reasonable. Despite the number of detailed investigations being undertaken in recent years to identify the source of the leaks and attempts made to repair the infrastructure as I have outlined, we have not been successful to date.

Over the past six months since I became minister I have been receiving increasingly concerning briefs from Sport and Recreation Services on the state of the pool. The most recent update to me last month indicates that the problem has persisted despite repairs undertaken to date, although it does seem to be seasonal. This alone should

give an indication of the complexities of the problem, as not only is the volume of leakage dependent on the seasons but it also seems to depend on fluctuations of the water table rising and falling.

I was advised that the most up-to-date estimate of the average water loss is close to 46.7 kilolitres a day. As the responsible minister, I have serious concerns about not only the financial impact that this leak has on government budgets but also the environmental impacts. There are obvious environmental concerns due to the loss of such a large quantity of water.

An initial concern raised by the Environment Protection Authority, who identified that chlorinated backwash water may be running into the stormwater, has been remedied through changes to the backwash system that now divert expelled chlorinated water into the sewer. This has not clarified or resolved where water from the leakage is going but has alleviated some of the immediate environmental concerns.

But the sheer volume of lost water is concerning in its own right. Water is precious in the ACT, and I do not believe we can in good conscience allow this leakage to continue. I have therefore directed Sport and Recreation Services to undertake a series of steps to address issues affecting the pool in the short and medium terms.

As usual, the outdoor dive pool and the outdoor toddler pools will close on 31 March of this year, the end of the 2014-15 summer season. Following this, more work will be undertaken to establish the cause of and potential solutions to the leakage problem. As members may be aware, the outdoor pool area is annually closed on 31 March until 1 November in a summer-winter use split.

It makes sense to allow the few remaining weeks of this summer season to continue and to undertake the investigations within this normal shutdown period. The indoor 50-metre pool, health club and ancillary facilities will remain open throughout this period, with the possible exception of a couple of days of closure to complete the investigative works.

Once the investigations are complete, a decision will then be taken as to whether the outdoor pools can reopen next summer. If the investigations identify the cause of the leaks and remediation work can be undertaken at a reasonable cost to government, the outdoor pools will be reopened next summer. However, the best advice available to me at this stage is that approximately 70 per cent of the current water loss is from the outdoor pools. If remediation cannot be undertaken, the outdoor pools will not be reopened next summer in order to reduce the significant loss of water that is currently taking place.

The primary user groups affected by such a closure would be water polo, water rugby and the ACT diving academy, as well as casual summer visitors. I have already personally spoken to the water polo, underwater rugby and diving clubs. I am keenly aware that the Civic pool has the only dive facilities in the region. I would like to assure the community and my Assembly colleagues that the ACT government is committed to working closely with all pool members, users and clubs who could be displaced to find suitable alternative facilities where possible. I will be holding

further meetings with pool user groups in the coming weeks to discuss how we can ensure that they are able to continue their activities at a suitable facility. The important thing now is to get the best possible information on the cause of the leaks and to consider further possible remediation options.

Sport and Recreation Services are moving to procure an aquatic leak detection expert. A leak detection expert will be fully briefed on the investigations and leak repair work carried out to date and asked to do further investigations in an attempt to determine the location of persisting leaks. Further to this and subject to successful detection, an aquatic engineer may need to be engaged to qualify advice from a structural perspective. Due to the complicated relationship between the indoor and outdoor pool systems, SRS anticipate that all pools may need to be closed for a short period of around two to five days so that further leak detection work can be carried out.

This will build upon the significant investigations of problems that have been undertaken to date and will give further information to the government to use in determining next steps. If remediation is found to be a viable option, quotes will be requested, including advice as to whether such works, if undertaken, would be warranted to ensure additional years of viable use of the outdoor pools. In other words, we need to establish how much it is likely to cost to fix the problem and what level of guarantee we would have that the repairs would be effective. This is important information that will inform whether the work can and will be undertaken.

New decisions to proceed with remediation must be made with an eye on the future and will require a careful assessment of current and anticipated needs. The quantum of any proposed remediation works will have to be considered in line with the lifespan of the pool. As I indicated earlier, conversations with relevant stakeholders have already begun. These discussions will continue over the coming weeks to ensure the disruption to Canberra Olympic pool members and users is minimised.

In addition to closing the outdoor pools, the issue of the leaks has required us to make subsequent decisions around the management of Civic pool. I would therefore also like to inform the Assembly today that the decision has been taken to establish a new management contract for the Canberra Olympic pool. A request for proposal will open this coming Saturday, 21 March, and will seek to establish a new management contract at the Canberra Olympic pool.

Shortly after the request for proposal for Civic pool is advertised, a similar procurement process for a new management contract for the Lakeside Leisure Centre in Tuggeranong will also commence. To date, the two facilities have operated under a single management contract. In the present circumstances it is prudent to ensure that contract arrangements remain tenable going forward.

I would also like to advise members that existing scheduled works to undertake routine repairs to the Lakeside Leisure Centre's concourse will be occurring in July and August this year. Substantive works will include the retiling of the pool concourse and refurbishment of the change-room facilities. These works will necessitate a

closure of the facility, including the gymnasium, over the July and August months. The government will of course work with contractors to expedite these works to reduce impacts on users.

These necessary works have been programmed to avoid the busy summer period and to coincide with the end of the current management contract and will result in greatly improved amenity for all pool and gym users. This information will be contained in the relevant tendered documents. As you will appreciate, necessary maintenance of our aquatic facilities must occur from time to time and works are programmed to take place during the low season of aquatic facility use.

Sport and Recreation Services have given preliminary advice of the closure to key user groups at Lakeside Leisure Centre who will be affected by the closure. This work responds to community concerns that have been raised about upgrades required. There will of course be further communication with affected stakeholders and residents of Tuggeranong regarding the scheduled maintenance in the coming weeks and months.

Back to the issue of procurement for Civic, the government believes that, given the uncertainty around the future of the outdoor pools, specifically whether they will reopen at some time in the future, respondents to the pools RFP will be asked to consider two management scenarios in their proposal. The first will include the indoor pool, health club and ancillary facilities, and the second will include the two outdoor pools in addition to these services. I would like to reiterate that, should an acceptable and cost-effective remedy be identified as a result of the final leak investigation, there may be an opportunity to reopen the outdoor pools.

The ACT government remains committed to ensuring that the Canberra Olympic pool can continue to operate for as long as it remains viable and that the maximum level of services it can offer remains available to meet the ongoing needs of the community into the future, until an ultimate decision is made about the long-term future of the facility. The long-term viability of the pool is currently being assessed in the context of broader considerations for the development of future aquatic facilities in the ACT and also in the context of a range of proposals that are currently being investigated.

Preliminary planning activities are underway to progress the ACT government's commitment to providing a new aquatic facility at Molonglo and also at West Basin with the city to the lake project.

I look forward to providing further updates to the Assembly about the future of the Canberra Olympic pool, including the results of our leak investigations work and whether it will be possible to reopen the outdoor pools.

MR DOSZPOT (Molonglo) (3:46): The announcement today about the dubious future of the Canberra Olympic pool comes as no surprise. As I mentioned earlier today when speaking on the Public Pools Bill, we have known for some time about the infrastructure vulnerabilities of this pool. We alluded to the fact that there are others equally as old and probably just as vulnerable.

We know that the current operator's five-year contract was terminated two years early, with effect from 30 June this year. We understand that the government was alerted to the leakage 18 months ago. If they were really worried about the loss of water, why has it taken this long to address the problem? It begs the question, minister: why have you thrown out the contractor who actually went to the trouble of discovering the problem?

What recompense does the contractor have in any of this? If the pool's costly water leakages can be fixed, the contractor will have no opportunity to recoup the losses that he has had to wear for the past three years. We know that the pool has been a loss-making enterprise. Water costs and leakages have both been a major reason for the losses.

On top of the excessive water leakages, water charges in the ACT are higher than across the border in Queanbeyan. The difference is \$2.20 a kilolitre in New South Wales compared to \$5.31 a kilolitre through ACTEW. This is something that the ACT needs to address if it wants commercial operators to be keen to take on and run these facilities.

The minister mentioned that the pool is to close for eight months in the first instance. He said that if remediation cannot be undertaken, the outdoor pools will not be reopened next summer in order to reduce the significant loss of water that is currently taking place. Again, there was no mention of the fact that for the better part of three years the previous contractor had worn those costs but this government cannot seem to absorb the costs that the contractor has been asked to absorb for three years. But what about the last 18 months, from when you first learnt of the extent of this problem, minister?

In reality we all know, minister, that what you are saying is code for permanent closure. An excessive repair bill will be the basis for this most probably. So where do the Canberra Diving Academy, water rugby and water polo go? No doubt there are other groups that the minister has not mentioned. What about people with a disability who need this facility for their own health and wellbeing? Where do they go in the short and perhaps the long term? The future of the Olympic pool, based on the minister's statements, looks grim. We all suspect that the government, or more precisely the Chief Minister, would love for it not to be there so that it will not interfere with other plans.

But the story gets worse. The Olympic pool is not the only one closing. The leisure centre at Tuggeranong is also to close for two months. With that closure—this is something that the minister has not touched on—there will be a loss of access for 2,000 people who currently use it—2,000 swimmers and 1,600 swimming lesson students, and up to 70 staff who will have no work for two months. The minister did not mention that. He did not mention the fact that he chose to terminate two contracts two years early. Well, he did mention partially that he chose to terminate two contracts two years early after allowing the contractor to manage with these less than satisfactory issues for three years.

What he did not touch on was that the same contractor had both contracts—one a loss-making enterprise and the other where some of that loss could be offset. But, by the actions that have been taken, both those opportunities are gone and there is no recompense to the contractor who bore the expense for such a long time.

What about the 70 staff, minister, who will just have to take two months off? What about their mortgages? What about the other issues that have to be taken into account? I will come to this in a minute. If it is just the retiling of the pool and the change room, why does the complete complex have to shut down? What about the gym? What about the workers? Why does the gym have to close if it is just the pool that needs new concourse tiling? Our information is that the work could have been better planned to avoid the entire shutdown of the facility. Again, it is an arbitrary decision by people who do not understand the world of commercial realities.

This indicates another doubt as to the competence of this government to manage a project like light rail and be able to sensibly assess commercial decisions in a logical and business-like manner. As I mentioned, there will be up to 70 employees out of work for two months. They presumably have mortgages, living costs and other expenses just like other ratepayers in our city.

How odd is it that today we have just passed legislation to modernise the management of our public pools but that the pools themselves are falling apart? I mentioned the ageing infrastructure. There are two other pools that are of similar significant age. When will we learn that they too are slated for short or longer term closure? I did not appreciate—

MR ASSISTANT SPEAKER (Dr Bourke): Mr Doszpot, please address your remarks to the chair.

MR DOSZPOT: I was not addressing them to anyone in particular. I have not looked that way, but I take your point, Mr Assistant Speaker. When will we learn, Mr Assistant Speaker, that they too are slated for short or longer term closure? I did not appreciate just how decrepit our pools were. It is ironic that we have just updated the legislation to reflect modern realities. There is not much point in having modern legislation if our pools are falling apart.

Question resolved in the affirmative.

Education—tertiary

Discussion of matter of public importance

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

The importance of growing the higher education sector in the ACT.

MS PORTER (Ginninderra) (3.53): I am pleased to have the opportunity to talk on the matter of public importance today—the importance of growing the higher education sector in the ACT. We are all aware that Canberra plays host to several higher education institutions, all of which have played, and continue to play, an important role in our city and our region. These include the Australian Defence Force Academy, the Charles Sturt University Canberra campus, the CIT, the Australian National University, the Australian Catholic University and the University of Canberra. In particular, I would like to draw members' attention to the critical importance of the ongoing development and growth of the University of Canberra's Bruce campus. It is developing its capacity and its facilities for the future.

As we know, the higher education sector is a key contributor to the ACT economy. It fosters innovation and research, provides jobs for Canberrans, and attracts bright and talented people to the territory. Canberra is a knowledge capital. It is one of Canberra's strengths. It is a key part of our national and international reputation, attracting academics and students from across Australia and the world.

But in this highly competitive field, each and every institution must continue to improve and grow to avoid being left behind. It is important that we continue to see this sector thrive, particularly if the commonwealth government continues down the destructive path of attempting to deregulate the sector, restructure funding and change student support arrangements. Thankfully, the Senate seems to have at least temporarily blocked this retrograde step, given there was no mandate for these changes.

I note that Professor Stephen Parker, the Vice-Chancellor of the University of Canberra, was quoted in yesterday's *Canberra Times*. He was referring to the case for a change to higher education, given the handling of the reform package by the federal education minister, Mr Pyne. I am sure I can speak for many in this place when I say how absolutely unacceptable it was for Mr Pyne to suggest funding cuts to national collaborative research if he was unsuccessful with his ideological agenda. Whilst this threat, it appears, has now been withdrawn, our science community is likely left with little confidence in the current commonwealth leadership and must be particularly holding its collective breath waiting for Mr Pyne's next bombshell.

Since 2002, the ACT government has made significant investments in the higher education sector in the ACT, both directly and through investments in facilities and policies which create a platform for growth. For example, our investment in the University of Canberra public hospital, which I spoke about in this place yesterday, prepares for the future health services this community needs, particularly as our population grows and our population ages.

However, more than this, it provides an opportunity for young people to get a good education and to have a strong career pathway, all the way from preschool to a career as a healthcare professional, while staying right here in Canberra. Furthermore, Canberra gains a workforce for the health sector tailored to service our community's needs. The health profession is a career that I chose as a young woman and one that I can highly recommend as satisfying and fulfilling. It is one that offers many

opportunities. Locating the hospital on the UC campus provides close links with the university and the research sector.

In the last couple of weeks the Chief Minister signed an agreement of strategic intent with Professor Parker. This agreement outlines the joint commitment between the university and government to the ongoing development and growth of the university's Bruce campus. This government is bringing forward a suite of reforms that will facilitate \$1 billion in investment, development and expansion and, importantly of course, job creation on the UC campus and in the surrounding community.

The UC master plan sets out a range of investments on the horizon, including the development of a sporting commons, a health precinct, an innovation precinct and more residential accommodation on the campus. By reducing red tape and freeing up the UC to attract broader investment in the university campus, we expect to grow job opportunities in the construction sector and ultimately in other sectors linked to the different precincts planned for the campus.

The planned campus improvements will help to attract more students, academics, researchers and visitors to the territory, and will further establish the ACT as a destination of choice for people in the higher education and research sector. They will consider relocating from interstate or overseas. The agreement is a demonstration of the Barr Labor government's commitment to encouraging future growth of the higher education sector and creating more job opportunities in the territory.

Next week we will be debating amendments to the University of Canberra Act that will help create a greater range of economic opportunities for the University of Canberra, enabling it to broaden its revenue base and lessen its dependence on government support and government funding. The amendments will also broaden the sphere of functions, enabling delivery of more services to the community.

Moreover, consistent with being a modern university, the wider functions will include support for cultural, sporting, professional, technical and vocational services, as well as participation in public discourse. The importance of building our universities and growing this sector is, without a doubt, a key priority for this government. I look forward to watching these developments come to fruition. As a member of this progressive Labor government, I am proud to be able to highlight this important sector today.

In closing, I would like to thank all who work in the higher education sector in the ACT and wish all our students enrolled throughout our many campuses all the best for their futures in their chosen vocations.

MR BARR (Molonglo—Chief Minister, Treasurer, Minister for Economic Development, Minister for Urban Renewal and Minister for Tourism and Events) (4.00): I thank Ms Porter for bringing forward this matter of public importance this afternoon. It is very timely to be talking about higher education and what governments can and should be doing to support the sector—in light of the second failed attempt by the federal government to deregulate university fees and cut university funding.

Prior to this second failure, as we heard, the federal education minister was attempting to hold the jobs of 1,700 scientists and researchers to ransom in an attempt to win Senate support for his plans. That shows just how much damage the federal Liberal government is willing to invoke in this sector in order to pursue a particular ideology. The damage that package would have done to newer universities such as the University of Canberra and other regional universities is very clear. And the stress that \$100,000 degrees would place on less affluent families would have driven many away from reaching their full academic and career potentials.

That government's approach to the higher education sector is in quite stark contrast to the approach that the ACT Labor government brings. We seek collaboration, we seek cooperation and, importantly, we seek a respectful partnership with the higher education institutions based in Canberra. The contrast between our approach and that of the Liberal Party could not be more stark.

Let us be clear, Mr Assistant Speaker: this government is about growing the higher education sector in Canberra, allowing our universities to build on their strengths to present the most attractive package for prospective students, researchers and employees. We want the campuses in this city to be thriving places that attract employment and collaboration opportunities with outside partners.

It is important that students, kids growing up in this city, do not have to leave—do not have to move away from their support networks, their friends and their family—in order to obtain world-class higher education. It should be available here, and with our policies it will be. The importance of growing the higher education sector in the territory is manifest for our educational pathways, for our economy, for innovation, for technological innovation opportunities and for our city's international reputation.

Our universities have gone from strength to strength in recent years. They are conducting leading-edge research, increasing the range of courses on offer in our city, specialising to cater for demand and delivering a world standard education.

In what are very challenging external economic times, the higher education sector is acting as a partial economic defence against the savage commonwealth Liberal government public service cuts. A stronger higher education sector reflects a more diverse ACT economy. I believe the ACT government's role is to work with the higher education and research sector to grow its presence and strength in Canberra for the benefit of our entire community.

At least one in nine of our residents either work or study at a university in Canberra. This is the highest proportion of any city in Australia. It provides us with a well-qualified and skilled labour market and gives us a clear competitive advantage in knowledge and service based industries when compared with other cities.

The sector is a key economic driver in the ACT. It is worth repeating the key findings of a 2014 Deloitte Access Economics report which found that our two major universities, the ANU and the University of Canberra, are contributing over \$1.7 billion per annum to the ACT economy and are generating around 11,500 full-time equivalent jobs.

Complementing this research, further work undertaken by Deloitte this year found that the sector in total—higher education and research in total, adding the University of New South Wales Canberra, the Australian Catholic University, Charles Sturt University and research institutes such as CSIRO, NICTA and Geoscience Australia together—adds some \$2.6 billion to the ACT economy each year, generating 16,000 full-time equivalent jobs. Over \$800 million of this economic contribution to the ACT economy and the creation of just over 6,000 full-time equivalent jobs could be identified as coming from international and interstate students. The report notes that the ANU, for example, is planning to increase its international student numbers from approximately 6,600 in 2014 to over 11,800 by 2024. This will have massive flow-on benefits for the ACT economy.

Ms Porter has outlined some of the actions that the ACT government is taking to support our own university, the University of Canberra, to build a sustainable and diverse funding base to allow the University of Canberra to maintain and enhance its reputation for providing high quality student experiences. I will not repeat all of these actions in detail, but I note that by removing undue impediments to the university's development and its governance we are paving the way for the University of Canberra to achieve its vision. The aim here is to foster \$1 billion in new projects across campus which will be a major draw for Australian and the world's students, research organisations and companies. We are taking these steps in partnership with the university because that is how a professional and forward-thinking government acts to support a vital part of our education system.

This afternoon I would like to take the opportunity to briefly mention some of the other practical steps the ACT government is taking to support the growth of our higher education sector. We have created “study Canberra” to promote Canberra as Australia's higher education destination of choice. We have funded the first Centenary Chair of Cancer Research at the John Curtin School of Medical Research, a \$20 million boost to ACT cancer services. We have worked in partnership with the ANU to develop City West, to provide an innovation and social bridge between the university and Canberra's western CBD edge. We have committed over \$30 million to the development of NICTA and established with NICTA the e-health living lab at the University of Canberra.

This support and collaborative effort are one reason why the ANU, NICTA, CSIRO, the University of Canberra and the University of New South Wales Canberra all signed on as foundation members of the CBR Innovation Network. During this time, and with the financial support and efforts of its members, the network will become a leader in driving the strategic approach to innovation and diversification of our economy and is reaching out to big and small groups across the ACT. The innovation network is a first for Australia. It makes the ACT the leader in innovation policy and program delivery in this country.

Our higher education and research institutions are looking to translate their existing research and academic knowledge into commercial opportunities through the development of a series of innovation hubs at Mount Stromlo, the sports technology and health precincts at Bruce, a renewable energy hub being built through the

Canberra Institute of Technology, the cyber security industry at the University of New South Wales Canberra campus and elsewhere. All of these projects are acting as creators of highly skilled jobs in the ACT.

Canberra has a well-deserved reputation as a knowledge capital where our universities and education providers are integral parts of our economy and our community. We are fortunate to be a multi-university town, but we cannot take this for granted. We need to work with all of our higher education providers to grow and to allow the exchange of ideas, the undertaking of new fields of research, the discovery of new solutions, and the successful creation of a range of offshoot businesses. This effort will be repaid many times over by developing the potential in students in this city, attracting the world's best and brightest to live here and, importantly, drawing new investment into the ACT economy.

This is one area where the contrast of approaches between the Liberal Party and the Labor Party is stark. We are making the investments in a more diverse ACT economy and supporting our higher education sector to grow. It is the right thing to do for this city at this time and we will make it happen.

MR SMYTH (Brindabella) (4.10): It is a treat when the new Chief Minister just asserts: "This is the difference between the Liberal and the Labor Party; we are going to make it happen." You have to look at his record in office and you have to look at the record of this government in office on whether they can make anything happen.

Dare I go back to the new ESA headquarters at Fairbairn that the government mismanaged, going from something to the tune of \$13 million to \$75 million? Or there is the opening of the AMC. It opened to great fanfare but was not ready. That led to all sorts of operational problems. There was the renewal of the Tharwa bridge, which was apparently impossible to start with but which happened just as the Canberra Liberals said it would happen. Of course, when it comes to infrastructure projects, there is the great success of this government, the GDE. It was in the budget in 2000, originally for, I think, \$55 million, to open in July 2006. What was the final bill? It was about \$200 million. It was five years late and there was the debacle of opening one lane and then coming back even before the one lane was finished and saying, "It is at capacity. We must open a second lane."

It is good for the Chief Minister to assert, "This is the difference: we deliver and we are diversifying the economy." The record, the truth and the statistics do not bear that out, and they never do.

This is typical of the Labor Party's approach: stand up and say it often enough; talk about the Labor Party's achievements. We have heard lots this week from Mr Barr. He says "I", "me" and "we", but the reality is that for some 10 years this government did not have a strategy for diversifying the economy. Every time I raised the issue of diversification, they laughed. They realised that in the lead-up to the 2012 election they had to do something, so we had a document. We know that that document was simply a rebrand, a rehash, a relaunch or a re-instigation of things that they had forgotten, denied, gotten rid of or shut down. That is your record, Chief Minister, and that is the record of the Labor Party across the country.

We get to higher education. Higher education is important. This city was meant to be a city of education. This was—

Mr Barr: You have wasted a quarter of your speech before you even mention higher education.

MR SMYTH: It is quite interesting. The minister asserts that I have wasted a quarter of my speech. It is not a waste when you hold the government to account. The opening speaker had 15 minutes and went for six minutes and 40 seconds. If we want to talk about a wasted opportunity, let us remember that we had an opportunity brought on by the Labor Party and their lead speaker did not even manage seven minutes. We want to talk about opportunities, Chief Minister. There are opportunities there all the time to hold you to account, and we will do it. As I have said before in this place—

Mr Barr interjecting—

MR SMYTH: As I have said before in this place, this city was founded to be a city of governance, education and the arts, as then Prime Minister Fisher said. Kate Carnell, when she was the Chief Minister, understood that, and we started the process. I acknowledge that there has been some continuance. At least Chief Minister Gallagher set up the portfolio of higher education. One of the first actions of the new Chief Minister, Mr Barr, was the abolition of that portfolio. He has responsibility for it, but it does not exist in the ministry. The downgrading of higher ed as a portfolio is in stark contrast to the words of the Chief Minister and—

Members interjecting—

MR SMYTH: There we go. Please, Mr Assistant Speaker, I seek your protection from the constant interjection of the Chief Minister.

MR ASSISTANT SPEAKER (Dr Bourke): Mr Coe, stop interjecting, please.

MR SMYTH: Mr Coe? I don't think he has—hardly.

I suspect this started out as another one of those stunt speeches to attack the federal government but that neither Ms Porter nor Mr Barr could raise the energy to do it. I suspect that fundamentally they know something has to be reformed in the higher education sector. Just remember what Labor Prime Minister Paul Keating said:

There is no such thing, of course, as “free” education—somebody has to pay. In systems with no charges those somebodies are all taxpayers.

This is a pretty important point: a “free” higher education system is one paid for by the taxes of all, the majority of whom haven't had the privilege of a university education. Ask yourself if you think that is a fair thing.

You would have thought they might have raised a bit of a sweat, got a bit of energy up and had a go. But they would have been thinking of the words of Andrew Leigh, the

federal member for Fraser, who said, on deregulated fees, that there is no reason to think that it will adversely affect poorer students. That was imagining our future from Andrew Leigh in 2004. Andrew Leigh knew. Paul Keating knew. Only those opposite think that there is no role here for reform.

We have already seen that a number of the universities—for instance, Queensland University of Technology—have now published their fee structures, showing that the scare campaign that is being run is false.

It is important to get on the record quotes from those who actually know what they are talking about. Let me quote from Senator Seselja's speech in the Senate. He said that Universities Australia, the Regional Universities Network, the Australian Technology Network, Innovative Research Universities, the Group of Eight, TAFE Directors Australia, the Australian council of private education and teaching and the Council of Private Higher Education are all supporting the higher education reforms, with some amendments. The only exception on that point seems to be the Vice-Chancellor of the University of Canberra.

We know that the business community sees that there is some need for reform, with groups like ACCI and the BCA also calling for it.

Universities Australia said:

The peak body representing Australia's universities calls on the Parliament to support the deregulation of Australian universities with changes to the Government's proposals that will assure affordability for students and taxpayers.

Professor Paul Craig of the Australian Catholic University said:

Rejecting the package wholesale is not a vote for university equity. It is a vote against reality.

That doyen of Labor politicians Professor Gareth Evans, now the Chancellor of ANU and former Labor minister, with his vice-chancellor, Ian Young, said:

The bottom line is that if Australia is to develop universities which can truly compete internationally, that can provide an excellent educational experience for students and provide outstanding graduates of the kind that are so vital to our nation's future, we have to not only allow, but encourage, diversity by removing constraints that prevent innovation.

If you want diversity, Chief Minister, take the word of Gareth Evans and Ian Young: if you want that, you must remove the constraints that prevent innovation.

Canberra is a city whose foundation was clear. It was right there from the start. This was to be a city of governance, education and the arts. We have concentrated on governance; I think we have done pretty well out of it. In that regard it has certainly proved its worth to the ACT as a place to live and in relation to its economy. But there is an opportunity here with education and with the arts.

Let us look at the reforms that are going on. Let us see what the value is to all students, but particularly to the people of the ACT. And let us see how we use that to leverage into an economy that can survive into the future. Let us face it: we still have an ACT economy that is in large part based on land and land development; we have an ACT budget that is land based and development based. What if you need to balance the budget? You sell another block of land; you undercut the block of land that you sold a couple of days, a couple of weeks or a couple of months before. You keep putting land in because you need to look good and balance your budget.

That is instead of saying, “How do we leverage off what is coming out of the ANU, UC, ADFA, the Australian Catholic University, Charles Sturt University, the CSIRO and the CIT, and build the image that Canberra is a place of education?” You only have to add to that mix the Academy of Interactive Entertainment to show that the private sector has a large role to play here as well, if we let it in. We need long-term planning. We have to make sure that we allocate the resources that are required. We have to make sure that the land use is appropriate.

As I brought to this place some weeks ago, we have to make sure that we have got the connections right. Even the ministers, it appeared, did not know that there was a plan to upgrade Clunies Ross Street, effectively putting a four-lane wall between ANU and the CSIRO. I have spoken to a large number of people about this. The combination of the research that will be conducted at the Black Mountain facility for the CSIRO plus the work done at the ANU will probably give us the largest concentration of research activity anywhere in the Southern Hemisphere. That is something we should be proud of, but we have to get it right. Putting a road through the middle of that network will not lead to the connectivity that leads to the breakthroughs that we need to—

Mr Barr: So we should put light rail there, then, should we?

MR SMYTH: Are we going to put light rail there as well? There will be four lanes of light rail, the Chief Minister interjects. That is the point. You do not get it. What there should be is a very small road or perhaps a road underground. Options should be looked at and discussed so that you can actually use that space to connect the students on one side with the research on the other and deliver the outcomes this city deserves. *(Time expired.)*

MS BURCH (Brindabella—Minister for Education and Training, Minister for Police and Emergency Services, Minister for Disability, Minister for Racing and Gaming and Minister for the Arts) (4.20): I rise very briefly to refer to an article—

Mr Smyth: That would be good.

MS BURCH: Mr Smyth, as always, is rude and interjects, but that is what we expect from Mr Smyth, because that is just how he plays.

Mr Doszpot: Look who is talking. Bloody hell!

MS BURCH: Mr Assistant Speaker, I think there was language used by Mr Doszpot that is absolutely unparliamentary.

Mr Doszpot: What was the language?

MS BURCH: I think it was “bloody hell”.

MR ASSISTANT SPEAKER (Dr Bourke): Stop the clocks. Ms Burch, resume your seat. Mr Doszpot, would you withdraw?

Mr Doszpot: I withdraw. “Bloody hell” is a—

MS BURCH: You stand when you are talking to the Assistant Speaker, I believe.

MR ASSISTANT SPEAKER: Ms Burch, thank you.

Mr Doszpot: Mr Assistant Speaker, I withdraw “bloody hell”.

MS BURCH: It is the tone of conversation you get from those opposite.

Mr Smyth referred to the University of Canberra—indeed, the vice-chancellor there. I refer to an article in the *Canberra Times* headed “Christopher Pyne should go as Education Minister, suggests University of Canberra’s Stephen Parker.” It is an interesting read in the *Canberra Times*. It states:

University of Canberra vice-chancellor Stephen Parker says a new federal education minister may be needed if the government wants to reform higher education.

Education minister Christopher Pyne has suffered two Senate rebuffs to his planned attempts to deregulate university fees.

According to the article, he went on to say:

... there was now a “case for change in minister” given the acrimonious handling of the deregulation issue.

Professor Parker is well and truly on the public record as not supporting those moves—and nor, does it seem, is the federal government, through the Senate. He is a representative of the people of this nation and, indeed, the ACT. The article goes on to state:

Earlier this month, Mr Pyne angered cabinet by threatening to slash science research funding and jobs if the Senate blocked his legislation.

That is the tone of the federal Liberal Party, and it is reflected in the tone of the conversation that has come from those opposite this afternoon. The *Canberra Times* says:

But on Monday he split his threat to cut research funding from the regulation legislation in a last-ditch attempt to get it through the Senate.

Professor Parker said at that time that “two half-sized objectionable bills are no different from one large one in my view.”

That was Professor Parker's comment. The article went on to say:

Professor Parker has been the lead critic of the government's higher education reform agenda. He has also been the only university chief to publicly denounce the government's plans to deregulate university funding, saying it would advantage—

Opposition members interjecting—

MS BURCH: Can you protect me, Mr Assistant Speaker, from the interjections?

MR ASSISTANT SPEAKER: Order, members!

Mr Coe interjecting—

MR ASSISTANT SPEAKER: Order, Mr Coe!

MS BURCH: According to the article, Professor Parker was saying:

... it would advantage Australia's elite institutions to the detriment of future generations of students ...

"If, as the government says, the package will be reintroduced and there is a hope for bipartisan support, then a change in minister could reset the atmosphere," he said.

The Senate blocking the legislation was "right for democracy, right for good policy and right for students" ...

Those are the words of Professor Parker. I support his words. Clearly, through the Senate, the Australian public made comment on Mr Pyne's proposed regulation change.

Discussion concluded.

Adjournment

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

That the Assembly do now adjourn.

Public Accounts—Standing Committee Report 7

MR SMYTH (Brindabella) (4.25): I present the following report:

Public Accounts—Standing Committee—Report 7—Review of Auditor-General's Report No 2 of 2014: *The Water and Sewerage Pricing Process*, dated 26 February 2015, together with a copy of the extracts of the relevant minutes of proceedings.

I move:

That the report be noted.

I would like to thank members of the committee for their assistance in this report. It is an important issue. There are five recommendations that go to, in the main, a lot of process, particularly that ACT government directorates and agencies should ensure complete compliance with the reporting requirements as called for under the Auditor-General's report directions. There is a call that, when the Treasurer receives the industry panel, by the last sitting day in May he report to the Assembly on the progress of the panel's consideration and that that information should come to the Assembly hopefully before May.

The committee also recommends that the government ensure that the reporting time for the review of the ACT water and sewerage pricing framework permits consideration of the outcomes of the evaluation of the current review process and suitability post reporting by the industry panel.

I also take the opportunity to thank the secretary of the committee, Dr Cullen, for her assistance in putting together this report.

Question resolved in the affirmative.

Report 8

MR SMYTH (Brindabella) (4.27): I present the following report:

Public Accounts—Standing Committee—Report 8—Review of Auditor-General's Report No 1 of 2014: *Speed Cameras in the ACT*, dated 26 February 2015, together with a copy of the extracts of the relevant minutes of proceedings.

I move:

That the report be noted.

Again, I thank members of the committee for their assistance in putting together this report. The issue of speed cameras in the ACT is very important to the people of the ACT. What I have noted under various ministers is that there has not been much of a case for the location and siting of the cameras. The committee's report has a few administrative recommendations amongst the eight recommendations which go to things like compliance with the requirements of the annual reports directions et cetera.

There is also a matter that is really becoming quite an issue with this government, and that is the release of reports. Recommendation 4 states:

The Committee recommends that the ACT Government table in the ACT Legislative Assembly, by the last sitting day in May 2015, the University of NSW's evaluation report on the existing ACT road safety camera program.

Recommendation 5 states that, if that report is not available, “the Attorney-General should make a statement to the ACT Legislative Assembly providing an explanation for the delay”. One wonders why the government get these reports and then refuse to release them. One can only question whether they are attempting to hide something. I think it is important that as much information that can be put in the public realm is put, and it is quite clear the committee has agreed with that.

As I said, there are eight recommendations in the report. Again, thanks to the members for their assistance in the hearings and all those that attended and gave evidence. I thank the secretary, Dr Cullen, for her assistance in getting us to the stage where we can table this report today.

Question resolved in the affirmative.

Adjournment

Motion (by **Ms Burch**) proposed:

That the Assembly do now adjourn.

Clean Up Australia Day

MS LAWDER (Brindabella) (4.29): In 1989 an “average Australian bloke” had a simple idea to make a difference in his own backyard—clean up Sydney Harbour. As a yachtsman, he had been appalled to see the rubbish covering the world’s oceans. After more than 40,000 people turned out to help him, the following year Ian Kiernan and his committee launched Clean Up Australia Day, to which 300,000 people turned up. Clean Up Australia Day has now become the nation’s largest community-based environmental event. Over the week of clean-up day action this year—24 February to 1 March—an estimated 526,268 volunteers cleaned up 13,563 tonnes at 6,151 sites across Australia.

On the morning of Clean Up Australia Day—1 March—I took part in the clean-up of Lake Tuggeranong organised by the Tuggeranong Lake carers and the Tuggeranong Community Council. In the afternoon my colleague Brendan Smyth MLA and I took a team of volunteers to Fadden Pond to clean up the pond and surrounding park. In addition to collecting a dozen or so bags of rubbish and recyclables from this small pond and park, volunteers removed weeds from garden beds and pathways and returned this well-loved area to an attractive and weed-free state. Thank you to those who came along to help, including Katrina James; Henrik Emlers; Cezanne Whitworth; Catherine, Jasmine and Annabelle Adcock; Gabi Cowley; Heather Allsopp and other locals, as well as some of my staff members and family.

Canberra Malayalees Association

MR COE (Ginninderra) (4.31): I rise tonight to talk about the Canberra Malayalees Association, a social group for Malayalee and Keralite Canberrans. The term “Malayalee” refers to people who live in or hail from the Indian state of Kerala and

whose mother tongue is Malayalam. The association has been active since the mid-90s and first celebrated Onam in 1996. Onam is a festival celebrated in Kerala. It is celebrated during the Malayalam month, which falls in August-September and which marks the homecoming of King Mahabali. This year Onam falls on 28 August and will be celebrated by the association in September.

Since 1996 the association has steadily grown, with hundreds of Malayalee now involved with the association. On top of Onam, the association also hosts three other formal large gatherings each year: Christmas, "Cultural Nite" and Family Fun day. As well as celebrating these functions, the association provides a range of services to its members and the broader Canberra community. The association runs a library service, known as Vayanashala, which provides a variety of books to members of the association as well as conducting a Malayalam language service to teach people how to read, write and speak Malayalam. A youth group known as Young Malayalee has also been established to engage young people of Malayalee descent with their cultural heritage. Sport also plays a large part in the association, with cricket, soccer, basketball and badminton activities regularly organised by the association.

I take this time to recognise and honour those currently involved in running the association, as well as those who have previously dedicated their time to establishing the association. These people include the current office-bearing committee members: Anil Gopinathan, president; Mary Georgekutty, vice-president; Jimmy Varghese, secretary; Jaison George, treasurer; Antony Paulose, joint treasurer; Jaisy Antony, joint secretary; Joshy Pereira, public relations officer; and Radhakrishnan, chief adviser. The current committee members include Vijay Sagar, Sanju George, Benny Kannampuzha, Jibin George, Betsy Joseph, Tania Fernandez, Anil Raj, Eldho Paulose, Santhosh Scaria, and Binoy and Binoj Chettiakunnel. Past presidents of the association include Mahesh Scaria, Dr Regina Ahmed, Thomson Phillip and Dr Krishna Kumar.

On the weekend I joined Mr Rattenbury and hundreds of members of the association at the athletics sports day. It was a great day, culminating in the north side versus south side tug of war. I thank Jacob Vadakkedathu, former president of FINACT, for his warm welcome at the event and for all he does for the Indian community. I congratulate the Canberra Malayalees Association and thank everyone who has helped to establish the organisation. For more information about the association, including their upcoming events, I encourage members to visit the association's website at www.canberramalayalee.org.

Gungahlin Community Council

MS FITZHARRIS (Molonglo) (4.34): I rise today to talk about the great work being done by the Gungahlin Community Council, otherwise known as the GCC. The GCC has recently been active in engaging with and reaching out to Gungahlin residents to identify the issues and concerns that really matter in the Gungahlin community.

The GCC operates within the wider Gungahlin district of the ACT. The district is home to a diverse group of suburbs bordered by the ACT-New South Wales border in the north, the Barton Highway in the south and the Federal Highway in the east. The

GCC is an important forum that allows residents and local businesses to express their wishes and vision for the wider Gungahlin area. I make special mention of president Ewan Brown, vice-president Peter Elford, secretary Tony Ozanne and other committee members.

I have been involved in the Gungahlin Community Council since 2011, sitting as a member of the executive in 2013. In this time I have seen the GCC develop into a community body that has embraced technology as a means of engaging with the greater Gungahlin community.

In meetings in 2013 the executive were tabling the idea of conducting online surveys aimed at engaging more members of the wider Gungahlin community. I was very excited to see this survey come to fruition late last year when the Gungahlin Community Council “Have your say” community survey 2014 was opened in October. The results were released on 25 February this year.

The aim of the survey was to collate views and concerns in regard to six key areas. They were: the urban village concept of the town centre, roads and transport infrastructure, commuting, local area services, community services, and the electorate. The survey collected 1,343 responses from a variety of different people, a fantastic and impressive result. I would like to congratulate the GCC on their hard work and use of various methods to promote the survey to the wider community.

The GCC successfully employed the use of email, promotion on the GCC website, social media in the form of Facebook banners, and feature pages in *Gunsmoke*, the GCC newsletter, and circulated widely through the My Gungahlin website. The GCC were also extremely successful in their utilisation of local groups to distribute the survey to a wider proportion of the community. This was done through articles in the *Chronicle*, promotion through the Communities@Work network and communication with many social, religious and business groups in Gungahlin.

Looking through the results of the survey, there were some responses in particular that interested me. These included that 81 per cent of those surveyed expressed their wish for greater entertainment services in the region, with the vast majority of respondents indicating their wish for a cinema in the area—a development I am equally passionate about and hope to see come to fruition shortly.

In terms of transport, it was unsurprising that 87 per cent of respondents indicated that their personal car was their main form of transport to work. However, it was also heartening to see that 75 per cent of respondents indicated they would like to see capital metro built, with around 67 per cent expressing their willingness to use the system once it is operating. Certainly, at last week’s Gungahlin Community Council meeting, members and committee members expressed their desire to see this government planning for the future in building a sustainable transport system that tackles the congestion that residents in Gungahlin find every day, coming in and out of the town centre.

By using a variety of communication means, the GCC survey was able to reach a large proportion of the wider Gungahlin region, resulting in a thorough and detailed

response. The work done by the GCC has showcased the importance of active outreach and engagement in collating the views and concerns of the community. I congratulate the GCC on the success of the “Have your say” survey.

Roads—Copland Drive

MRS DUNNE (Ginninderra) (4.38): Residents of Belconnen, in particular those around Melba and Evatt, are being asked to participate in a Copland Drive traffic study about the state of that road and surrounding areas. I welcome this because over the years the state of Copland Drive and the issues in relation to speeding have been a top-of-mind issue for my constituents and neighbours. I have to declare an interest here; I live on a street that feeds directly off Copland Drive, but not in an area which is of particular concern, and my intersection is quite good.

I am concerned, however, about some of the proposals that are being put forward in stage 2 of the Copland Drive traffic study. There was an extensive letterboxing program with a very tightly typed pamphlet that went out. It is not the sort of pamphlet that encourages people to read it because there is so much to be read on it. I have also had a lot of feedback from constituents.

One of the issues that was raised with me—and this is the one that I am most particularly concerned about—is that constituents have complained to me about the way they were treated at the consultation at the Melba shops last Saturday. One constituent said to me:

The ... government representative was dismissive of our comments, saying that in response to any points we might have to make there would be other people who would have the opposite view anyway and that they simply have to go through this consultation process.

That means the consultants have made up their mind, and that means the government have made up their mind and they are probably wasting everybody’s time and money by having this so-called consultation. There is another consultation this afternoon at the Melba shops.

One area of particular concern is Grainger Circuit, where the government is proposing to install speed cushions outside the primary school. This is despite the fact that the residents who live in Grainger Circuit have said that speeding is not an issue in Grainger Circuit—the issue is illegal parking during school hours in areas that block traffic—and that the installation of speed humps will not address the issues of illegal parking which block the view and make it dangerous for people to cross there.

One constituent sent me a letter that had 27 recommendations for works that could be done along Copland Drive, but it seems that most of these issues have not been taken up in the consultation. It is becoming apparent that there is a risk that the consultants have gone into this issue with a preconceived set of ideas and that if constituents come up with a contrary idea they will just be cast aside.

I admit that when you consult with people you get conflicting results. There is a suggestion that there needs to be some sort of adjustment to the intersection of Copland Drive and Verbrugghen Street. There are three options: some minor improvement to the intersection, a roundabout or traffic lights. I can tell you, Madam Assistant Speaker, that basically the community is divided equally as to which of those would be desirable.

From time to time decision-makers have to make decisions, but in doing so the constituents' views need to be respected. If proposals are being put forward which are not supported by constituents, it means that people in the street are saying, "This is not the problem that we need to address in our street; you aren't addressing the problem that we see in our street." If the whole process involves putting in expensive and often disastrous traffic cushions, and if having consultation means that people come away feeling so embittered and disrespected by the consultation that their first recourse is to write to their local member to complain about it, it means there is something wrong with the consultation.

I have raised these matters with the minister concerned. I hope the reports I get back from today's and Saturday's consultation will show an improvement in the demeanour of those conducting the consultation and a greater openness to the views of my constituents, the residents of Evatt, Melba and Spence, about the issues relating to Copland Drive.

Question resolved in the affirmative.

The Assembly adjourned at 4.43 pm until Tuesday, 24 March 2015, at 10 am.

Schedules of amendments

Schedule 1

Public Pools Bill 2014

Amendments moved by the Minister for Sport and Recreation

1

Clause 2

Page 2, line 4—

omit clause 2, substitute

2

Commencement

This Act commences on a day fixed by the Minister by written notice.

Note 1 The naming and commencement provisions automatically commence on the notification day (see Legislation Act, s 75 (1)).

Note 2 A single day or time may be fixed, or different days or times may be fixed, for the commencement of different provisions (see Legislation Act, s 77 (1)).

Note 3 If a provision has not commenced within 6 months beginning on the notification day, it automatically commences on the first day after that period (see Legislation Act, s 79).

2

Clause 17 heading

Page 13, line 2—

omit the heading, substitute

17 **Pool fees and guidelines—category 1 facilities**

3

Clause 17 (1)

Page 13, line 3—

omit clause 17 (1), substitute

(1) This section applies to a category 1 facility.

(1A) An operator of the facility may set fees to be charged for the facility, if there is no fee determination under section 54 (Determination of fees) in force for the facility.

4

Clause 17 (2)

Page 13, line 6—

omit

by an operator of the facility

substitute

under subsection (1A)

5

Clause 55, note 2

Page 42, line 7—

omit

This page intentionally blank.

Answers to questions

Legislative Assembly—presentation costs (Question No 364)

Mr Coe asked the Minister for Planning, upon notice, on 11 February 2015:

- (1) What was the total cost of the presentation by Jan Gehl Hon FAIA held at the Legislative Assembly on 5 February 2015 including (a) speaking fee, (b) transport, (c) accommodation, (d) incidentals and (e) any other costs associated with the presentation.
- (2) What other projects has the ACT Government engaged Mr Gehl to work on since 1 January 2013.
- (3) What is the cost of the projects in part (2).

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

- (1) The total cost of the presentation by Jan Gehl Hon FAIA held at the Legislative Assembly and attended by 140 people on 5 February 2015 was \$3917.80.
 - (a) The ACT Government did not pay a speaking fee to Jan Gehl.
 - (b) The ACT Government paid a \$2000 contribution towards Mr Gehl's travel costs.
 - (c) The ACT Government paid for two night's accommodation in Canberra at a cost of \$590.00.
 - (d) Incidentals \$1116.80.
 - (e) Hire of the Reception Room at the ACT Legislative Assembly and its facilities cost \$211.00.
- (2) The ACT Government has not engaged Jan Gehl Hon FAIA to work on any projects since 1 January 2013.

Jan Gehl did give a second presentation on 6 February 2015 to 45 ACT Government staff from the Environment and Planning Directorate, Territory and Municipal Services, Land Development Agency and Capital Metro Agency. The presentation was followed by a question and answer session.

This second presentation was delivered at Quality Hotel Dickson at a cost of \$670.00 for venue hire. There were no other costs associated with this second presentation.

- (3) Nil costs.

Jan Gehl's visit to Canberra was initiated and authorised by the Director-General EDP as it was directly relevant to the work of the ACT in relation to climate change adaptation, town centre master planning and active travel (walking and cycling). Jan Gehl is an internationally recognised expert in urban planning and design, credited with helping to generate the cycling culture of Copenhagen. The ACT was able to take advantage of the fact that the NSW Government had organised for him to be in Australia and undertaking work in Sydney and Wollongong. I attach a copy of Jan Gehl's citation in Wikipedia for information of the member.

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

**ACTION bus service—passengers
(Question No 366)**

Mr Coe asked the Minister for Territory and Municipal Services, upon notice, on 12 February 2015:

- (1) What is the weekday daily number of origin passengers at bus stops (identified by bus stop ID) (a) 2634, (b) 5127, (c) 2824 and (d) 2948.
- (2) What is the weekday daily number of destination passengers identified in part (1).

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

For the period of 1 September 2014 to 11 February 2015:

Bus Stop ID	Daily Average Boardings (1)	Daily Average Alighting (2)
(a) 2634: Canberra Ave after Ipswich St	8	1
(b) 5127: Canberra Ave after Ipswich St	1	21
(c) 2824: Iron Knob Street Park and Ride	0	1
(d) 2948: Canberra Outlet Centre Iron Knob St	188	152

**Roads—street lights
(Question No 367)**

Mr Coe asked the Minister for Territory and Municipal Services, upon notice, on 12 February 2015 (*redirected to the Minister for Roads and Parking*):

- (1) What was the annual cost of funding electricity for all of Canberra's street lights for the periods (a) 1 July 2009 to 30 June 2010, (b) 1 July 2010 to 30 June 2011, (c) 1 July 2011 to 30 June 2012, (d) 1 July 2012 to 30 June 2013, (e) 1 July 2013 to 30 June 2014 and (f) 1 July 2014 to 11 February 2015.
- (2) What was the total number of street lights in Canberra for each period listed in part (1).

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

- (1) Annual cost of funding electricity for streetlights:

(a) 2009/10	\$3,967,000
(b) 2010/11	\$4,323,000
(c) 2011/12	\$4,665,000
(d) 2012/13	\$5,913,000
(e) 2013/14	\$5,998,000
(f) July 2014-January 2015	\$3,112,000

(2) Total number of streetlights in Canberra as at:

(a) 30 June 2010	69,119
(b) 30 June 2011	70,355
(c) 30 June 2012	72,639
(d) 30 June 2013	73,993
(e) 30 June 2014	75,744
(f) 11 February 2015	76,363

*Based on data as at 19/2/2015

Capital metro—productions (Question No 368)

Mr Coe asked the Minister for Capital Metro, upon notice, on 12 February 2015:

- (1) What was the cost of the large model cardboard tram used by Capital Metro for their public consultation during January and February 2015.
- (2) What was the cost of producing the videos placed on the ACT Government's YouTube page entitled (a) Why light rail is a good investment, (b) Background to the Capital Metro Business Case and (c) Light Rail: it's really happening.

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

- (1) The cost of the model cardboard tram used by the Capital Metro Agency for the recent four week consultation period was \$11,320.00 (GST inclusive).
- (2) The cost of the videos placed on YouTube for:
 - (a) 'Why light rail is a good investment' - \$721.80 (GST inclusive);
 - (b) 'Background to the Capital Metro Business Case' - \$721.80 (GST inclusive);
 - and
 - (c) 'Light Rail: It's really happening' - \$1,386.00 (GST inclusive).

ACTION bus service—passengers (Question No 369)

Mr Coe asked the Minister for Territory and Municipal Services, upon notice, on 19 February 2015:

- (1) What is the weekday daily number of origin passengers at the bus stops (identified by bus stop ID) (a) 5031, (b) 2943, (c) 2944 and (d) 2825.
- (2) What is the weekday daily number of destination passengers identified in part (1).

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

For the period of 1 September 2014 to 11 February 2015:

Bus Stop ID	Daily Average Boardings (1)	Daily Average Alighting (2)
(a) 5031: Canberra Ave Caravan Park	47	3
(b) 2943: Canberra Ave after Geelong St	2	31
(c) 2944: Canberra Ave before Faulding St	2	1
(d) 2825: Canberra Ave after Whyalla St	0	2

Housing—first home buyers (Question No 370)

Mr Coe asked the Treasurer, upon notice, on 12 February 2015:

- (1) How many times, broken down by year, has ACAT overturned the Commissioner for ACT Revenue's decisions about First Home Owner Grant (FHOG) applications and Home Buyer Concession (HBC) applications.
- (2) How many of the decisions in part (1) have been in favour of the applicant for the FHOG and HBC.
- (3) What was the value of decisions listed in part (1).

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

- (1) Please refer to the following table:

Year of ACAT Decision	Times the ACAT Overturned ACTRO Decisions	
	First Home Owner Grant	Home Buyer Concession
2008	Nil	Nil
2009	Nil	Nil
2010	Nil	1
2011	Nil	Nil
2012	Nil	Nil
2013	Nil	Nil
2014	Nil	1
2015	1	1

- (2) Four decisions overturned by the ACAT were in favour of the applicant.
- (3) The total value of the decisions listed in part (1) was \$36,155.62, excluding interest on any refunds.

**Environment—former petrol station sites
(Question No 374)**

Mrs Jones asked the Minister for the Environment, upon notice, on 19 February 2015 (*redirected to the Chief Minister*):

- (1) Has the human health and environmental risk assessment for the former petrol station site in Campbell (Block 1, Section 49) been completed; if so, when was this completed.
- (2) Is groundwater remediation required; if so, when is remediation due to be completed.
- (3) Has the Environment Protection Authority received the independent auditor's statutory site audit statement that was expected to be finalised in the latter part of 2014, as indicated in your answer to Question No 302 on 30 June 2014; if so, when was this statement received.
- (4) If remediation on the Campbell site is already complete (a) when will development commence and (b) what is the expected completion date.
- (5) Was there any other contamination at this site which needed rectification.

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

- (1) Yes, the human health and environmental risk assessment for the site has been completed. It was finalised in January 2014 and found acceptable to the Auditor in August 2014. The Auditor considered that the risk to human health on and off-site to be low and acceptable.
 - (2) Groundwater remediation was not required at the site.
 - (3) No, the Environment Protection Authority has not received the site audit statement for the site. Viva Energy Australia (formerly Shell Australia) has advised that the Auditor for the site has sought additional information on the removal of fuel infrastructure at the site prior to finalising the audit documents.
 - (4) Remediation of the site is complete. There is no current development approval for the site. The development of the land will follow the lodgement and assessment of a Development Application for the site. The date for commencement and completion of development on the site is therefore not yet known.
 - (5) The identified impacts at the site were hydrocarbon impacts to soil associated with the former operation of the site as a service station. No other contamination was identified requiring rectification.
-