Debates

WEEKLY HANSARD

Legislative Assembly for the ACT

EIGHTH ASSEMBLY

5 JUNE 2014

www.hansard.act.gov.au

Thursday, 5 June 2014

Thursday, 5 June 2014

MADAM SPEAKER (Mrs Dunne) took the chair at 10 am and asked members to stand in silence and pray or reflect on their responsibilities to the people of the Australian Capital Territory.

Planning, Environment and Territory and Municipal Services—Standing Committee
Report 5

MR GENTLEMAN (Brindabella) (10.02): Pursuant to order, I present the following report:

> Planning, Environment and Territory and Municipal Services—Standing Committee—Report 5—*Inquiry into Vulnerable Road Users*, dated 29 May 2014, together with a copy of the extracts of the relevant minutes of proceedings.

I move:

> That the report be noted.

This report represents our findings from the inquiry into vulnerable road users, a very important matter which was referred to the committee by the Assembly in May last year. The committee received 54 submissions to its inquiry and held seven public hearings to take evidence from 36 witnesses.

The committee would like to acknowledge the contributions made to the inquiry by organisations and individuals who provided submissions and evidence at the public hearings. It was clear to the committee that the issue of vulnerable road users is an important one to a range of people in the community, and the committee expresses its thanks for their valuable contributions to the inquiry.

The majority of evidence submitted to the inquiry emphasised the issues faced by a particular road user—for example, cyclists, motorcyclists or pedestrians. However, it was also acknowledged that the implementation of initiatives to increase safety for one category of vulnerable road users would, in effect, result in increased safety for all vulnerable road users, and indeed for all road users. The committee also noted that the central theme underpinning much of the evidence provided to the inquiry related to the importance of every road user developing a greater understanding of the needs and challenges faced by other road users.

The committee acknowledges that, for individuals and the community as a whole to develop a better understanding of the challenges faced by vulnerable road users, it will require attitudinal change. This is not an easy task, as has been the case with other road safety issues such as seatbelts, drink-driving and speed limits. The changes in community perception are progressive and will likely occur incrementally.

Evidence received through the inquiry led the committee to conclude that there is no single policy response that results in better protection for vulnerable road users. In order for this to occur, a coordinated and collaborative approach across a number of government agencies and directorates will be required.

The committee's report includes 28 recommendations across a variety of areas, and I will take this opportunity to highlight the recommendations. Recommendation 1 recognises the need for a review of the road rules at intersections to be undertaken to mitigate risks to vulnerable road users. Recommendation 2 is for a review of cycling education programs in ACT schools, and that consideration be given to compulsory training in ACT primary schools.

Recommendation 3 calls on the government to provide an update to the Assembly about traffic conditions at the intersection of Athllon Drive and Beasley Street following the implementation of a reduction in speed limits during specified times. That is directly in relation to the witness statements from Melrose high.

Recommendations 4 and 5 suggest initiatives to improve the safety of pedestrians and cyclists when using shared paths. Recommendations 6 and 7 relate to pedestrian crossings, and include a recommendation that the requirement for cyclists to dismount at pedestrian crossings be amended to enable cyclists to remain on their bikes but that they must slow to a walking pace prior to entering and when on the crossing.

Recommendations 8 and 9 seek to improve licence testing and ongoing training opportunities for motorcyclists. Recommendations 10 and 11 relate to the development of brochures and other promotional material to raise awareness about vulnerable road users. Recommendations 12, 13 and 14 relate to improving the way accident data is collected and shared between agencies. Recommendations 15, 16 and 17 relate to consideration being given to amending the road rules to mandate a minimum overtaking distance that must be allowed when passing cyclists, and that an education and awareness campaign would be required to educate more road users.

Recommendations 18, 19 and 20 are that changes be made to the drivers licence testing process to better create a focus on drivers becoming more aware of vulnerable road users. The committee has also recommended that further research be undertaken about the possible inclusion of testing driver attitude in the licence testing process.

Recommendations 21 and 22 are that an examination be undertaken about the possible introduction of a strict liability scheme in the ACT. Recommendations 23 and 24 relate to the reviewing of speed limits in different areas across the ACT. Recommendation 25 suggests that the Minister for TAMS evaluate the current trial of separating cyclists from other traffic in six locations around the ACT.

Recommendation 26 suggests a trial of motorcycle lane filtering, following the successful trial undertaken in New South Wales in 2013. Recommendation 27 suggests a targeted education campaign to promote the safety benefits of wearing protective clothing when riding a motorbike. Finally, recommendation 28 is that road rules be amended so that motorised scooters are recognised as a separate category.

There is a note of hope that we heard during the hearing, and that was from Nick Clarke, the CEO of ANCAP, which is the crash safety rating program that runs across Australia. It has sister operations in other countries around the world. Mr Clarke said to the committee that we should be careful about making arrangements, especially in relation to road furniture and engineering changes, because technology in motor vehicles is changing so quickly that he believes in the not-too-distant future collisions will be completely avoidable, and highlighted that the main reason for vehicle collisions is driver error. So if this technology goes ahead as he indicates, there will be far fewer collisions and perhaps no more actual death by motor vehicle accidents.

In conclusion, I would like to thank the other members of the committee—Mr Alistair Coe, the deputy chair, Dr Bourke MLA and Andrew Wall—for their assistance during this inquiry. A special thanks also and a vote of good luck to our committee secretary, Margie Morrison, in her new role in the federal parliament. We will miss her but we do wish her well. I commend the report to the Assembly.

MR COE (Ginninderra) (10.09): I, too, commend the report of the Standing Committee on Planning, Environment and Territory and Municipal Services inquiry into vulnerable road users to the Assembly. I would like to extend my thanks to both the committee members and Margie Morrison, who was the committee secretary for the vast majority of the time of this inquiry. As we heard from Mr Gentleman just then, she is moving up to the hill to take up a role with the committee office there. We wish her all the very best with that exciting move.

The issue of vulnerable road users is, of course, a very important issue for all of us. It is no wonder why we had a pretty high level of interest by way of submissions and witnesses who were keen to pass on their views to the committee and, through the committee, to the Assembly.

I commend the recommendations to the Assembly and would like to hone in on just one in particular that I think warrants particular attention—that is, recommendation 24, which reads:

> The Committee recommends that the ACT Government conduct a review of the speed limit hierarchy across all roads in the ACT.

I think we do have a very complex set of speed limits across the territory. It can lead to a perception of entrapment when the speed limit on a road could plausibly be 60, 70 or 80 while in fact it is 50. There are many roads across Canberra where this applies. I think it is quite unfair to motorists, and indeed to vulnerable road users, when there is considerable uncertainty about what a speed limit could or should be.

Finally, I would like to say that I found it disappointing that, during the course of this inquiry, the government seemed to make several significant policy changes on this very subject, which brings into question the reason for setting up this inquiry in the first place. Sure, the business of government does continue, but with this inquiry both Minister Corbell and Minister Rattenbury said, "We need these recommendations. We need to hear what the community has to say." During the course of this inquiry, the

government made three significant changes which were all within the scope of the committee—a trial on cycle path separation or segregation, the introduction of aggravated offences for road traffic offences and a discussion on and implementation of no-fault legislation with regard to insurance.

I think we should be very careful about implementing these sorts of issues when a live committee inquiry is looking into these issues. The government owes it to the committee process to wait to hear what the committee does in fact recommend and what it does in fact report. Otherwise we will have a tough time getting witnesses to submit documents in future, if it turns out that the committee reports are in fact going to be overlooked and the government goes ahead with what it intended to do the whole time.

I pass on that note of concern. That said, I do encourage the government to carefully consider the 28 recommendations and all the commentary in the report so that they can better understand the best practice that the committee has sought to establish by way of improving the roads in the ACT.

MR RATTENBURY (Molonglo—Minister for Territory and Municipal Services, Minister for Corrections, Minister for Housing, Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs and Minister for Ageing) (10.13): I wish to speak briefly to this motion this morning.

I would like to thank all of the committee members for their work on the report. Obviously, I have only just seen it, but I can see that a substantial amount of work has gone into it. When I moved the motion to initiate this inquiry in April 2013, I hoped that we would see a thorough canvassing of the issues, and I think we have seen that. There has been a high level of interest in the committee. There were 54 submissions and many witnesses appeared. Certainly, from a first glance at the report, it appears that the committee has canvassed a broad range of issues. Having listened to Mr Gentleman's summary of the recommendations and having had a quick look myself, there are some really interesting issues here that we will now need to spend more time on.

There will, of course, be a formal government response. I do not seek to pre-empt that in any way. I simply want to thank the committee for their work. Some of the recommendations, I think, will be readily accepted. Others will require some more work, and that will require more detail.

I do reflect on the comments Mr Coe just made about certain initiatives being taken in advance of the committee reporting. We had this discussion in the committee. I do not see this as an issue. Certainly, for example, with the trial of separators in a handful of locations across the city, in my evidence to the committee I said I felt that this was complementary to the work of the committee, in the sense that it is on a pretty small scale. It involves a handful of sites. In some ways it was about further informing the work that the committee was doing. I see there is a recommendation to report on the evaluation of that, and I think that is quite appropriate.

We know that there is a lot of work to be done to make vulnerable road users feel safer in the ACT and to improve the number of people utilising sustainable transport options. I look forward to working through the details of the committee's report to identify the practical steps that can now be implemented.

We have an international expert from San Francisco in Canberra today. I have just hosted a breakfast gathering with him this morning. A number of TAMS officials attended, along with staff from other ministers' offices. It is quite inspiring to hear what can be done to make it safer for vulnerable road users for a relatively little amount of money, where there is a commitment by government and its agencies to really get down and focus on things that make a practical difference.

I would like to thank Tim Papandreou for taking the time to both come to Canberra and share his expertise with us. He turns out to be here on an auspicious day, as we contemplate this committee's report as well. I think there is a great opportunity to do a lot of things that will make a significant difference for vulnerable road users in the coming years, and I thank the committee for their work.

Question resolved in the affirmative.

Administration and Procedure—Standing Committee
Report 3

MR GENTLEMAN (Brindabella) (10.16): Pursuant to the order of the Assembly, I present the following report:

> Administration and Procedure—Standing Committee—Report 3—*Lobbyist Regulation*, dated 3 June 2014, together with a copy of the extracts of the relevant minutes of proceedings.

I move:

> That the report be noted.

I will not speak too much to the report. It is quite detailed and I urge all members to read it thoroughly. I just want to commend Stephen Skehill for his expert advice during the inquiry and also commend the committee for its work.

MR SMYTH (Brindabella) (10.17): It is quite detailed and Mr Skehill has given some solid advice there on what is required. From my perspective, the committee seemed to be doing this because everybody else had done it, rather than that there was an overwhelming need for it. Indeed, the ministers and former ministers in the room during the discussion could hardly recall occasions where this would come into force, and I am always very cautious about doing things because every other jurisdiction has done it.

With that, the report is there. Members need to read it. It will have some impact on some officers, and I would suggest, people, when we get to the discussion, if we are only doing it because other people have done it, then we really need to question the need for this.

Question resolved in the affirmative.

Auditor-General Amendment Bill 2014

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

Title read by Clerk.

MS GALLAGHER (Molonglo—Chief Minister, Minister for Regional Development, Minister for Health and Minister for Higher Education) (10.19): I move:

> That this bill be agreed to in principle.

I am pleased to table the Auditor-General Amendment Bill 2014 and its explanatory statement. The bill clarifies consultation requirements for the Auditor-General, established by the Auditor-General Amendment Act 2013. Under the renewed provisions, the Auditor-General must consult auditees on certain reports that are to be tabled in the Legislative Assembly. This bill clarifies and refines two elements of these provisions.

Under changes made by the Auditor-General Amendment Act 2013, when consulting on drafts of these Assembly reports, the Auditor-General must give parties at least 14 days to comment. This 14-day requirement, however, currently applies every time the Auditor-General consults on a draft report, whether it is a whole report or part of a report. It is normal practice for the Auditor-General to consult iteratively on the text of a report. This improves the accuracy and appropriateness of the final report. It is neither feasible nor necessary to provide 14 days to comment for each consultation. Sometimes the Auditor-General may only be consulting on a single paragraph from a draft report. To safeguard the Auditor-General's ongoing productivity, this new bill makes clear the 14-day provision applies only to one of the drafts provided to auditees for consultation.

The bill further clarifies that when consulting an organisation the Auditor-General only needs to provide those parts of the draft report which are relevant to that organisation. This is particularly relevant in reports of audits which cover several organisations. In these cases there may be probity reasons for not sending organisation parts of a report which are not relevant to it.

In summary, the Auditor-General Amendment Bill 2014 clarifies and builds on the important changes to the Auditor-General Act passed last year. These changes support the Auditor-General's office carrying out its essential work in an efficient and productive way whilst ensuring auditees and other interested parties are adequately consulted and I commend the bill to the Assembly.

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

Red Tape Reduction Legislation Amendment Bill 2014

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—Deputy Chief Minister, Treasurer, Minister for Economic Development, Minister for Sport and Recreation, Minister for Tourism and Events and Minister for Community Services) (10.21): I move:

> That this bill be agreed to in principle.

I introduce the Red Tape Reduction Legislation Amendment Bill 2014 which amends the following acts and regulations: the Planning and Development Regulation 2008, the Public Unleased Land Act 2013, the Gaming Machine Act 2004, the Casino Control Act 2006, the Race and Sports Bookmaking Act 2001, the Registration of Deeds Act 1957, the Tobacco Act 1927, the Hawkers Act 2003, the Magistrates Court (Fair Trading Motor Vehicle Repair Industry Infringements Notices) Regulation 2012, the Magistrates Court (Sale of Motor Vehicles Infringements Notices) Regulation 2005, the Security Industry Act 2003, the Fair Trading (Motor Vehicle Repair Industry) Act 2010, the Pawn Brokers Act 1902, the Sale of Motor Vehicles Act 1997 and the Second-hand Dealers Act 1906.

The purpose of the amendments to all 15 acts is to reduce red tape for business and for the community, particularly in relation to the establishment of outdoor dining facilities, amendments to certain licensing periods, business signage requirements and statutory declarations.

The bill implements a simplified and streamlined approval mechanism for outdoor dining areas for businesses such as restaurants and cafes. At present businesses are required to lodge a development application and then liaise with multiple ACT government agencies and can incur significant financial costs to establish or locate minor objects in outdoor dining areas. The amendments I present today will allow businesses intending to place semi-fixed objects in outdoor areas to simply apply for a single permit under the Public Unleased Land Act 2013. These permit applications will be assessed by the Office of Regulatory Services and this will lead to a significantly streamlined process.

The bill will also amend the Casino Control Act 2006 and the Race and Sports Bookmaking Act 2001 to extend licence periods from two to three years. The Justice and Community Safety Legislation (Red Tape Reduction No 1—Licence Periods) Amendment Act 2013 amended a number of acts to extend the maximum length of various licence periods. These amendments were in response to a recommendation from the government's red tape reduction committee which found that administration of annual licence renewals is time consuming and costly for business. The bill that I present this morning extends these benefits to more businesses.

The bill will also reduce regulatory requirements for certain licensees relating to signage, the display of licences and advertising. In relation to the Hawkers Act 2003, hawkers will no longer be required to display their licence or an exemption to operate near a commercial business and will only have to produce a licence or exemption at the request of an authorised person. In relation to the Pawn Brokers Act 1902, the Sale of Motor Vehicles Act 1997 and the Second-hand Dealers Act 1906, the amendments will remove requirements for the display of signage indicating that a licensee is a licensed dealer. A licensee will still be required to display the licence in a prominent place at premises where the business is carried on under the licence.

Under the Tobacco Act 1927, licensees that sell tobacco products will only have to display the licence on the business premises but will not have to display the detailed conditions that accompany the licence. For the purposes of the Gaming and Machine Act 2004, gaming machine licensee details will now only need to be prominently displayed at the main entry of a gaming area and not at every entry into and exit out of a gaming area.

In regard to the Security Industry Act 2003, the Fair Trading (Motor Vehicle Repair Industry) Act 2010 and the Sale of Motor Vehicles Act 1977, this bill will lift requirements for these businesses to display or state their licence number in all advertising materials. Finally, the amendments I present today will remove the duplication of statutory declarations attached to the deed when lodging a deed for registration if the power of attorney contains certification as required under the Powers of Attorney Act 2006.

In conclusion, as part of the government's business development strategy released in 2012, I convened a red tape reduction panel to identify regulations that imposed unnecessary burdens, costs or disadvantages on business activity within the territory. This bill is another example of the work of the panel to date. However, regulatory reform and red tape reduction are ongoing priorities for the government and I will be bringing further bills to the Assembly in the coming sitting weeks. We will continue our important engagement with the local business community to develop this agenda further. I commend the bill to the Assembly.

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

Payroll Tax Amendment Bill 2014

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—Deputy Chief Minister, Treasurer, Minister for Economic Development, Minister for Sport and Recreation, Minister for Tourism and Events and Minister for Community Services) (10.28): I move:

> That this bill be agreed to in principle.

The Payroll Tax Amendment Bill 2014 introduces an important change to the territory's payroll tax legislation and will have a positive long-term impact on competition and equity within the subcontracting labour market. Like all jurisdictions in Australia, the ACT collects payroll tax on wages paid by employment agents to subcontractors. Schedule 2 of the Payroll Tax Act 2011 provides payroll tax relief for employment agents in certain circumstances.

The ACT is the only jurisdiction where a genuine employer exemption exists in the calculation of payroll tax for employment agents. Under current legislation, the criteria for establishing a genuine employer for this purpose are not clear, which has made the tax legislation complex and difficult to interpret in this respect. The Payroll Tax Act will be amended to remove the genuine employer exemption to harmonise ACT legislation more in line with the other states and territories.

The ACT will continue to offer six other exemption categories that employment agents may claim. This amendment will provide more certainty to Canberra employment agents and to the contractor community with regard to their payroll tax liabilities.

Recent evidence suggests that some, but not all, employment agents and subcontractors have been aggressively taking advantage of the exemption being repealed by this bill. The exemption in its current form allows single-person companies to be considered genuine employers and for employment agents contracting with them to exempt their wages from payroll taxation. This exploitation of the current regime results in an unequal playing field for employment agents competing for subcontractors. Furthermore, repealing the provision brings into alignment the treatment of wages paid to some subcontractors who aggressively utilise the provision with those subcontractors who do not.

The bill I present to the Assembly today will ensure that the taxation environment is the same for all employment agents and subcontractors, regardless of the industry they operate in or how they are structured. This will result in subcontractors' wages being treated in the same way as other contractors for payroll tax purposes.

The bill will also ensure that the territory's approach to employment agent exemptions is more consistent with that of other Australian jurisdictions. This amendment will provide certainty to the Canberra employment agent and subcontractor communities with regard to their payroll tax liabilities. Repealing the genuine employer exemption provision will remove the confusion around the exemption of wages under the act, increase the certainty of the territory's taxation regime and promote economic growth.

The act will continue to provide six exemptions in the appropriate circumstances for employment agents paying wages to subcontractors. Where a subcontractor is a body corporate, partnership or sole trader and has at least two persons working on a contract, one of whom is an employee of the business, a payroll tax exemption is provided under the remaining bona fide employer provisions. Wages paid by employment agents to subcontracting single-person companies will no longer be eligible for payroll tax exemptions under these provisions.

This is a very important amendment for the territory. It will reduce the inequality in the payroll tax environment, promote competition and also improve the sustainability of the system. It will bring the territory into line with other jurisdictions and thus reduce red tape for those businesses that operate across state borders. I commend the Payroll Tax Amendment Bill 2014 to the Assembly.

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

Land Tax Amendment Bill 2014

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—Deputy Chief Minister, Treasurer, Minister for Economic Development, Minister for Sport and Recreation, Minister for Tourism and Events and Minister for Community Services) (10.33): I move:

> That this bill be agreed to in principle.

As announced in the 2014-15 budget, the government will continue its commitment to taxation reform. The Land Tax Amendment Bill 2014 is another step the government is taking to provide a fairer, simpler and more efficient taxation system for the people of Canberra. The bill I present to the Assembly today removes the issue of inequity that currently exists in the calculation of land tax. Generally, land tax applies to all residential properties that are rented and properties owned by a corporation or trustee. Land tax in the territory is currently calculated based on the average unimproved value of the property and a marginal rate. Multi-unit properties have generally had a lower average unimproved value than standard residential properties, thus a lower marginal rating factor applies. This approach has resulted in a disproportionately low amount of land tax contributions coming from multi-unit property owners.

In the current fiscal year approximately 35 and a half thousand properties are subject to land tax in the territory—44 per cent of these properties are standard residential houses with the remaining 66 per cent being properties that are either units or townhouses. However, the standard residential houses contribute 78 per cent of land tax revenue. So 44 per cent of properties are contributing 78 per cent of the land tax revenue; the remaining 22 per cent is coming from multi-unit and townhouse properties.

To create a more even distribution of land tax, this bill imposes a fixed charge in the calculation of land tax. A fixed charge will be determined at $900, and it is estimated that this fixed charge will make up roughly 40 per cent of revenue raised from land tax once the amendments have been implemented. This measure has synergies with the general rates framework where 40 per cent of general rates revenue is also generated through a fixed charge.

Sections 15 and 16 of the Land Tax Act allow land tax to be charged on only that portion of a property that is liable for land tax if the whole parcel is not land taxable. Amendments to these sections with this bill ensure that the fixed charge will not be applied in full when only a portion of the property is liable for land tax. The fixed charge will be levied on all land tax of the properties from 1 July this year. Until the successful passage of this bill a fixed charge will be implemented by a disallowable instrument. Effective from 1 October, this bill will include a fixed charge component of land tax into the Land Tax Act.

The marginal rates of land tax determined by a disallowable instrument will be significantly decreased as a result of the introduction of the fixed charge. This will ensure that land tax liabilities are distributed more equally across the taxable property types. The introduction of the fixed charge will remove a distortion in the way land tax is levied. Once effective, land tax will be more evenly distributed over the taxpayer base in the territory, removing any land tax advantages certain types of property ownership have over another.

These amendments create a more equitable way of imposing land tax in the territory and are congruent with the principles of tax reform in providing a fairer, simpler and more efficient tax system that is sustainable for the long term. It is a core commitment of this government, and I commend the Land Tax Amendment Bill 2014 to the Assembly.

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

Electoral Amendment Bill 2014

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—Attorney-General, Minister for Police and Emergency Services, Minister for Workplace Safety and Industrial Relations and Minister for the Environment and Sustainable Development) (10.38): I move:

> That this bill be agreed to in principle.

I am pleased to introduce the Electoral Amendment Bill 2014 today. This bill reflects the increase in the size of this Assembly from 17 to 25 members and provides for the election of five members from each of five electorates. The move to increase the size of the Assembly to 25 members and, more specifically, to provide for five five-member electorates is consistent with the findings of the expert reference group inquiry into the size of the Assembly in 2013. Both the Labor government and the Liberal opposition have publicly announced their support for the recommendation of the expert reference group to increase the size of this Assembly to 25 members with five members from five electorates.

This bill, therefore, omits references to seven-member electorates in the Electoral Act 1992. In particular, section 34 of the Electoral Act provides for three electorates with seven members to be returned from one electorate and five members to be returned from the remaining two electorates. The bill amends section 34 by dividing the ACT into five electorates, with five members to be elected from each electorate. This bill only applies for the purposes of a general election held after the commencement of the Australian Capital Territory (Legislative Assembly) Act, which means it will apply, in relation to the 2016 ACT Legislative Assembly general election.

The amendments are drafted this way to provide the Electoral Commissioner with the power to act to facilitate moving to the 25-member Legislative Assembly. The remainder of the bill omits reference to seven-member electorates in sections 116 and 205(f) and in schedule 2. Section 116 provides for the grouping of candidates on ballot papers. Section 205(f) relates to limits on electoral expenditure for political party groupings.

The bill clarifies that the maximum multiplier for the electoral expenditure cap is the sum of, for each electorate, the lesser of five and the number of candidates for the electorate. The reference to the maximum multiplier of seven for seven-member electorates in the section is therefore omitted.

Schedule 2 contains tables for producing the Robson rotation of candidate names on ballot papers. This bill omits the table for seven-member electorates. This amendment is necessary to maintain the integrity of the Electoral Act and to make sure there is no ambiguity about the five-by-five electoral structure.

If the Assembly passes this bill and the Australian Capital Territory (Legislative Assembly) Bill, the next step will be a redistribution of the electorates to be carried out by the ACT Electoral Commissioner. These important pieces of legislation on the size of the Assembly come in the context of an inquiry into a range of electoral issues. As members would be aware, the Assembly established a Select Committee on Amendments to the Electoral Act 1992 which would inquire into the public position of the Labor government and Liberal opposition that the membership of this Assembly should be increased to 25 members at the 2016 election, the amendments that would be required to the Electoral Act as a result of this position, the recent High Court case of Unions New South Wales v New South Wales and its implications, and the Elections ACT report on the 2012 ACT election. The Assembly also resolved that that select committee would report back by the last day of June this year.

I note that some of the recommendations made in the Elections ACT's report on the 2012 election were technical in nature and some were more substantive. The select committee in its discussion paper on this inquiry has raised a number of issues, including discussion about increased public funding of elections. The Electoral Commission made some additional recommendations in its submission to the inquiry. The report of the select committee may, therefore, recommend a number of amendments to the Electoral Act.

In addition to this, in its submission to the inquiry the Electoral Commission mentioned that it was preparing a report on the operation of the electoral campaign finance reforms. The Electoral Commission states in that submission that the report would be provided later in the year. The government is mindful of this ongoing work and will consider it in due course. The government is presenting these two bills to increase the size of the Assembly today because the policy basis for them is clear, the timing is right, and there is clear support across this Assembly.

The Electoral Act requires that a redistribution of electorates for the Assembly must begin as soon as practicable after the day two years before the next general election. This will be in October this year. It is therefore necessary, if an increase to 25 members with five members returned from each of the five electorates is to be achieved in time for the 2016 election, that the Assembly consider this legislation as soon as possible. Any further amendments that may be required to the Electoral Act can therefore be considered later in the year once the select committee inquiry reports.

The two bills I am tabling today will improve representative government for the people of the ACT. This is an important reform, one which recognises both the increased size of our population and the unique role and function of this Assembly in serving the people of the Australian Capital Territory.

I commend the bill to the Assembly.

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

Australian Capital Territory (Legislative Assembly) Bill 2014

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—Attorney-General, Minister for Police and Emergency Services, Minister for Workplace Safety and Industrial Relations and Minister for the Environment and Sustainable Development) (10.45): I move:

> That this bill be agreed to in principle.

Today I am introducing the Australian Capital Territory (Legislative Assembly) Bill. This bill, with the Electoral Amendment Bill I have just introduced, will increase the size of this Assembly from 17 to 25 members. This is an important measure which will improve representative democracy and support good governance for the people of the ACT. By increasing the number of members of this Assembly, responsibility for the local government and territory functions of the Assembly can be shared amongst more members and more ministers, leading to improved governance for all Canberrans.

The move to increase the size of the Legislative Assembly to 25 members is consistent with the findings of an expert reference group chaired by the Electoral Commissioner into the size of the Assembly in 2013. The expert reference group's report recommended that the size of the Assembly be increased, and it specifically recommended an increase to 25 members with five members returned from five electorates at the 2016 election. That report also recommended that the Assembly be increased to 35 members at the 2020 election.

In coming to this conclusion, the expert reference group sought community, expert and stakeholder reviews and received a number of submissions. The group took into account the fact that all other parliaments in Australia have at least 25 members and that all other Australian jurisdictions also have local government. In the ACT both state and local government functions are carried out by the Legislative Assembly.

The expert reference group further noted the wider range of roles and responsibilities exercised by the territory now that simply did not exist in 1989, the first year of self-government. Another factor taken into account by the group was the extensive range of services the ACT is responsible for but which are provided to residents in the wider capital region of New South Wales.

The expert reference group reported that the current small size of this Assembly and the executive poses a significant risk to good government in the ACT. To give effect to the committee's recommendations to increase the Assembly to 25 members, two separate amendments are required. The first is this stand-alone bill, the Australian Capital Territory (Legislative Assembly) Bill, which will require a two-thirds majority to take effect. The Australian Capital Territory (Legislative Assembly) Bill is made under section 8 of the Australian Capital Territory (Self-Government) Act 1988.

The self-government act sets the number of members at 17 or such number of members as provided for by enactment. It requires that any enactment to change the number of members must be passed by at least two-thirds of the members of this place. Also, any law to which the Proportional Representation (Hare-Clarke) Entrenchment Act 1994 applies, including a law which changes the number of members of the Assembly, requires either passage by a two-thirds majority of members of the Assembly or by a majority of electors at a referendum.

This bill is short, with a single substantive provision. In that substantive provision, subsection (1) states that the act is made for the purposes of section 8(2) of the self-government act. Section 8(2) of the self-government act allows for the number of Assembly members to be provided for by enactment. Subsection (2) fixes the number of members of the Assembly at 25. Importantly, subsection (3) provides that the number of members fixed in subsection (2) applies to the Assembly constituted by members elected at a general election after the commencement of the act. In other words, the Assembly does not immediately increase to 25 members. I expect the Electoral Commissioner will be relieved by this. The next Assembly, the Ninth Assembly for the ACT, will have 25 members.

While this bill is short, it represents a coming of age for our territory. It would not have been possible before amendments to the self-government act were made in 2013. As members would be aware, until that time, the size of the Assembly could only be changed by regulations made by the commonwealth in accordance with an Assembly resolution. With the requirement to achieve a two-thirds majority to pass the bills, even coming to an agreement on the way forward reflects the growing maturity of the ACT and of this Assembly. I commend the bill to the Assembly.

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

Legislation (Penalty Units) Amendment Bill 2014

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—Attorney-General, Minister for Police and Emergency Services, Minister for Workplace Safety and Industrial Relations and Minister for the Environment and Sustainable Development) (10.51): I move:

> That this bill be agreed to in principle.

I am pleased to present the Legislation (Penalty Units) Amendment Bill today.

The ACT statute book uses the concept of a penalty unit for offences to express a maximum monetary fine for an offence. Section 133 of the Legislation Act 2001 currently defines the value of a penalty unit as $110 for an individual and $550 for a corporation. The Legislation (Penalty Units) Amendment Bill increases the value of a penalty unit for an individual to $150 and for a corporation to $750. This equates to an increase of $10 for an individual and $50 for a corporation, or approximately a seven per cent increase.

The increase only affects the maximum monetary fine that a court can impose on an offender or corporation. It does not create a mandatory monetary fine that the court will impose. In sentencing a person, the court will consider the personal circumstances of the offender based on submissions made to the court, including the offender's ability to pay. A sentencing court can fix a financial penalty for an offender at an appropriate sum taking into account the offender's circumstances and how long it may take them to pay the fine. Further, after considering an offender's personal circumstances, a court is able to use non-monetary penalties in sentencing an offender. For example, a sentencing court can make a non-conviction order or sentence a person to a good behaviour order or a community service order.

In 2013 the government introduced a review mechanism into the Legislation Act to require me, as Attorney-General, to consider the appropriateness of the monetary value of a penalty unit at least every four years. This review mechanism allows me to consider the monetary value of a penalty unit sooner than that four-year schedule—which I have done in consultation with my government colleagues through the budget cabinet process.

This increase is to make sure that financial penalties imposed by the court for regulatory offences in the ACT, particularly where corporations are involved, keep pace with the real value of money. The increase reflects similar increases to other fees as part of the 2014-15 budget and also reflects the general increase in the cost of government administration of penalties. The bill will roughly align the value of a penalty unit in the ACT with the increased penalty unit values in Victoria and the Northern Territory for the 2014-15 financial year.

The increase in the monetary value of a penalty unit will not be retrospective. This means that the penalty unit amount for offences or current proceedings for offences which occurred before the date of its implementation will not be affected by the increase. Increasing the value of a penalty unit will mean that this new value will be applied to all court imposed fines and infringement notice schemes that are made or remade after the new penalty unit value applies.

I commend the bill to the Assembly.

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

Utilities (Technical Regulation) Bill 2014

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—Attorney-General, Minister for Police and Emergency Services, Minister for Workplace Safety and Industrial Relations and Minister for the Environment and Sustainable Development) (10.55): I move:

> That this bill be agreed to in principle.

The availability of clean water, a sewerage system and a safe and reliable electricity and gas supply is something we take for granted as a community.

The ACT has over 3,000 kilometres of sewer mains, with 27 pump stations. The drinking water network is also over 3,000 kilometres long, with 45 service reservoirs, 14 water management areas and three main dams. The electricity distribution network alone includes over 4,900 kilometres of high and low voltage mains lines, over 53,000 poles and over 3,200 transformers, serving more than 173,000 customers. The high voltage transmission network that delivers power to the distribution network is now over 100 kilometres long. The gas network has over 4,000 kilometres of piping and over 100,000 meters. These electricity assets were worth $645 million in 2012 and water assets were valued at more than $2 billion in 2013.

These networks are growing every day and everyone in the ACT relies on these services in one way or another. Electricity, gas and other forms of energy carry inherent life safety risks. The universal availability of clean water and effective sewerage is fundamental for public health and to prevent the spread of disease. The

way these networks are being used and how energy is being created and distributed is changing. This change is happening at a rapid pace. Utility infrastructure and networks that provide an energy or water service to the public require continuity of planning, operation, maintenance and supply of service. Utilities are rightly expected to operate with minimal interruption to supply. Utilities are also expected to design, plan and construct new infrastructure and provide uninterrupted supply to that infrastructure.

This government is committed to adapting to climate change and mitigating the causes of climate change. Adaptation includes promoting the efficient use of energy and water, including secondary water. Mitigating the causes of climate change, the government has set a target of 90 per cent of the ACT's electricity being sourced from renewable energy and a target of a 40 per cent reduction in the ACT's greenhouse gas emissions by the year 2020.

New ways of generating, harnessing and distributing energy and water are being constructed right now. Our utility networks no longer flow in one direction; they are interactive. And no longer are the large-scale utility networks the only means of distributing energy and water. The change of approach towards power generation, power sharing, energy efficiency and utilisation of energy through heating and cooling does not change, though, the fundamentals for technical regulation, being life safety, health and safety, reliability and efficiency.

This bill is designed to address the regulatory needs of the traditional utilities and the new utilities. The bill is crafted to deal with the fact that the ACT is a city-state with state and municipal functions. The government has to use the small size of our territory to its advantage. Consequently, the types and sizes of utilities covered in the bill are broad. But the bill is designed to enable the technical regulation to be tailored to the size and complexity of the utility rather than applying a one size fits all approach.

I will briefly give an overview of the changes outlined in this bill.

The bill takes technical regulation out of the Utilities Act and makes a separate Utilities (Technical Regulation) Act. The Utilities Act will then predominantly be an act to license larger utilities and provide for the economic regulation of these utilities. The bill then establishes a modern scheme to regulate licensed utilities that currently do not require a licence. The bill expands a traditional definition of utility service. In addition to the traditional utility services under the Utilities Act, the bill defines electricity generation, electricity transmission and district energy services as regulated utility services.

When the Utilities Act was made 14 years ago, large-scale generation and significant transmission networks did not exist in the ACT. The advent of new sources and means of energy generation, and the evolving applications of new technology in district energy services, means that energy and water services are no longer a sole, independent service in each premise. Energy and water services can be combined and supplied to multiple premises. A district energy service, for example, can mean the provision of locally generated energy to create electricity and hot or chilled water to multiple buildings.

This bill provides the means to regulate this spectrum of services appropriately.

The ACT now has a series of important dams, especially the new Cotter Dam. This bill updates dam safety for the territory to be consistent with other states and territories. The bill creates a uniform approach to the safety management of all dams of a significant magnitude.

The bill creates a statutory office holder called the technical regulator, who has the task of administering the proposed act. The bill will not change any existing administrative arrangements, and the Director-General of the Environment and Sustainable Development Directorate is expected to remain the technical regulator.

The technical regulator will be empowered to appoint technical inspectors and exercise auditing and investigation functions. The technical regulator and inspectors will have tools such as formal warning notices and directions, a power to condition licences, and authority to condition or revoke operating certificates. The work of the technical regulator, their costs and any regulatory action taken will be reported in an annual compliance report, which is envisaged to be incorporated into the annual report of the Environment and Sustainable Development Directorate.

The bill aligns with the national approach to the national energy market reform and does not affect any arrangements with the commonwealth. In July 2012, the national energy customer framework, as part of the national energy market reform, transferred certain industry regulatory functions from the states and territories to commonwealth agencies, namely the Australian Energy Regulator and the Australian Energy Market Commission. This transfer of industry regulation necessitated substantial changes to the ACT energy legislation. Although further changes of industry regulatory frameworks are expected as the national energy market reforms continue, technical regulation remains the responsibility of the states and territories.

We have a responsibility to manage energy and water prudently to protect the environment and to deliver these services in a safe manner.

This bill provides a legislative basis to support the government's sustainable energy policy by providing a flexible framework for regulating cleaner energy generation. The bill also embraces new and old technology and aims to maintain the territory's good record on providing safe, reliable and sustainable energy and water services.

I commend the bill to the Assembly.

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

Gas Safety Legislation Amendment Bill 2014

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—Attorney-General, Minister for Police and Emergency Services, Minister for Workplace Safety and Industrial Relations and Minister for the Environment and Sustainable Development) (11.05): I move:

> That this bill be agreed to in principle.

This bill amends the Gas Safety Act and regulation and the Construction Occupations (Licensing) Act and regulation. The bill moves accreditation of gas appliance workers from under the Gas Safety Act into the occupational regulatory framework established under the Construction Occupations (Licensing) Act.

The accreditation of gas appliance workers is the last occupational regulation that remains in an operational act administered by the Construction Occupations Registrar. Gas appliance worker accreditation was not subject to the initial competition reforms that led to the new licensing act in 2004. It is currently regulated by a code determined in 2007. The code requires revision to include new qualifications and methods of assessment and clarify the rights and obligations of accredited people. A number of these revisions would have effectively re-created relevant provisions in the licensing act which have been tested and refined over almost a decade of operation.

So instead of duplicating processes under two separate acts, this bill provides for further consolidation of occupational regulation into the licensing act.

The bill includes transitional provisions so that every person accredited immediately prior to the commencement of the new licensing system will be automatically licensed with the same scope of work they are currently accredited to do. Any pending decisions on suspensions and cancellations will need to be finalised and are taken as decisions under the licensing act. For continuity, the bill also allows applications for accreditation and renewal outstanding at the time of commencement to be processed without a new application being made. All review rights are preserved for decisions of suspension, cancellation, accreditation and renewal.

Gas accreditation workers are already subject to a disciplinary system and to other powers such as inspection and information gathering powers and directions to make an installation compliant. While some additional processes will apply—for example, demerit points—the licensing act creates a much clearer set of rights of review and obligations. Eligibility criteria and requirements for ongoing renewals are also well defined.

The bill also translates the existing accreditation levels into occupation classes that bring licensing in line with current qualifications and practice. A number of accredited people are also familiar with the construction licensing system as they hold licences and permits in other occupations. The transfer to the licensing act means that those practitioners will only need to hold one licence and one licence number. Gas accreditation and gas appliance work are already managed by the same teams as those who manage the licensing act, so it is not expected that there will be any significant disruption for industry.

The bill also revises product approval processes to accommodate competition in the certification services market and enable adoption of corresponding laws for approvals. The existing product safety standards are part of a national system of standards across all states and territories.

The bill also provides clarity for products that are not covered by product-specific safety standards—known as type B appliances.

A further amendment removes a superseded requirement for attaching compliance indicators to premises where gas-fitting work has been carried out. The certificate of compliance required under the legislation provides suitable certification and contains more information than a fixed indicator.

The bill inserts provisions that complement those in the Electricity Safety Act and the building code for energy efficiency. New provisions will allow regulations to be made to promote the efficient use or conservation of power and energy, or to limit harm to the environment from gas appliances and installations.

Further amendments transfer all residual powers of the Planning and Land Authority in the Gas Safety Act to the Construction Occupations Registrar. This aligns with current administrative processes in the Environment and Sustainable Development Directorate. It also reflects that the functions of the registrar include responsibility for administering the Gas Safety Act as an operational act under the Construction Occupations (Licensing) Act.

The bill contains other amendments to streamline, update and clarify existing legislation and improve the operation of legislation to promote the safe use of gas products. These include inserting objects of the Gas Safety Act, highlighting important concepts in that act, outlining the relevant standards for practice in the act rather than in a code of practice, and redrafting certain offences to be consistent with the Criminal Code. These amendments are important to keep gas safety legislation relevant and up to date.

I commend the bill to the Assembly.

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

Domestic Animals Amendment Bill 2014

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

Title read by Clerk.

MR RATTENBURY (Molonglo—Minister for Territory and Municipal Services, Minister for Corrections, Minister for Housing, Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs and Minister for Ageing) (11.11): I move:

> That this bill be agreed to in principle.

Today I am presenting a bill to amend the Domestic Animals Act 2000 to promote responsible dog ownership and to provide suitable penalties to act as a deterrent to dog attacks in the Canberra community.

The bill that I am presenting aims to do this in four important ways. It creates a new offence covering situations where a person allows a dog to attack another person or animal, causing them serious injury. It creates a new offence of a dog attacking a person or animal, causing serious injury, in the absence of its keeper or a carer. It creates a new offence of allowing a declared dangerous dog to attack a person or animal, causing serious injury; and it increases the infringement notice penalty for the existing offence of allowing a dog to attack or harass a person or animal.

Australia has seen a number of particularly vicious dog attacks on both people and other animals in recent years. The ACT has not been immune from these attacks. Dog attacks have resulted in significant national media and public attention and have generated much community debate about dog attacks and responsible pet ownership.

On the Easter long weekend alone, three vicious dog attacks occurred in Sydney. In the worst of the three attacks, a 90-year-old woman was hospitalised in Sydney's south after being viciously attacked by a dog owned by her daughter. The woman was left in a critical condition after having undergone emergency surgery for severe injuries to her head.

The woman's 70-year-old daughter also suffered serious injuries to her hands as she tried to pull her dog off her mother. The woman was eventually rescued by a father and son who happened to be walking past on their way to a family dinner. These men also suffered injuries in the dog's frenzied attack. The animal was destroyed by the local council after the attack.

This is just one example of the many dog attacks that have occurred in Australia that have had significant media coverage. Most dog attacks are not reported by the press. Closer to home, there were 284 reported dog attacks or incidents of harassment in the ACT during 2013. So far this year, Domestic Animal Services has issued 31 infringement notices for dog attacks or harassment. These are statistics that I find unacceptable.

DAS takes all dog attack and harassment incidents very seriously. Where there is enough information provided, DAS rangers undertake a thorough investigation into each reported dog attack. The ensuing investigation can lead to the potential seizure of the attacking dog or infringement notices being issued to the dog's keeper. The most severe attacks can lead to prosecution of the attacking dog's owner.

Owning and caring for dogs is a serious responsibility. Most dog owners are well aware of their responsibilities to provide for the welfare of their family pet. They are aware they must provide food, exercise, love and training to ensure that their dog thrives and remains a valued member of the family.

But sadly, a minority of dog owners are not aware of, or do not take seriously, their responsibility to ensure that their dogs are not a threat to other people or other animals. Those who do not take their pet ownership responsibilities seriously may be found reckless under the law.

The bill that I am presenting today ensures that if a person is reckless as to whether their dog attacks another person or animal, that person may be found criminally liable for their dog's actions. For example, if a dog owner fails to maintain their property's fences and their dog escapes and attacks a person, this bill holds the dog's keeper responsible for that attack.

Dog attacks have a serious impact on our community. The physical and emotional scars of having been the victim of a dog attack can have a lasting impact, as can the emotional impact of finding the body of your family's beloved pet dog or cat after it has been mauled to death by an uncontrolled dog, or having to make the decision to euthanase your pet after it has been the victim of an attack.

DAS rangers are also impacted by dog attacks as they are required to deal with the victims of attacks. So are the doctors, vets and ambulance officers who know only too well the trauma experienced by dog attack victims. This personal trauma also reflects an economic cost to the community from dealing with the aftermath of dog attacks and a financial impact on an individual who is faced with hospital and veterinary bills.

The ACT has opposed the trend in other jurisdictions of introducing breed-specific legislation to try to avoid dog attacks. Instead, the ACT's policy position is that breed-specific legislation is not effective in preventing dog attacks, and that introducing dangerous dog legislation that applies to individual dogs is more effective.

Breed-specific legislation has been particularly criticised by the Australian Veterinary Association, which has pointed out that as there is no DNA test that can identify a dangerous breed, any declarations of dangerous breeds can, and will, be contested in court. Victoria's experience following the introduction of its 2011 breed-specific legislation would appear to support the Australian Veterinary Association's criticism of these laws.

On the other hand, dangerous dog legislation focuses on specific individual dogs that have already exhibited signs of aggression, rather than targeting individual breeds. The RSPCA has expressed its support for the ACT's position on this matter.

The current legislation provides an offence when a dog has attacked or harassed a person or an animal. The penalty for such an offence is 50 penalty units and this bill does not change this. However, the changes do update the provision to reflect modern drafting and also to take account of human rights and Criminal Code compatibility.

The offence of a dog attacking or harassing a person or animal is now clearly drafted as a strict liability offence which means that the burden of proof shifts to the defendant. This will allow for a prosecution case to be mounted on proof of the act occurring rather than the examination of the intentions or otherwise of the defendant.

Under the new provisions there are three defences available to a defendant, including where a dog comes to the aid of a person that it could be expected to protect. The bill which we are considering today most importantly provides a new offence for serious injury caused by a dog attack.

New section 50 provides that if a person is a keeper or carer for a dog and they do something, or fail to do something, which results in the dog attacking a person or animal and the attack causes serious injury, then that keeper or carer of that dog can be found guilty of a serious offence. Serious injury is defined as one that endangers a life or is a significant or longstanding injury.

The amendments proposed provide a substantial penalty in the case of serious injury caused by a dog. Punishment for conviction of an offence under this provision is a maximum penalty of 100 penalty units or imprisonment for one year or both.

This represents an extension of the law to ensure that there is an escalation of offences that are commensurate with the damage that is done through poor management or control of a dog. The amendments do provide for certain defences such as when a person or animal has provoked a dog which has turned on the provoker or where a dog has attacked an intruder on premises which are occupied by the keeper or carer.

In cases of serious injury where a person is convicted or found guilty of the offence, the court must order the dog destroyed unless satisfied that there are special circumstances that justify not doing so. Nevertheless, if special circumstances exist, the dog will be declared a dangerous dog and the dog will need to complete behavioural or socialisation training with its owner.

This bill also introduces a new offence of allowing a declared dangerous dog to attack a person or animal, causing serious injury. The keepers of declared dangerous dogs should be well aware of the potential for their animals to cause serious harm to people or other animals and they are required to comply with the strict conditions imposed on dangerous dog licences.

Keepers of dangerous dogs therefore are culpable if their dog attacks a person or another animal. This bill reflects that culpability. It sets the maximum penalty for the new offence of allowing a dangerous dog to attack causing serious injury at 500 penalty units, imprisonment for five years, or both. The effect of these proposed amendments creates a scheme of escalating penalties.

While the changes will act as a motivation for people to manage and control their dogs appropriately, they will also provide more appropriate redress for incidents that result in injury. In the past such offences have been difficult to prosecute, given the limitations and the law as it stood. But now, with the changes, the government will have a more responsive legislative scheme in which to issue infringement notices and to prosecute offenders.

The bill that I am presenting today shows that the ACT government takes seriously the issue of dog attacks and responsible pet ownership. It demonstrates the ACT government's commitment to creating a liveable city for all Canberrans by fostering an environment in which people can feel safe. I commend the bill to the Assembly.

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

Amendments to the Electoral Act 1992—Select Committee
Amendment to resolution

MR GENTLEMAN (Brindabella) (11.21): I move:

> That the resolution of the Assembly of 20 March 2014, relating to the establishment of the Select Committee on Amendments to the *Electoral Act 1992*, be amended by adding a new paragraph (2)(d):
>
> "(2)(d) if the Assembly is not sitting when the Committee has completed its inquiry, the Committee may send its report to the Speaker or, in the absence of the Speaker, to the Deputy Speaker, who is authorised to give directions for its printing, publication and circulation.".

This is just a machinery motion to allow the report to be published out of session.

Question resolved in the affirmative.

Executive members' business—precedence

Ordered that executive members' business be called on.

Health—proposed Medicare co-payments

MR RATTENBURY (Molonglo) (11.22): I move:

> That this Assembly:
>
> (1) notes:
>
> (a) that free, universal access to quality healthcare, through Medicare, is a mainstay of our Australian society;
>
> (b) the Federal Government's budget proposal to require $7 Medicare co-payments for all GP visits, pathology tests and diagnostic imaging, around 70% of services, is a burden on the poor, the young, the elderly and people with chronic illnesses who can least afford to get sick;
>
> (c) the impacts of these co-payments as well as increased costs of PBS medicines to the cost of living for low-income families;
>
> (d) that discouraging access to doctors in the early stages of health concerns will cost the Government more in the long run;
>
> (e) the sustainability or otherwise of the Medicare program will not be addressed by the co-payments, as this funding will be diverted to providers and the Medical Research Future Fund;

(f) that it is important to ensure that we continue to maintain a fair healthcare funding system, to ensure equitable access to quality healthcare; and

(g) over 50% of GP visits in Canberra are bulk billed, and bulk billing patients will now be expected to provide a total of around an extra $5 million annually through individual co-payments; and

(2) calls on the Speaker to write to the Prime Minister and the Minister for Health on behalf of the ACT Legislative Assembly requesting them to withdraw their proposal to introduce Medicare co-payments.

The motion is about the impacts of the federal government's recent budget on our healthcare system. In particular, I am concerned about the impact on families, on the sick, on the vulnerable, on pensioners and low-income families, amongst others, of the Medicare co-payment proposal. Universal health care in Australia has been a mainstay since the Whitlam era. The original purpose of the new universal health insurance scheme, called Medibank at that time, was to provide the most equitable and efficient means of providing health insurance coverage for all Australians.

Medicare, as we know it today, has been in place since 1984. Millions of Australians rely on it every month for subsidised treatment from medical providers such as medical practitioners, nurse practitioners and allied health professionals, as well as for free treatment in public hospitals. Before the advent of Medicare we had a two-tiered system of health care in Australia, as you can imagine, where only those who could afford it were able to gain professional support for their health care. This is not an Australia that the Greens want to go back to, and I hope that all members in this place would agree with me.

In delivering the Abbott government's first federal budget, Mr Hockey said that we are a nation of lifters, not leaners. Sadly, though, this budget leans on the poor to lift the rich. The load has not been evenly spread, with a thin tissue of alleged burden on high-income earners and big business while students, the unemployed, those on welfare, the sick, the ageing and the vulnerable take the big hits.

The attack on the heart of Medicare—a cornerstone of our modern and caring society—by removing free universal access to quality health care is a disaster for those on low incomes and a disaster for the health of our nation. The government's assault on Medicare, one of the great Australian success stories, shows that the government really does not understand the fundamental problems in Australia's health system and is implementing an agenda that simply makes life harder for ordinary people.

Madam Deputy Speaker, the Greens have a different agenda. Our election promises go in exactly the opposite direction in relation to Medicare. We wanted additional funds for Medicare, as we believe that healthy people make a healthy society. We have also long fought for funding for denticare, as we believe that having healthy teeth is an integral part of being healthy. There is no good reason for dentistry not to be covered by the Medicare system, given that looking after your teeth for your long-term health is vital. This is on top of the additional burden which will be felt by public dental patients as the government reduces funding to states and territories.

Let us take a moment to break this budget proposal down for those who may still be confused. When Mr Hockey talks of a budgetary emergency and unsustainable health spending, we need to pause for a minute and pick the granules of truth from the nuggets presented. Yes, there is a deficit and, yes, the quest for the magical surplus will require some sensible taxation and some targeted expenditure reviews. And, yes, the health funding envelope is growing at the same rate as the nation's waist lines, and this is something all governments are experiencing and need to address.

But governments, responsible governments at least, should be looking at who they are trying to support when they start to tweak policy and cut funding. Cutting funding to the state and territory health budgets seems to me to be a perverse start to the work needed to reduce the burden on our struggling health systems. We have already heard of a novel response to these cuts from the New South Wales Liberal health minister, who suggested that perhaps the best way to respond to the co-payment was to put more doctors, essentially GPs, in hospitals so people can avoid the $7 and put the burden right back on Medicare where it belongs.

We have all heard the experts saying that these co-payments will discourage people visiting the doctor. This is, indeed, a terrible outcome. Surely we as a society are all familiar by now with the concept of front-end investment, whereby every dollar spent now can reduce expenditure later. This has been proven in health time and time again, from the provision of safe injecting equipment to healthy eating and lifestyle programs, smoking cessation and so many other preventative health measures.

On this front, this Abbott government proposal is a clear policy fail and will only add to our spending in this area twofold in the future. If Mr Hanson wants to reduce the burden on our emergency departments, which he certainly raises regularly in this environment, then this co-payment proposal is exactly the wrong way to go. It is a sure-fire way to reduce people getting regular check-ups, though, and waiting until it is too late and then needing emergency help. This is unsustainable for the individuals concerned and for the health system overall.

We need to ensure that we are making it easier, not harder, for people to regularly look into their health issues as they crop up. We have heard that it will hurt those who cannot avoid doctors' visits, those with chronic illness, the elderly and children. Sure, they will only have to pay the first 10 times, but for some individuals that is $70 that they will not be able to buy food or pay the bills with. And for some families, with more than one child, that may add up to quite a lot over the year. Again, it is a policy fail in that it is the poorest of the poor who will really feel the bite.

Mr Hockey talks of nothing being for free. Well, I certainly pay for Medicare—every year, throughout the year, as part of my tax. It is called the Medicare levy and I am happy to pay it. I can afford it. But the fallacy of this statement pales in comparison to the ridiculous contradiction in the co-payment. The moneys raised are not going to the states to pay for more hospitals, more prevention programs or more bulk-billing doctors. The moneys raised are not going back into the federal coffers, general revenue.

Certainly, if the system is broke then fix it. Fund early intervention and primary healthcare services; fund the gaps that have appeared in the health budgets around the country. But do not divert $2 to the doctors and their practices, which will barely cover the administration cost of collecting the revenue, while sending $5 to a new medical research future fund. If we are to have a world-class medical research program—the largest in the world, if we are hearing things correctly—then surely that should not come at the cost of actual human beings' real and immediate health—people today that have real problems.

And in any case, what do we know about this medical research future fund? Was it something that Messrs Abbott, Hockey and Dutton took to the federal election? Was it the reason people voted for them? No. We know very little about its purpose, really, and certainly it is unclear why sick people should be paying directly from their pockets for this into the future. Voters certainly were not told that the Liberals planned to introduce co-payments to Medicare. I did not hear it once during the election campaign.

I think it is worth also reflecting on the actual administration costs of this program. A report recently appeared in *Crikey!* which cited the German example of a similar system where the administrative burden, the administrative cost, was so substantial that the German parliament ultimately voted to remove the entire system. It simply proved to be an enormous cost.

Certainly, we have seen some of the issues raised around that, around practices needing to charge people when they go for pathology tests. There is the prospect of those facilities having to start taking cash payments, and the security issues that go with that. All of these are consequences that are in addition to the very substantial health issues that I think this co-payment raises.

Over 50 per cent of Canberrans rely on bulk-billing for their GP visits; I think it is actually around 53 per cent at the moment. This is no small number of people who are going to be directly impacted by this policy. These patients are expected to bring in around $5 million annually through individual co-payments. That is a large burden, especially given that it is not coming from a tax on luxury goods but on essential health services. The contradictions in this policy are multiple, and the federal government must be told that we as a community are calling them out on this, the meanest tax in what is, frankly, a pretty ordinary budget.

As my federal colleague Dr Richard Di Natale has noted, the Greens believe that Medicare is one of the great Australian public policy success stories. It may not be perfect, but for 30 years it has delivered health care fairly and efficiently. It means that everyone gets access to high-quality health care, no matter what the size of their wallet or whether they are unlucky enough to be born with a chronic disease.

The federal government's campaign to steer Australia towards the US system is not about balancing the books and it is not about improving our health. It is about chipping away at an institution that does not sit well with their views on how a government should work.

In combination with jobs being cut, Newstart being slashed and university becoming more expensive, life is being made harder for single parents, people with disabilities and young people. Making health care more expensive too just is not fair, especially when we hear that 22 per cent of Australians already cite cost as an impediment to health care.

This policy will not just impact on young people. I understand that seniors are the major users of Australia's healthcare system. Introducing co-payments for GP visits and increasing costs of PBS medicines will mean basic health care may be compromised for many seniors, especially low-income seniors. When we already know that a significant proportion of seniors currently struggle to pay their electricity, gas or telephone bills on time, this is the last thing that they need. Seniors may decide not to visit their GP or will forgo their prescription medication. They will consequently get sicker and end up in expensive tertiary hospital care, potentially with a more limited life expectancy. When we hear about these direct impacts, it is alarming to then hear in the last few days that federal health officials did not undertake any modelling on whether a co-payment would cause a spike in hospital visits.

Madam Deputy Speaker, there are many appalling things in this year's federal budget, but the Medicare co-payment scheme is certainly amongst the worst in terms of public policy in actually serving the needs of everyday Australians. The Greens are very concerned that the federal government has effectively decided that, when it comes to Australians' health, our credit cards are more important than our Medicare cards.

I think it is important for this Assembly to write to Mr Abbott and Mr Dutton to tell them that we do not support their proposal for Medicare co-payments, as we do not believe that health should be determined by income. I look forward to members' support to stand up for Medicare and support this motion today.

The actual text of the motion, I think, sets it out very simply. It underlines the fact that universal quality health care is a mainstay of Australian society and that the $7 Medicare co-payment is being applied to all GP visits, pathology tests and diagnostic imaging, around 70 per cent of services, and that is a burden on the poor, the young, the elderly and people with chronic illnesses—the ones who can least afford to get sick. The increased costs of PBS medicines will have an impact on the cost of living of low-income families. The measure has the potential to discourage access to doctors in the early stages of health concerns, which will cost the government more in the long run.

The sustainability or otherwise of the Medicare program will not be addressed by the co-payments, because the funding is being diverted to other places. Over 50 per cent of GP visits in Canberra are bulk-billed, so this will have a very direct impact on many of our constituents right here in Canberra. That is why I think it is important for this Assembly to express its views strongly to the federal government and urge them to withdraw their proposal to introduce Medicare co-payments. I commend the motion to the Assembly.

MR HANSON (Molonglo—Leader of the Opposition) (11.35): No-one from the government? Okay. I can certainly indicate I will not be supporting this motion today. Let us be very clear what this motion is about. Mr Rattenbury does the government's bidding. We saw that actually in the cartoon on the front page of the *Canberra Times* yesterday about the budget, the caricature of Mr Rattenbury as the government's lap dog.

But every Thursday in executive members' business he gets to come up with a motion where he can feed it to his base in the Greens and say, "It's all right, I'm still a Green, I'm still doing what Senator Milne wants me to do," whether it is banning piggeries that do not exist or, as it is in this case, moving this motion. We know that this will have no effect. This is a federal issue. This is a matter that is currently before the federal parliament. It has not been to the Senate yet. I think it is likely that this will not get through the Senate. But what is quite clear is that this will have no effect and is much more about Mr Rattenbury trying to make a political point rather than having any substantive effect.

Before I go to the substance of the issue, I do find it a little ironic that Mr Rattenbury is complaining about a $7 co-payment today, when he was saying that he was going to support a budget that is going to put rates up by, on average, $150 a year. Where he says the co-payment is unfair, it is transformational to bill you an extra $150 a year. We know that Mr Rattenbury wants to put parking fees up by 30 per cent, hitting people's back pockets.

Mr Corbell: On a point of order.

MADAM DEPUTY SPEAKER: Resume your seat, Mr Hanson. Point of order, Mr Corbell. Stop the clock, thank you.

Mr Corbell: The motion is specifically about the Medicare co-payment, and we have heard very little from Mr Hanson on this in the time he has had on his feet already, and I would ask you to ask him to remain relevant to the question before the chair.

MR HANSON: Madam Deputy Speaker, on the point of order, the main thrust of Mr Rattenbury's argument was about the effect on the cost of living and people's ability to afford the $7 co-payment, and my point about people's cost of living and other cost pressures is equally relevant to this debate.

MADAM DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr Hanson. Notwithstanding your last remark, Mr Hanson, quite a lot of what you have been speaking about to this point has not been relevant, and I would ask you to be relevant to the motion that is before us at the moment, thank you.

MR HANSON: Members, it seems that when I start to hit the mark, debate gets shut down in this place, does it not? When I start to make some points—

Mr Corbell: Point of order.

MADAM DEPUTY SPEAKER: Will you sit down, please, Mr Hanson. Point of order, Mr Corbell.

Mr Corbell: Madam Deputy Speaker, Mr Hanson is now reflecting on your ruling. You are not shutting down the debate. You are asking him to remain relevant to the question before the chair. His comments, Madam Deputy Speaker, are disrespectful of your ruling.

MADAM DEPUTY SPEAKER: Mr Hanson, I do find the point of order valid. I do find it disrespectful. All I am asking you to do is not go off the subject of the motion that is before us all at the moment. So if you could just remain relevant, which is the point of order. Thank you very much.

MR HANSON: Thank you, Madam Deputy Speaker. Let me be very clear about, as I said, the way I consider this motion and the motivation for it, why Mr Rattenbury is moving it, and the contradiction in complaining about a $7 co-payment, as much as we may not want to see that, whilst at the same time jacking up every fee and charge in this territory that is going to put thousands of dollars onto the bills of average Canberrans.

We are strong supporters of a sustainable Medicare. Medicare is the cornerstone of the modern Australian healthcare system. It provides an important safety net for the health of all Australians. It is an important part of Australia's modern fabric, which helps underpin the health of the nation and ultimately its economic and social success.

However, Medicare, like all government services, must be sustainable. The taxpayer currently funds 263 million free services a year under Medicare. Ten years ago we were spending $8 billion on the MBS. Today it has grown to $19 billion, and in 10 years time it will be more than $34 billion. Medicare is currently unsustainable. It is under unprecedented cost and demand pressures from an ageing population, increased lifestyle-related chronic illness, advances in technology and patterns of youth.

It is important to understand that the co-payment proposal has built-in safety nets. From 1 July 2015, previously bulk-billed patients will be asked to contribute $7 to the cost of each visit to the GP. The $7 contribution will also apply to out-of-hospital pathology and diagnostic imaging services. To protect the vulnerable, the contribution will be capped at 10 visits a year for commonwealth concession card holders and children under 16.

Doctors will receive $5 less from the government for a standard GP consultation in recognition of the new $7 patient contribution. This means GPs will receive $2 more per consultation when they charge the $7 contribution. Doctors will be eligible for a low-gap incentive to encourage them to charge concession holders and children only the $7 contribution for the first 10 visits.

From 1 January 2016, a new safety net will ensure that Medicare resources are appropriately directed to help the out-of-pocket costs for Medicare-funded services.

The newer low-cost threshold will help more people and ensure that safety net benefits are available to people who have serious medical conditions or prolonged healthcare needs. As a further protection, doctors actually have the discretion whether to charge the fee or not.

So where does the money from the co-payments go? It is announced that for each $7 patient contribution $5 will be reinvested into the new medical research future fund. This will come from reducing the Medicare benefit scheduled rebates for these services by $5, and $2 will go to the provider. The medical research future fund will grow to $20 billion, the largest of its kind in the word, and the fund will facilitate Australia maintaining a world-class medical research sector with access to cutting-edge innovation and clinical breakthroughs in our hospitals, the underpinnings of the healthcare system of the future. The fund will provide significant new funding to medical research in addition to existing funding profiles.

Every dollar of the estimated savings from health reform in this budget will be reinvested in the fund until it reaches $20 billion. The fund is estimated to reach that target by 2020 and the capital base is set to be preserved in perpetuity. From 2015-16, the net earnings from the fund will serve as a permanent revenue stream primarily to the National Health and Medical Research Council. The fund will distribute around $1 billion a year to medical research from 2022-23.

The establishment of the fund ensures the government meets its commitment to maintain health investment while delivering a sustainable health system in the future. This investment, to be managed by the Future Fund Board of Guardians, will help ensure Australia can continue to advance world-leading medical research projects, attract and retain first-class researchers and deliver improved health and medical outcomes for all Australians.

The Medicare co-payment is a simple way, as much as some might not like it, to start to make Medicare more sustainable. Academics and economists have advocated the approach for many years. Let me quote:

> At the heart of the problem is that in healthcare, as with other goods and services, free provision leads to overconsumption. As health researchers have shown, cost-less medical care means that people go to the doctor even when they don't need to, driving up the cost for all of us.
>
> As economists have shown, the ideal model involves a small co-payment—not enough to put a dent in your weekly budget, but enough to make you think twice before you call the doc. And the idea is hardly radical.
>
> There's a better way of operating a health system, and the change should hardly hurt at all.

Who was that from? That was from Andrew Leigh MP, the federal member for Fraser. My goodness me, a well-respected academic! I am sure Ms Burch and Dr Bourke would agree. He is Labor's shadow assistant treasurer. Let us have a look at the SMH article of 2003 in which Dr Leigh was asked:

> What is the right co-payment rate?

Andrew Leigh said:

> The key with any co-payment system is to set it at a level that deters frivolous visits, but doesn't run down preventive healthcare. Catching diseases such as cancer and heart disease early dramatically improves the likelihood of survival, and is far less costly.

So it was Andrew Leigh that was arguing for this—your federal member, members opposite—quite convincingly and it was the federal Labor Party that first introduced the co-payment, in 1991. Mr Hawke—remember him, Bob Hawke—introduced a co-payment back then, $3.50. I am trying to think what the CPI was but I would imagine $3.50 back then was probably more than $7 now is. That was what Mr Hawke put in there. But that was later reduced to $2.50 and then—I think Dr Leigh intimated this—it was scrapped in March 1992 as a result of the battle between Hawke and Keating in those days.

The federal coalition was the best friend Medicare ever had, and the current coalition government will continue to be by making Medicare sustainable. And it is just remarkable that those opposite are criticising the co-payment because it is those opposite who have been advocating it and had previously introduced it at the federal level. Not only do we have on record the powerful support of this idea from Dr Andrew Leigh MP, but it is worth reflecting on the process by which the Federal Labor Party came to the policy conclusion:

> As economists have shown, the ideal model involves a small co-payment … And the idea is hardly radical.

The Hawke government champion was Brian Howe, a leading member of the Labor left.

In 2003, Andrew Leigh clearly articulated Labor's real position. He advocated an Australian co-payment and listed the OECD countries which had a similar co-paying public health system: Austria, Belgium, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, the Netherlands, Norway, Portugal and Sweden. And in 2003, Andrew Leigh said that co-payments were:

> … widely recognised as effective in keeping down excess visits. Yet it was scrapped in 1992, an unlikely casualty of the Hawke-Keating leadership battle. Converting the 1991-92 scheme into today's money would be equivalent to $3.50, it would be enough to deter frivolous GP visits, but not enough to limit genuine preventive care. Everyone, including pensioners, should pay it, with welfare benefits and pensions increased to compensate for the extra burden. Those who are chronically ill could receive an exemption …

In 2003, Andrew Leigh gave the pseudo medical observation:

> The Government has correctly diagnosed two of our health system's ailments—the lack of a co-payment and the lack of incentives for doctors to move to the bush.

That was Professor Leigh when he was an economist at Harvard, preaching. But now he has got to toe the party line. Now he has been told, "Shut up, mate. You are causing us some embarrassment here. We have got a good political line to run. Shane is going to run it for us in the ACT Assembly. Run it up on the hill. Let us whip up some fear and loathing and hatred. Let us get that going. So you have got to toe the party line, my son."

So Dr Leigh, who was opposed to the proposal, in recent weeks said:

> Since 2003, a lot has changed in the healthcare system, and I've changed my view …

Really! That is extraordinary. Other people have said in a discussion paper last year:

> As long as it is applied fairly across the community, a co-payment is a perfectly valid policy measure. If Andrew Leigh, before he had to toe the party line, recognised that then I welcome his contribution to the debate.

What has changed his mind? My understanding as well is that Professor Leigh used to support deregulation of universities back when he understood economics, and my understanding is now that he is toeing the Labor Party line his position has changed radically.

So let us look at the evidence. Let us look at what can make Medicare sustainable. It is blowing out by billions of dollars. We have got to make sure that we have a sustainable healthcare system into the future, and economists like Professor Leigh, Dr Andrew Leigh, member for Fraser, ALP member, shadow assistant treasurer, have said this is the way to go and have argued for this.

There are, I accept, concerns with this. I wish this was not so. I really do wish it was not so. I am sure we all do. But we have a choice whether we are going to bury our head in the sand, whether we are going to say that this just something, a problem that will go away, or whether we are going to recognise that we have an unsustainable Medicare system, that we have to do something and that we have to look at the evidence. When we do, the government has come up with something that will result in people on health cards paying no more than $70 maximum.

It is ironic that at the same time members are coming in here to squeal about this, when they are, in this budget, putting your rates up by $150, putting your parking fees up by 30 per cent, putting utility charges up by nine per cent when CPI is only 2.1 per cent, putting up fees and charges that are going to cost hundreds and hundreds of dollars, but meanwhile $7 to try to make Medicare sustainable is, in Mr Rattenbury's words, a disaster; it is an assault. What I suggest to Mr Rattenbury is that he go and have a chat to Professor Leigh, the assistant shadow treasurer, and ask why Dr Leigh wanted to assault—*(Time expired.)*

MS BURCH (Brindabella—Minister for Education and Training, Minister for Disability, Children and Young People, Minister for the Arts, Minister for Women, Minister for Multicultural Affairs and Minister for Racing and Gaming) (11.51): I

thank Minister Rattenbury for bringing this motion forward. It was interesting to listen to Mr Hanson. He has not said whether he is supporting this motion or not, but it is very clear—

Mr Hanson: Yes, I did, at the outset.

MS BURCH: I am sorry, Mr Hanson; I missed that. You have a clear choice to say very publicly, by either supporting or not supporting this motion, that you support the co-payment for Medicare or you do not support the co-payment for Medicare. You can say you are concerned about it, but it is a very simple question: you support it or you do not, and that will be evidenced by the time we take a vote on this.

It was interesting that in half of your speech you talked about Andrew Leigh, who clearly came out and declared a change of position. But no-one is talking about the Treasurer, Mr Hockey, and his change of position. As a Young Liberal he was advocating and promoting the cause of free education, and here he is—

Mr Hanson: Madam Deputy Speaker, I got pinged for relevance. Could you observe whether Mr Hockey and his position on education when he was at university is relevant to a debate on the Medicare co-payment.

Members interjecting—

Mr Hanson: If you had let me go, I would let her go.

MADAM DEPUTY SPEAKER: Mr Hanson, are you going to—

Mr Hanson: I have moved it as a point of order on relevance.

MADAM DEPUTY SPEAKER: I know, but I am wondering if you are going to allow me the courtesy of being able to speak.

Mr Hanson: My apologies, Madam Deputy Speaker. I was responding to an interjection, and I should not have.

MADAM DEPUTY SPEAKER: Please do not. Your point of order is upheld. Ms Burch, will you remain relevant, please.

MS BURCH: Thank you. The other comment that Mr Hanson made—and he always uses such colourful language—was that we are here squealing about the co-payment. Some other groups that are squealing about the co-payment, Mr Hanson, are the Australian Medical Association and the health consumer forum. I pulled from a website—I am not quite sure now which website it was—over the last couple of days that there has been criticism of the proposal by the Australian Medical Association, and Australia's largest consumer health group, the Consumer Health Forum, said it would not support measures that increased co-payments and charges given the considerable evidence surrounding the impact of the growing out-of-pocket expenses relating to health.

So how would you define those two groups? Will you go to the ACT branch of the Consumer Health Forum when they oppose this and say that they are squealing? I do not think you will.

In today's paper, doctors at one Melbourne hospital told the ABC that the first weekend after the federal budget, the emergency department there recorded its busiest weekend all year. Some of the patients were there for GP-like presentations; they were not in need of urgent care. There was no other reason for a big increase such as this—either a gastro outbreak or a weather surge. This increase in presentations to a Melbourne hospital was based on the co-payment. Medicare figures show that in the lead-up to the announcement of the co-payment there was a drop in standard GP visits. So if anyone needs to understand the impact of this co-payment, it is there for anyone to read.

The Prime Minister has clearly broken his promise that there will be no new taxes. We have a $7 GP tax. This will cost Australian families $3.5 billion in out-of-pocket expenses, a hit to the most vulnerable Australians.

While the details of how the co-payment will be administered are not yet clear, it appears that in the ACT alone the co-payment is expected to cost the community in the order of $9 million per year, over and above the fees that are already paid for non-bulk-billed services.

Is this the plan of the Abbott government—to really end Medicare? It will deter Australians from seeking early care and treatment. It will lead to greater complications and sicknesses, increasing hospitalisation, and costing the system, taxpayers and patients more. In fact, we know from international evidence that people will not seek preventive care or follow-up care. We already know that people do not fill a second script because they cannot afford it, and that is exactly what this measure will continue to do. The only people advocating for this co-payment are the Abbott government and his beloved Commission of Audit.

Why does Tony Abbott think he knows best when it comes to Australia's health care? The AMA, the college of emergency physicians, the Doctors Reform Society, the Public Health Association, the Royal Australian College of General Practitioners, the Consumer Health Forum, the Australian Healthcare and Hospitals Association, and a number of other health academics have advised against this tax, but the Abbott government is doing it anyway. The Prime Minister is asking Australian families to foot the bill for his broken election promises.

A number of pieces of international and Australian evidence and research show that the introduction of co-payments is likely to lead to a decline in access to primary healthcare services, a decline in health outcomes, that will ultimately increase the cost overall. People who delay seeking health care for preventive health or early intervention are more likely to present when the illness is more complex and costly to manage, increasing the potential for worse health outcomes, leading to longer hospital delays or an increase in future hospital use.

As Mr Rattenbury pointed out, this was not part of the federal election campaign. I have no memory of Mr Abbott, Mr Hockey or Peter Dutton standing at shopping centre stalls and in front of cameras and saying to the folk of Australia, "We will charge you a co-payment for you to see your doctor; we will make your health outcomes worse for the years to come."

A $7 co-payment for a visit to the doctor, and an increased cost of PBS medicines, pathology tests and diagnostic imaging will undoubtedly affect lower income groups more than any others, thereby potentially resulting in higher mortality, increased morbidity for some, and increasing cost and suffering for others. That is what the Liberal Party are signing up for. They are signing up for higher mortality, increased morbidity, and increasing cost and suffering for others.

The opportunity to live a long and healthy life is already unequally distributed in Australia. The poorest 20 per cent of the population can still expect to die younger, six years on average, compared to the richest 20 per cent. Those who are from a socially disadvantaged group and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders have the highest risk of chronic disease, including depression, diabetes, heart disease and cancers.

As I said, this co-payment, as evidence shows, will mean a decline in access to primary health care. So those that are already less well, are unhealthier than others, have poorer access and have a higher level of disadvantage will decline even further into disadvantage.

A family of four would pay the $7 GP fee at least 40 times a year before they would qualify for a 10-visit safety net, because it applies to individuals rather than families, and a pensioner couple would visit a general practitioner 20 times a year before they would both be bulk-billed. That is the health system that Jeremy Hanson wants to see for Canberrans. That is the health system that he is standing here and supporting.

The collection of co-payments in the aged-care sector is also likely to be particularly challenging and may further reduce service delivery in this vulnerable sector. Again, evidence from overseas shows that there will be fewer visits for preventive care such as vaccination, cancer screening, preventing chronic disease and regular care needed for chronic diseases.

The current vaccination schedule requires five separate visits to receive vaccines in the first 18 months of a child's life. Over 60 per cent of those under seven years of age in the ACT have their vaccinations done in general practice. The introduction of a GP co-payment could serve as a disincentive for people to visit the doctor for vaccinations, particularly the low socio-economic families within Canberra.

Targeting the sick to fund health care is likely to have an impact on the cost-effective approach to health—namely, early intervention. Primary care is where educative and preventive medical care, as well as assessment and treatment, are provided.

Let us briefly look at the impact on general practice care. The GP rebate for most GP items will be decreased by $5. ACT GPs will have to choose between one of the

following options. They can continue to bulk-bill 55 per cent of their consult, which means taking a significant drop in income. Even if they do not charge, they will get the reduced rebate and no incentive payment for the first consult per year for each patient. That is a loss of $14 per visit.

They can choose to charge a $7 co-payment and have no change in income compared to the current situation, but knowing that their actions will have a negative effect on the health of some of their patients. They can charge a co-payment that is greater than the $7, and approximately 45 per cent of consults will be business as usual. But for the 55 per cent of others, they will make their service unaffordable and, in all cases, will leave the patient $5 worse off.

The co-payments will be challenging and costly to administer and monitor. The administrative burden of a $7 co-payment on a GP small business is likely to be significant. We have heard many times from those opposite their great championship of small business, and that small business should be supported. The administrative burden of this co-payment on a GP small business will be significant, but that seems to be okay for the Canberra Liberals and the federal Liberals. It will further disadvantage those in our community. This co-payment will lead to a decline in health outcomes and a decline in access to health care for those that need it most.

The opportunity now for Mr Hanson is very clear. He either supports the co-payment or he does not. He either supports Canberrans having worse health outcomes under this regime or he does not. And if he continues to stand as the health representative of that side and support a co-payment, the contradiction and the hypocrisy are extraordinary. I ask the Canberra Liberals to support this. It is the right thing to do for our community.

MR RATTENBURY (Molonglo) (12.03), in reply: I thank Ms Burch for her comments and support for the motion. This is an important motion. It is about making a very clear statement on behalf of our community about our concerns about this co-payment and the impact it will have on our citizens in the ways that groups such as the Australian Medical Association and other experts have indicated.

As I said in my earlier remarks, I strongly believe that the universal access to health care that Medicare provides is a real cornerstone of the way we see ourselves in Australia. People look at places like America and say, "That's not what we want." I believe this is the first step on that path, and I think we should seek to stop this now.

As Mr Hanson touched on, there is quite a debate to be held on this in the federal parliament. I know that my federal Greens colleagues will be very strongly opposing this matter. That does not mean this is not a place for us to discuss it because it impacts directly on our constituents, and I think it is quite appropriate that this Assembly expresses a view.

Perhaps I should not have been surprised, but, as is his wont, Mr Hanson went straight to playing the person as opposed to discussing the topic. The commentary that he delivered on me is best left unresponded to because it really is not worth it. But it is worth discussing this measure and why I think it is important that this co-payment is

not put in place. It will have detrimental health outcomes for this country—for people who live here in Canberra and right across the country. We do not want to discourage people from going to their GP to seek help and early treatment.

Members may have noticed the recent media campaign targeted at middle-aged or slightly older men about going to the doctor. When you have a concern, do not put it off. Do not fear the consequences; actually go and see the doctor so that you might avoid a more serious problem down the line.

I am concerned that this co-payment will provide a counter-incentive to that sort of message. That is why I think it is the wrong policy for Australia. I think we can do better than that in this country. I think we need more progressive taxation. This is a truly regressive tax, a truly regressive fee and I think it is one that we should be opposed to.

I thank those members who support the motion. I hope that this measure is not proceeded with at a federal level and that our citizens here in the ACT continue to be able to access bulk-billing medical services without needing to make this co-payment.

Question put:

> That the motion be agreed to.

The Assembly voted—

Ayes 9		Noes 8	
Mr Barr	Ms Gallagher	Mr Coe	Ms Lawder
Ms Berry	Mr Gentleman	Mr Doszpot	Mr Smyth
Dr Bourke	Ms Porter	Mrs Dunne	Mr Wall
Ms Burch	Mr Rattenbury	Mr Hanson	
Mr Corbell		Mrs Jones	

Question so resolved in the affirmative.

Leave of absence

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

> That leave of absence be granted for all Members for the period 6 June to 4 August 2014.

Administration and Procedure—Standing Committee
Report 2

MR RATTENBURY (Molonglo) (12.10): I present the following report:

> Administration and Procedure—Standing Committee—Report 2—*Application for Citizen's Right of Reply: Mr Jorian Gardner*, dated 3 June 2014, together with a copy of the extracts of the relevant minutes of proceedings.

I move:

> That the report be adopted.

On 28 April 2014, the Speaker of the Assembly received a submission from Mr Jorian Gardner seeking redress under the resolution of the Assembly of 4 May 1995, as amended on 6 March 2008, relating to a citizen's right of rely. That is continuing resolution 4.

The submission referred to comments made by a number of members in the Assembly on 25 February 2014. The Speaker accepted the submission for the purpose of the continuing resolution and referred it to the Standing Committee on Administration and Procedure.

The committee met on 22 May 2014 and, pursuant to paragraph 3 of continuing resolution 4, decided to consider the submission. The committee resolved to recommend that the response agreed to by the committee and Mr Gardner be incorporated in *Hansard*.

The committee draws attention to paragraph 6 of the continuing resolution, which requires that in considering a submission under this resolution and reporting to the Assembly, the committee shall not consider or judge the truth of any statements made in the Assembly or of the submission. Therefore, the committee recommends that the response by Mr Gardner be incorporated in *Hansard*.

MR HANSON (Molonglo—Leader of the Opposition) (12.11): I move:

> That the debate be adjourned.

MADAM SPEAKER: Those of those opinion say "aye". To the contrary, "no". I think the noes have it.

Members interjecting—

MADAM SPEAKER: Sorry, I am in a position where I think the noes have it. Mr Smyth, did you want to take a point of order?

Mr Smyth: I am raising a point of order. I think the right thing to do is actually to let people read it, unless those opposite have actually seen the report before it was tabled and they all know what they have just signed up to.

Mr Corbell: It is just routine administrative.

Mr Smyth: It is not routine administrative. There is a statement there that is in response, a citizen's right of reply; so it is anything but routine or administrative. We get so few of these, and this will be included in the *Hansard*. If you vote in favour of the report being adopted, you will all have signed up to something that you have not read, unless you have had prior notice of it. So the reasonable thing, I would have thought, would be for people to have time to actually read and understand what they are agreeing to.

MADAM SPEAKER: The question before the Assembly is that the debate be adjourned.

Question resolved in the negative.

MADAM SPEAKER: The question now is that the report be adopted.

MR SMYTH (Brindabella) (12.13): I will speak to the motion. Normally I am on the administration and procedure committee, but because I was named by Mr Gardner as somebody whose comments he who took offence to I have not read this. This has just landed on my desk and Mr Rattenbury has moved was that the report be adopted.

If this is adopted, this goes into *Hansard*. I would assume that, except for the four members of the admin and procedure committee, nobody in this place has actually read it. Yet you blithely now want to adopt the report and put in *Hansard* something that, apart from the four committee members, no-one else has had the opportunity to read.

The notion that this is somehow routine is ridiculous. In all the time I have been here, I think there have only been two or three of these things come to the Assembly. Recommendation 1 states:

> The committee recommends that a response from Mr Jorian Gardner, in the terms specified in Appendix A, be incorporated in *Hansard*.

That is what you are voting for. If you adopt this report, it goes into *Hansard*. I would have thought that people should have had time to at least have a read rather than just rubberstamp it. Bring it back on on the next sitting day. I would have thought that was logical, but if people want to go ahead without reading documents and approving them for inclusion in *Hansard*, which is a serious matter, then go right ahead. But you are setting a new low standard for administration in this place.

MR HANSON (Molonglo—Leader of the Opposition) (12.15): Madam Speaker, I support everything that Mr Smyth has just said. I think it is unfortunate that this is happening without a chance for members who are named to have a chance to look at the document in some detail. I have had a chance to skim it, to have a look.

What I will say, and I want this on the record, is that I stand by my comments. I stand by everything those other members have said that are named in this document, that being Mr Smyth and Mrs Jones. I stand by the Liberal Party's position on this, which is in essence that the process around the appointment was flawed. There was a real problem with that process. That has been litigated in this place before but I stand by that.

I also stand by my comments, and those made by others in this place, that it was highly inappropriate for the government to fund an event that included Nazi strippers at the opening of the Fringe Festival.

Mr Corbell: Point of order, Madam Speaker.

MADAM SPEAKER: Mr Corbell on a point of order.

Mr Corbell: Madam Speaker, the question before the chair is that the report be adopted. I think it is unhelpful that Mr Hanson seeks to re-litigate these other arguments that are not directly related to the question before the chair.

MADAM SPEAKER: Mr Corbell, the question is that the report be adopted. But the report that we are proposing to adopt relates directly to the appointment of someone to the Fringe Festival and relates directly to what was said in this chamber about the Fringe Festival. I do not uphold the point of order. The question is the report be adopted, Mr Corbell.

Mr Corbell: Thank you, Madam Speaker. This is a—

MADAM SPEAKER: Hang on!

MR HANSON: Excuse me, I am speaking.

MADAM SPEAKER: Mr Hanson has not finished.

Mr Corbell: I beg your pardon; I misunderstood, Madam Speaker.

MADAM SPEAKER: It is all right. Mr Hanson.

MR HANSON: As a point of clarification for the minister, I will state it again: I stand by my comments. I stand by those made by Mr Smyth and Mrs Jones, who have been named. I see this as an exercise in grandstanding. We know that the individual concerned seeks notoriety. We know that he has been a problem for this government, and he will continue to be no doubt while those opposite support him in their endeavours and continue to fund him to run their activities.

What I would say on behalf of the community, on behalf of the chair of the Multicultural Forum, who said that this caused offence, is that we should not have a situation where the government is spending money on an event that caused offence to the multicultural community, that results in a Nazi parody at the start of the Multicultural Festival. I believe it is appropriate that the opposition should respond to that. I do not think that it is anything other than grandstanding for somebody to come in here with this right of reply to try to continue the argument.

This is something that we will continue to be happy to have debate on. If the government wants to defend their actions, if they want to defend the actions of Mr Gardner, who they appointed and paid $20,000 of taxpayers' money to, then let them stand up in this place and say, "Yes, we support everything about this," because I do not resile one inch from what I and my members have said in this place.

MR CORBELL (Molonglo—Attorney-General, Minister for Police and Emergency Services, Minister for Workplace Safety and Industrial Relations and Minister for the Environment and Sustainable Development) (12.18): Madam Speaker, the standing

orders set out a process, which has been well established for a significant period of time, for redress for ordinary citizens for comments made under privilege in this place. The Assembly has established these mechanisms recognising that, in circumstances where members use privilege to make attacks on individuals who do not have the protection of privilege, they have the ability to reply to those attacks. That is what this citizen's right of reply is—it is redress. It is redress for Mr Gardner because of the attacks on his character and conduct made under privilege by members of the Liberal Party.

The Standing Committee on Administration and Procedure has endorsed in accordance with the procedures set out in the standing orders Mr Gardner's proposed right of reply. The question before us now is that that right of reply be incorporated into *Hansard* so that it, too, has the protection of privilege. This is not a right granted lightly or often by this place, but there is a clear and established procedure to allow citizens to reply when their character has effectively been defamed, and that is what has occurred in this place.

Mr Hanson's comments and the comments of his colleagues are most effectively characterised by the last paragraph of Mr Gardner's proposed right of reply, where he says:

> Members of the ACT Legislative Assembly should be made aware that their words about non-elected, ordinary members of the public whether negative or positive carry weight. Scoring political points at the expense of someone's career and well-being was never the intended use of privilege and certainly doesn't live up to the high standards that I, as a citizen of the Australian Capital Territory, expect from my elected representatives.

That is exactly the reason this report should be adopted. What is the point of delaying that inevitable consequence? Are you going to seek to have it not adopted? Are you going to say that Mr Gardner is not entitled to reply to the defamatory attacks you made on him under the protection of parliamentary privilege? That is the question before this place. You should accept that as an ordinary citizen Mr Gardner is entitled to have his response placed on the public record and given the same protection that you enjoy in your attacks on him.

MR COE (Ginninderra) (12.22): Madam Speaker, as Mr Smyth has indicated, I was temporarily on the Standing Committee of Administration and Procedure to hear this matter. Neither the opposition nor I have any problem whatsoever with a citizen being given the opportunity for a right of reply. That is right and proper. But in the same way that every committee receives submissions and then scrutinises those submissions to make sure they are not defamatory and are appropriate to go on the website, that is what the Assembly should be doing as well. We are not saying he should not have a right to reply, but we should not simply be saying that everything in this document is all good to go on the record of this Assembly.

It is for that reason that continuing resolution 4 (7) states:

> In its report to the Assembly on a submission under this resolution, the Committee may make one of the following recommendations … (b) that a

> response by the person or corporation who made the submission, in terms specified in the report and agreed to by the person or corporation and the Committee, be published by the Assembly or incorporated in *Hansard* ...

We do not have a problem with that recommendation, but it is a recommendation to the Assembly that it be published. The committee has said, "Yes, this should be published. We're recommending that to the Assembly." However it would be inappropriate for MLAs just to blindly accept that recommendation without saying, "Let's scrutinise it." I say it would be appropriate to allow MLAs to at least read this report before having it incorporated into *Hansard*. Even if it is just till a later hour of this day, Madam Speaker, I think that would be prudent rather than simply signing up to anything. We would not do that in the committee and we should not do that here either.

MS GALLAGHER (Molonglo—Chief Minister, Minister for Regional Development, Minister for Health and Minister for Higher Education) (12.24): Hopefully we can deal with this matter before lunch. In the time this debate has been going I have managed to read this report, as I assume other members have been able to do.

Mr Smyth: So you hadn't read it when you were going to pass it.

MS GALLAGHER: Well, I am a fast reader, but it is only six pages long. It is only six pages long. There are only five paragraphs in the report, one of which is:

> The committee recommends that a response by Mr Jorian Gardner, in the terms specified in Appendix A, be incorporated in *Hansard*.

All parties are represented on this committee through admin and procedure. I presume the committee looked at the submission from Mr Gardner. And I have to say that it is interesting that the most worked up we see the Liberal Party this week is over this matter. They have come in here and used privilege to defame an ordinary citizen. That citizen has sought a right of reply to those defamatory comments, the committee has met, resolved that those comments should be incorporated into *Hansard*, and who is squirming all over the place—the people who actually defamed him.

There is absolutely no need to delay this. It might make the Liberal Party uncomfortable and it may actually make you think again before you come in here and destroy the reputation of an individual citizen who does not have the same privilege you have by coming into this place. I cannot recall an individual being attacked by as many MLAs as I witnessed in that debate. Liberal MLA after Liberal MLA walked in here and defamed an ordinary citizen, and now you are all squirming because he gets the right to reply and have that incorporated into *Hansard*. You did not seem as concerned when all your defamatory comments were put into *Hansard* without any right of review before the transcript came out. This is a straightforward matter, and this committee report should be dealt with.

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

> That the debate be adjourned.

MR RATTENBURY (Molonglo) (12.27), in reply: I am surprised by the way this debate has played out today. I was presenting this report on behalf of the administration and procedures committee into what I think members would have expected to be a normal procedural matter, and that is the reason I did not support the adjournment. The standing order is about giving ordinary citizens a right of reply when they have been discussed in the Assembly and they feel they have been materially adversely commented on.

The committee fulfilled its function under the standing order. It formed a view that Mr Gardner had a right of reply and then it scrutinised his response to ensure that it met the standing orders and the requirements of the Assembly, as the committee is required to do. Paragraph (6) of the continuing resolution, as I touched on in noting the committee's report today, underlines the fact that the committee does not in considering a submission under the resolution consider or judge the truth of any statements made in the Assembly or the submission. That is one part of its function. The point of the provision is that citizens should simply have a right of response in the Assembly. In my view, this is an entirely procedural step once the admin and procedures committee has formed a view that the reply complies with the requirements of the Assembly.

We know that is how it has worked in this place on previous occasions, and I think that is why members are surprised by this debate. In the time I have been in this place my experience is that once the administration and procedures committee looks at a matter, it just comes in here and that is the way it goes. But we did not even get the basic courtesy this morning of being told by Mr Hanson that he wanted to consider this. If Mr Hanson had said, "Look, I actually want some time to consider this," we could have looked at the precedents and thought about it. But we did not even get that courtesy.

Mr Hanson: I hadn't seen it.

MR RATTENBURY: You knew it was coming, Mr Hanson; it is listed on the blue. Members knew it was coming. If people had a genuine issue where they knew they were doing something that was outside the normal form of this place, the basic courtesy of advising of that in advance would have been welcome.

Question resolved in the affirmative.

Response incorporated at appendix 1

MADAM SPEAKER: I will point out for the information of members that the blue actually says that the report be noted. That may have led to some misunderstanding about what was going to happen today.

Public Accounts—Standing Committee
Statement by chair

MR SMYTH (Brindabella): Pursuant to standing order 246A I wish to make a statement on behalf of the Standing Committee on Public Accounts relating to inquiries about certain Auditor-General's reports currently before the committee.

As to the *Review of Auditor-General's Report No. 4 of 2013: National Partnership Agreement on Homelessness,* on 19 June 2013, Auditor-General's report No 4 of 2013 was referred to the Standing Committee on Public Accounts for inquiry. This report presented the results of a performance audit that reviewed the ACT government's implementation of selected programs and initiatives under the national partnership agreement on homelessness. The report contained four recommendations. The committee received a briefing from the Auditor-General in relation to the audit on 15 October 2013 and a submission from the government dated 11 October 2013.

The committee has resolved to inquire further into the report. Whilst the terms of reference for the inquiry will be the information contained within the audit report, the committee's inquiry will focus specifically on: measuring the success/effectiveness of policies and programs targeting homelessness and progress on implementation of the audit report recommendations. The committee will be inviting written submissions to its inquiry from key interest and stakeholder groups. The committee is expected to report to the Legislative Assembly as soon as practicable.

Sitting suspended from 12.32 to 2.30 pm.

Questions without notice
Budget—rates increases

MR HANSON: My question is to the Treasurer. Treasurer, in an ABC interview on 1 November last year, you stated that household rates would triple sometime in the second half of the century. Do you still stand by that statement?

MR BARR: Yes.

MADAM SPEAKER: Supplementary question, Mr Hanson.

MR HANSON: Treasurer, will you now guarantee to the people of Canberra that rates will not triple before the second half of the century?

MR BARR: I can guarantee to the people of Canberra—

Members interjecting—

MR BARR: What I can guarantee to the people of Canberra is that in two years time insurance tax will be abolished and we will no longer need to utilise the rates system to replace revenue from insurance taxes. As we move through each subsequent phase of tax reform, the level of annual rates increase declines over the forward estimates and over the duration of tax reform.

Mr Coe: Point of order.

MADAM SPEAKER: Point of order, Mr Coe.

Mr Coe: Madam Speaker, the leader's supplementary question was with regard to rates, not any other tax, as he is talking about.

MADAM SPEAKER: My notes, Mr Barr, say that the leader's question was: can you guarantee that rates will not triple in this half of the century? I ask you to be directly relevant to the question.

MR BARR: The factors that are increasing rates are threefold—replacement of insurance taxes, which will be abolished shortly; replacement of stamp duties; and an inflationary component. Tax reform is revenue neutral.

Mr Coe: Point of order.

MADAM SPEAKER: Point of order, Mr Coe.

Mr Coe: Madam Speaker, he is in effect ignoring your ruling. The question was: can you guarantee that rates will not triple before the second half of the century?

MADAM SPEAKER: I have drawn Mr Barr's attention to the fact that the question was: can you guarantee that rates will not triple in the first half of this century? I have asked him to be directly relevant, but I will give him some leeway to answer the question.

MR BARR: The points of order have removed all of my time to respond.

MADAM SPEAKER: A supplementary question, Mr Smyth.

MR SMYTH: Treasurer, what credibility do your tax reforms have if you cannot give any guarantee that rates will not triple in the first half of this century?

MR BARR: I can give the guarantee that this government will reform unfair and inefficient taxes, that we will do so gradually over an extended period of time, and that the government's intention, once we have abolished insurance tax, is that the rate of annual rates increases will fall again. So the highest increases were in the first year of reform and each year after that we have either seen a reduction or a plateauing in rate increases, and in the future those increases will be less because there will only be one tax line left to substitute away from, and that is stamp duty. That reform takes place over a long period of time and the government, of course, retains the capacity from one budget to the next to substitute a variety of different tax lines.

If the federal white paper on tax reform and the federal white paper on reform of the federation offer further opportunities for tax reform, the government will take them. If those white papers offer the opportunity for new taxes to be levied by the commonwealth that are transitioned to the states and territories, we would certainly be interested in that option, as, I think, would other states and territories.

MADAM SPEAKER: Supplementary question, Mr Gentleman.

MR GENTLEMAN: Treasurer, what is the importance of this tax reform for the ACT?

MR BARR: Critically, this tax reform unlocks a deadweight burden on our economy. It allows us to grow faster than we would otherwise, and in the first five years of tax reform that is worth about $170 million to the territory economy. It is a fundamental point: if we need to raise a certain level of revenue—and I do not hear those opposite arguing that this community needs less services, but we might hear that from the Leader of the Opposition in his reply to the budget—surely we should use the best and most efficient forms of taxation available to us rather than the worst and most inefficient. What is so hypocritical about the Leader of the Opposition in particular is that on ABC radio this year with me he said he supported tax reform, he wanted it, it should be supported and that the Henry tax reforms should be implemented. Well, they are being implemented here.

MADAM SPEAKER: Have you got a point of order, Mr Hanson?

Mr Hanson: A point of order, Madam Speaker.

MADAM SPEAKER: Sit down, Mr Barr. Stop the clock, please. Mr Hanson, before you start, I remind members that if they have a point of order they need to say they have a point of order when they stand.

Mr Hanson: My apologies, Madam Speaker. Could you ask Mr Barr to withdraw the accusation that I was being hypocritical?

MADAM SPEAKER: I must say that I did not notice it, but if you did make that accusation, it is unparliamentary, Mr Barr, and you should withdraw.

MR BARR: I withdraw, Madam Speaker. The Leader of the Opposition in his comments on ABC radio when he was standing next to me in the studio indicated support for the Henry tax reforms and that we needed a systemic response to tax reform. That is what we are getting in the ACT—structural tax reform.

Ms Gallagher: I nearly crashed my car when I heard that.

MR BARR: We were all a little astounded. There was a little moment where the Leader of the Opposition stated the true position. The political facade was stripped away and we saw a glimpse of the true Jeremy Hanson, the inner reformer, the guy who actually really does want to do the best thing by his community and this economy. But now what we see is reversion to type—the standard opposition for opposition's sake, the same tired, old rhetoric reliving past failed election campaigns. It is the same sort of tired rhetoric from the Leader of the Opposition.

Budget—health infrastructure

DR BOURKE: My question is to the Minister for Health. Minister, the ACT budget continues the delivery of major health infrastructure in the ACT. Can you outline for the Assembly the key capital projects that you have funded in the budget?

MS GALLAGHER: I thank Dr Bourke for his continuing interest in the health infrastructure program, and it is a great pleasure to update the Assembly on all the projects that are in the budget. I will continue to talk on our record of completely reforming the health system, building top-quality facilities. In fact, I was at the women's and children's hospital this morning and had the opportunity to speak with some women who had recently had babies about how the facility was second to none in the country. It is a wonderful feeling, as health minister, to walk through a building that offers such great amenity for patients and staff.

In this year's budget the University of Canberra public hospital will proceed. That is a very important component of the overall network of hospital services here in the territory, alongside Canberra and Calvary hospitals. This will provide opportunities for teaching and research through partnerships at the University of Canberra and, we believe, will have a very significant positive in terms of the work and opportunities presented at the University of Canberra. I hear already, just from placing a public hospital here, the approaches to the university to co-locate other health services there have risen considerably.

There will also be $43½ million for a secure mental health unit. This has been funded to construct a 25-bed facility that co-locates acute and rehabilitation beds on the one site.

There is the investment in the Calvary hospital to deliver a car park. This will enable construction of a 700-vehicle car park on the Calvary hospital Bruce campus. At the same time, there is a grant provided to Calvary hospital for the expansion of electrical substations, which is essential for that campus as it continues to expand. There are also going to be additional beds at Calvary Public Hospital, 15 additional beds, which is partly delivering on our commitment around beds at Calvary hospital that we made in the election campaign.

There are also extra beds to be provided at Canberra Hospital. So there is money in the budget to ensure that we are able to continue the refurbishment and decanting work that needs to go on at the Canberra Hospital. There is also money for other infrastructure upgrades and, of course, the relocation of the ophthalmology services from Canberra Hospital to improved and refurbished accommodation within Calvary hospital.

MADAM SPEAKER: Supplementary question, Dr Bourke.

DR BOURKE: Minister, with funding in the budget to progress the—

MADAM SPEAKER: Preamble.

DR BOURKE: University of Canberra public hospital, could you please update the Assembly on progress on this important project?

MS GALLAGHER: I thank Dr Bourke again for his interest in the University of Canberra public hospital. It was wonderful to visit with you there yesterday at lunchtime. The University of Canberra public hospital will be an exciting addition to the public hospital network and will provide a range of subacute services that will help to reduce the stress on our tertiary hospital at Canberra and, of course, the major hospital we are operating at Calvary hospital.

The service delivery plan outlines a range of rehabilitation services that will be offered from the UCPH, such as neurological, general, older persons and slow stream rehabilitation, aged care inpatient day and ambulatory services, and mental health rehabilitation and day services.

As part of the proposed network of hospital facilities, UCPH will provide adult day rehabilitation, community and ambulatory services as well as 140 overnight inpatient beds enabling subacute services to be provided in a purpose-built contemporary facility without the pressure of an emergency or acute care hospital. There is also the opportunity to integrate clinical education, teaching and research. Already those partnerships are being examined at this stage of the project.

I hope that members of the community do continue to provide comments on our planning around this facility. It is important that we work with all stakeholders. I know that the Health Care Consumers Association and other user groups are getting very involved in the planning. When we do involve stakeholders early and often, we get a much better product at the end.

MADAM SPEAKER: A supplementary question, Ms Berry.

MS BERRY: Minister, how is the secure mental health unit, which is also funded through the budget, progressing?

MS GALLAGHER: Very well, despite the efforts from those opposite to delay it this week. We have $43.4 million allocated for the design and construction of a 25-bed facility. This is the first allocation for this project. Health planning briefs were completed in November. The preliminary sketch plan design process is progressing. Concept validation has been completed, and a draft 50 per cent PSP was completed at the end of March. The documents are now being submitted for endorsement and a cost plan for 50 per cent PSP has also been completed.

The development approval for early works is anticipated in August 2014. Four head contractors were shortlisted following a request for expressions of interest. The request for tender from the shortlist closed in April 2014, with evaluation now underway. Engagement of the head contractor is anticipated in July 2014.

MADAM SPEAKER: A supplementary question, Mr Coe.

MR COE: Chief Minister, which minister will be delivering the health infrastructure budget following the appointment of a sixth minister?

MS GALLAGHER: I hold the title of being the longest serving health minister in the country. I have to say it is an honour holding the portfolio. It is an honour for anyone who holds the portfolio and has the responsibility and the ability to deliver such key infrastructure for the territory.

Budget—emergency services

MR GENTLEMAN: My question is to the Minister for Police and Emergency Services. Minister, the government has announced an extra $48.8 million in the 2014-15 budget for emergency services. Can you please outline to the Assembly what this substantial investment in the territory's emergency services is for?

MR CORBELL: I thank Mr Gentleman for his question and I am very pleased to outline to the Assembly the significant investment the Labor government is making in further strengthening the capability and resources of our emergency services. The funding, in total $48.8 million, is going to a range of very important projects.

First of all, we will see a new ambulance and fire station for Belconnen, with the development of a joint ambulance and fire station facility in Aranda. This new facility is modelled on the successful experience of the west Belconnen fire and ambulance station, and of course the south Tuggeranong fire station, which is currently under construction to deliver better fire cover for the southern areas of Tuggeranong. The Aranda station will provide joint fire and ambulance facilities to allow the existing fire and ambulance facilities in the Belconnen town centre on Rae Street to be retired and relocated to a more effective location to maintain effective fire cover and ambulance cover.

I am very pleased to see this funding in the budget, because it is the completion of Labor's election commitments to deliver three new important fire and ambulance facilities for the Canberra community as the first stage of the station upgrade and relocation program. We went to the last election promising funding to deliver a new fire station in Tuggeranong and a new fire and ambulance station in Belconnen, and we have met both of those commitments. These new facilities, I know, will be warmly welcomed by the Canberra community, in particular the local neighbourhoods that they will be directly serving.

Secondly, there is $7.4 million to upgrade the territory radio network and the computer-aided dispatch system in the 000 call-taking centre. This is a very important investment in the maintenance of capability to both manage radio communications and ensure that computer-aided dispatch for 000 call taking is maintained at a very high level of reliability. This is very important because we know how critical radio communications are, particularly in the context of a large-scale incident. The government invested significantly in this technological capability following the reviews into the 2003 bushfire disaster, and we are maintaining and further strengthening that capability. We are also maintaining the trial of the ACT Ambulance

Service extended care paramedic program for a further 12 months. The extended care paramedic program is helping us to ensure that our paramedics are delivering a very high quality of service and skill when it comes to them responding to emergency calls.

The government is also planning for the future, with funding for feasibility studies and the assessment of options for expanded facilities for ACT Policing in Gungahlin. The joint emergency service centre in Gungahlin, which includes the adjacent and connected Gungahlin police station, is now nearing capacity. We need to now plan future options to expand the space or relocate the operations of ACT Policing in Gungahlin because of the dramatic increase in the size of that station and its personnel complement. This funding will allow us to look at options as to the best way to address that.

So there are very significant commitments in this budget for emergency services. *(Time expired.)*

MADAM SPEAKER: A supplementary question, Mr Gentleman.

MR GENTLEMAN: Minister, can you please expand on the government's commitment to the new ambulance and fire station at Belconnen?

MR CORBELL: I thank Mr Gentleman for the complementary—supplementary, I should say; it is complementary and supplementary, Madam Speaker. The new station will be built on Bindubi Street in Aranda, with construction expected to start in late 2014 and completion anticipated to be by mid-2016. As I said earlier, it will involve then the relocation of the existing ambulance and fire rescue stations from Lathlain Street in Belconnen to the new facility in Aranda.

I am very pleased to say that development approval for this project has already been achieved. It was approved in March this year following two separate community consultation processes with local residents. The new Aranda station, as I mentioned earlier, is the final project in the first phase of the station upgrade and relocation strategy, which the government has put in place to strengthen and to maintain effective levels of fire and ambulance coverage right across the city.

The site on Bindubi Street has been chosen because of its very close proximity to the arterial road network, which significantly assists our fire and ambulance services to respond promptly and quickly to 000 calls. The construction of the new station at Aranda, of course, follows on from the outstanding facility now in place and operational in west Belconnen—which I know has been very warmly welcomed by the west Belconnen community—and the new south Tuggeranong fire station currently under construction, which I know will equally be well supported and welcomed by residents in south Tuggeranong, particularly in the Lanyon valley.

MADAM SPEAKER: Supplementary question, Ms Porter.

MS PORTER: Minister, can you tell us more about the enhancement to radio and dispatch systems at the Emergency Services Agency?

MR CORBELL: I am very happy to expand on the other elements of the budget that deal with radio and dispatch systems and the ESA. There is $7.4 million to upgrade the TRN network and computer-aided dispatch. These systems are integral to effective emergency response right across the city. The funding over the next four years will enable critical ICT infrastructure to be upgraded. This includes replacing the trunk radio network microwave ring, undertaking due diligence on the TRN infrastructure and radio terminal replacement and upgrading the existing computer-aided dispatch to maintain its capability to manage emergency operations into the future.

It is very, very important that we maintain investment in these critical systems. The government is making a very significant investment in these critical systems because we know how important it is that they are maintained to ensure that they are capable of operating at a high level of reliability, particularly in the event of an emergency.

MADAM SPEAKER: A supplementary question, Ms Berry.

MS BERRY: Minister, what does the continuation of the trial of an extended care paramedic program entail?

MR CORBELL: The extended care paramedic program—and I thank Ms Berry for the supplementary—is to finalise the evaluation currently being undertaken by the University of Wollongong on the effectiveness of the project. The key objective of this trial is to expand the current clinical competencies of our intensive care paramedics in collaboration with other healthcare professionals, to make sure that we can, wherever possible, deliver the highest quality level of support and care through the paramedic service.

There are a number of benefits to patients associated with this program, including effective follow-up of patients who initially refuse emergency ambulance transport, and therefore the associated risk reduction to the community; the ability where clinically appropriate to complement existing primary healthcare strategies, where care can be provided, wherever possible, in people's own homes; a reduction in low-acuity presentations; and complementing existing demand management strategies.

This has been an important trial. The government believes we need to bring it to completion and undertake that evaluation to determine whether or not it presents a suitable model into the future for further enhancing the level of care provided by our intensive care paramedics.

Budget—superannuation

MR SMYTH: My question is to the Treasurer. Treasurer, the 2014-15 budget cites a 50 per cent increase in the superannuation returns in the year 2014-15. What is the reason for such a large increase?

MR BARR: Presumably performance of the superannuation portfolio—very strong results from our investments.

MADAM SPEAKER: Supplementary question, Mr Smyth.

MR SMYTH: Treasurer, what assumptions has the government used to come up with such a large increase?

MR BARR: Consistent practice with the past, Madam Speaker, recognising the strong performance of the portfolio.

MADAM SPEAKER: Supplementary question, Mr Wall.

MR WALL: Treasurer, to what extent is the government relying on superannuation returns to achieve surplus in 2017-18?

MR BARR: We obviously make an adjustment to our headline net operating balance to ensure consistency with both past practice and to reflect the nature of the superannuation holdings within the territory's accounts that are somewhat different from other states and territories, particularly reflecting an historical legacy of taking over liability from the commonwealth in relation to a proportion of our workforce who worked for the commonwealth government and then transitioned into the ACT public service.

We have always made that adjustment. That has been a feature of the presentation of ACT budgets from the time we changed from an AAS to a GFS accounting system. It is obviously a component of our budget both in terms of expenses and revenue and so is reflected in our net operating balance, and it makes a positive contribution to that.

MADAM SPEAKER: A supplementary question, Mr Wall.

MR WALL: Treasurer, why do superannuation returns in the forward years not grow as fast?

MR BARR: In the forward estimates it is Treasury's practice to return to long-run estimates of growth. Obviously, these are adjusted from budget to budget to reflect immediate actual performance but then, generally speaking, over the final two outyears of the budget period long-run performance is normally forecast. That is the basis for most projections in the final two years of the budget estimates period.

ACTION bus service—performance

MR COE: My question is to the Minister for Territory and Municipal Services. Minister, why do 30 per cent of ACTION buses run not according to the schedule?

MR RATTENBURY: As has been discussed at various times before, in estimates and the like, ACTION has historically done its timing points off a range of manual observations. But as I have indicated previously, with the introduction of the MyWay system and the full GPS tracking of buses, we are now seeing a tightening of those timetables. Certainly with the introduction of network 14, which is based much more on accurate data from the MyWay system rather than manual observation, ACTION is predicting an improvement in its on-time running performance.

MADAM SPEAKER: Supplementary question, Mr Coe.

MR COE: Minister, if you are predicting improvement in your on-time performance, why is it still only about 75 per cent of the target?

MR RATTENBURY: That is the target that has been set out in the budget papers.

MADAM SPEAKER: A supplementary question, Mrs Jones.

MRS JONES: Minister, why are passenger boardings down by 600,000 on your 2013-14 target?

MR RATTENBURY: I think there is a range of possible factors for that.

Mr Smyth interjecting—

MR RATTENBURY: I think they were handing out Red Bulls in the Liberal Party room at lunchtime today. It has been a most extraordinary question time. We have actually heard a member meow like a cat during this question time, which is perhaps the most extraordinary thing I have heard since I have been in this place.

As I was starting to say before the various snide comments came across the chamber, there are undoubtedly a range of reasons why those passenger numbers have dropped. Certainly, through the endeavours of network 14, we are seeking to provide more direct services, better connected services and services that run more frequently. I believe these improvements will drive an increase in patronage for ACTION.

It being 3 pm, questions were interrupted pursuant to the resolution of the Assembly.

Appropriation Bill 2014-2015

[Cognate bill: Appropriation (Office of the Legislative Assembly) Bill 2014-2015]

Debate resumed from 3 June 2014, on motion by **Mr Barr**:

> That this bill be agreed to in principle.

MR HANSON (Molonglo—Leader of the Opposition) (3.00): Madam Speaker, it is notable that the Treasurer's speech on Tuesday was the shortest in Assembly history. Quite frankly, if I had to sell that deceitful load of debt-ridden drivel, I would want to duck for cover as well. This budget is lazy, it is indulgent, it is arrogant and it is dishonest. It is born from a complacency that only comes from a government so out of touch that they have forgotten who it is they serve and what it is they are here to do.

Let me give an example: this government inherited one of the best operating health systems in the country and they have turned that into a system that is failing Canberrans. We wait longer for treatment than anyone else in the nation. You should hang your head in shame. You have failed. They have taken one of the best cities in the country in which to live and raise a family to one where cost of living pressures are squeezing Canberra families for every cent they can with no end in sight.

Millions in waste, billions in debt, and what does this government have to show for it? There are two pet projects: Shane's train and Simon's solar plant. The hubris is on display in the headline figures. When faced with record debt and record deficits, does this government show restraint or responsibility? No. They go for the hip pocket of Canberrans and they rack up another billion dollars in debt. That is not a total billion dollars in debt; that is another billion dollars in debt. The amount owing at the end of this budget cycle if $4.5 billion. It is the highest ever recorded in the territory.

Like misguided, spoiled teenagers, they have spent their pocket money, they have broken the piggy bank and they have now pilfered their parents' credit cards. It is the parents of this city that will be paying these bills, and they will be paying them for a very long time.

Just on the borrowings, Canberra families are going to have to dig deep to find nearly $1 billion in interest. That is not paying back the debt. That is just paying off this government's interest bill. They are spending like it is not real money, but it is real money and it is Canberra families that are going to have to pay the bill.

In fact, that equates to over $6,000 for every Canberra household. It is money that we could use for new schools and new hospitals—two new hospitals. It could be used for more schools—20 new schools. It could build two new dams, even at the price of their Cotter Dam. And it could fix practically every road and footpath across this city.

But it is all gone. It is all gone. Now the families of Canberra have to pay for the spending of this government. They have been living like kings and queens with their friends in the inner circle, all congratulating each other on how visionary and transformational they are. And they continually put forward the most ridiculous confections of monetary voodoo.

I utterly reject the recovery outlined in this budget. It beggars belief that after years of more borrowing and ongoing overspends there is going to be this miraculous $215 million turnaround in the last year. Does anybody in this chamber or this town actually believe that Andrew Barr is going to deliver this magic surplus? Madam Speaker, he is the Wayne Swan of the ACT.

But that is not the only deceit in this budget.

Members interjecting—

MADAM SPEAKER: Order, members!

MR HANSON: In his tabling speech on Tuesday, Andrew Barr boasted proudly of his tax reform. He talked about taxes being reduced. But it is a staggering omission that he neglected to say how his tax reform was going to be paid for. Andrew Barr was telling the community continually about how he was going to fund that tax reform but forgot to tell them that their rates were going to go up by another 10 per cent. That is hundreds of dollars out of Canberrans' hip pockets, following the hundreds last year and the hundreds before and for years and years to come.

At 10 per cent, our rates will triple in just over 11 years. We were promised that they would not, but let there be no doubt in anybody's mind that they will. I point out to members how the language has changed from those opposite. Now the Chief Minister is trying to say that it was only a promise that they would not triple in this term of the Assembly and this term of government, and that we were saying otherwise.

We all know that was not what was being said at the last election. I remind members of the statement made by Andrew Barr on ABC Radio as late as last year where he claimed that rates would only triple "by the second half of this century".

I remind members of the Chief Minister staring down the barrel of a TV camera during that election campaign and promising, insisting in fact, that rates simply would not triple. "They won't triple under the government's proposed tax reforms." It was Katy Gallagher's Julia Gillard moment. "There will be no tripling of rates under the government that I lead." We know what the Australian people's response to that statement from Julia Gillard was. And it would be the same to Katy Gallagher.

It is no wonder that the Chief Minister and the Treasurer are trying to rewrite their statements and trying to rewrite history. It is true that your rates are going to triple. It was always true, and no amount of squirming now will save you from the families of Canberra who get those rising bills every single year.

It is undeniably true that the extravagance in the territory's budgets have to be paid for by the family budget. Andrew Barr, who is on the record as saying that the family home is a tax haven, is now using families as his own personal ATM. No matter what you earn or where you live, Andrew Barr is in your hip pocket every day pilfering more and more. Every time Canberrans turn on a light, Andrew Barr is there taking their money. Every time they turn on a tap or try to heat their home, Andrew Barr is there taking more and more. Every time they get into their car, every time they try to find a car park in the city, there is Andrew Barr taking their hard-earned money.

The cost of living statements in the budget show that, on average, transport costs increase by 8.5 per cent. Property charges increase by 9.25 per cent. Utilities increase by 8.5 per cent. Remember, the CPI is only 2.1 per cent. There is a projected 30 per cent increase in parking revenue, a 20 per cent increase in ORS revenue and a six per cent increase in car registration fees—all going to Andrew Barr to feed his bloated, lazy budget. In total, there is an increase of $932 million in revenue in the budget papers, or a 22 per cent rise—all that new revenue going to Andrew Barr.

Unfortunately, although Andrew Barr is world class—and I will give him this—at taking money out of the hip pockets of Canberrans, this mob opposite are disastrous at actually delivering anything. The GDE took longer to deliver than the Sydney Harbour Bridge. The mental health facility that they boast about in this budget was budgeted at $11 million and was due to be opened three years ago. It is now in the budget for four times that figure, and work has not even started.

What about the prison? It opened and it was unready. It was unfinished. It is now going to cost Canberrans about $100 million just to make it meet the original promise, at nearly double the original budget. And that is all after, you will recall, Simon Corbell said in 2007 that it was good in its configuration as promised for 25 years.

The biggest blowout of all, of course, is the Cotter Dam. Labor promised that this was going to go for about $140 million. They delivered it a quarter of a billion dollars over budget. Canberrans have to pay for that.

And that is all before light rail. From the self-proclaimed world's best treasurer—he fights Wayne Swan for that mantra—comes the city's biggest white elephant. It will be as much use as Sydney's monorail, but not as attractive. He claims that it is going to be transformational. It will be. What it will do is transform every tree on Northbourne Avenue into a stump. He is going to transform that corridor to a traffic jam for years whilst it is being built. And it will transform the developer, who is the luckiest builder in the Southern Hemisphere, because Andrew Barr himself admitted that there is no cost at which he will not build it.

Kerry Packer once said that you only get one Alan Bond in a lifetime. Some rail developer somewhere will say that you only get one Andrew Barr. Put simply, $614 million, if you believe that figure, is the price that Labor put on securing Shane Rattenbury's support to form government. It is a debt that Canberra families will be paying off for generations. We know it, the government knows it and the people of Canberra are beginning to know it too. The problem is that, like so many announcements this government has made, the government just cannot tell the truth.

The amount being allocated to this budget is not the $23 million headline figure touted by the government. In fact committed funding for capital metro is $64 million. That includes spending in 2013-14, forward estimates and money contained in the TAMS budget for the Civic to Gungahlin corridor improvements, which are specifically listed as preparation and support work for light rail—$8 million in 2014-15 and $12 million in 2015-16. And this is before any of the funds for the actual construction of the project itself.

Based on this government's performance, Madam Speaker, I guarantee to you that this will not be built on time, this will not be built on budget and there will be no change left over from a billion dollars. Meanwhile, while Simon Corbell pushes his light rail full steam ahead, other important projects are being left at the station.

One example is the promised upgrade to the hospital tower at the Canberra Hospital. This was once a major infrastructure project lauded by the Chief Minister. Forty-one million dollars was put in the 2011-12 budget to get that project ready to go. But that was removed and now it is a vague intent for sometime in the future. Does anything show how off-track this government is, when they are putting the light rail, Simon's train set, ahead of fixing what is one of the worst performing health systems in this country?

This budget is the culmination of a Frankenstein coalition, the result of what happens when a desperate, rabid Green will do anything, including crippling the family budgets of this city and abandoning core services, for a light rail system.

The double standards from this government have become all too common. I am amazed that only this morning members of this government had the hide to come into

this place and say it was unfair for a co-payment to see a GP—that $7 that they raised the concern about—while all the time they are taking an extra $150 from those families, an extra $150 just in their rate rises alone. It is the same as talking about supporting working families while robbing them blind behind their backs. It is the same as talking about fairness and equality while running one of the most elitist governments in this territory's history.

It is the same as talking about being progressive when what they really mean is taking money from anyone who is not a crony and spending it on their pet projects. And it is the same as stripping millions of dollars from money meant to be used for our community to fund yourselves through pokie machines—targeting some of the poorest families in this city in Charnwood. Don't you mob ever lecture me on your commitment to social equality while you are targeting Canberra's poorest families to pay for yourselves and your Labor mates with your pokie machines.

Madam Speaker, this budget is a shambles. Canberra deserves better and we will give it to them in 2016.

Our alternative, Madam Speaker, is clear. I have said it before and I will say it again: we will be different and we will be proudly different from this Labor and Greens government.

Firstly, we would not have wasted 13 years of government to find ourselves in a position where our only option is debt and deficit. Secondly, we would remember that we are not here to serve ourselves. We are here to serve the people of Canberra—the mums, the dads, the singles and married, the builders and tradies, the nurses and teachers, the small business owners: everybody—all working to get ahead, treasuring their homes, raising their families, working for their local communities, but often neglected by this government.

Our vision for Canberra is not focused on minority interests and narrow ideological agendas. Our vision is about making Canberra the best place for everyone to raise a family, to make a living and to get ahead. That is why we will unashamedly pursue economic prosperity—for this city, for our business people and for every citizen of this great city.

We will make Canberra a city where home ownership is attainable, encouraged and respected—not where home owners in Canberra will eventually be slugged an extra $1 billion a year in rates.

We will give Canberra the best health system in Australia, and we will do so by prioritising the health system over pet projects like light rail, solar farms and wind farms. We will get Katy Gallagher's inner circle out of management positions and end the cycle of sycophancy and bullying that led to the doctoring of 12,000 health records and the resignation of 12 doctors.

Equally important, we should have the best education system in Australia—not by closing schools. I remind you that, while our Chief Minister complains about federal funding, it was Katy Gallagher who signed a deal with Julia Gillard in 2013 that reduced federal funding coming into our schools by $30 million.

Madam Speaker, I will never sell out our children's future the way that Katy Gallagher did. We will always be the friends of the hardworking, honest business owners who create the jobs, who create the wealth and who drive the economic prosperity of our great city.

We will create a city connected by the best road system in Australia. We will make the roads work. We will support public parking, and we will not force people out of their cars in the way Labor are, with their ideological dislike for cars, by putting parking up by 30 per cent.

We will fix the planning system, and not with some dodgy workaround that makes it easier for government projects while leaving the private sector high and dry. It is ironic that Simon Corbell and Shane Rattenbury are the ones who are trying to put politics back into planning.

We will give this territory better economic management. Andrew Barr stated that people are not just figures in balance sheets, and I agree. But that is not reflected in this budget. One look at the cost-of-living figures in this budget shows the thousands of dollars every family has to pay for a government that has lost the plot.

Andrew Barr is saying, with a straight face, that the economic support for the people in Tuggeranong—get this—is the $100 million extra on the jail and refurbishments to a tip. That is his support for the people of Tuggeranong.

The Labor Party and the Greens proudly say that they want to be the most extreme government in Australia, but my conversations, and that of my team, suggest that the people of Canberra want the opposite. They are increasingly concerned with the costs that come with a Labor-Greens government, who are running amok with the chequebook, writing cheques that ordinary families have to pay.

In response to these people's concerns, Labor's answer is debt. Andrew Barr thinks that increasing debt is an economic plan, and it is not. He thinks that it is fair, and it is not. And he thinks that blaming the federal government absolves him of all responsibility. Well, it does not. As Simon Corbell said on Tuesday this week, both sides of federal politics are dudding the ACT. But where was Andrew Barr and where was Katy Gallagher when Labor was getting rid of 14,500 jobs? Where were they then?

I said at the beginning of my speech that Andrew Barr's budget speech was noted for being the shortest in ACT history. But it was also notable for its lack of passion. Madam Speaker, the big difference between us and them is that we are passionate about this city and improving everybody's everyday lives. That is expressed in what you choose to focus on. For us, it is time to focus on what the people of Canberra want, not on what the elites and the inner circle wants.

Madam Speaker, I will say to you: I will make it very clear the difference between us and them. In 2016, we will put a stop to light rail. We will not triple everybody's rates. We will not pursue expensive solar and wind farms all across Canberra, in people's

backyards. We will not force people out of their cars. We will not ban piggeries that do not exist, or interfere unnecessarily in everybody's lives. We will not spend taxpayers' money to appease a Green. We will not take millions of dollars in poker machine revenue that is meant for the hardest hit in our community.

What this budget shows more than anything is that, despite the fact that Katy Gallagher boasts constantly about the fact that the people of Canberra always vote for her and vote for Labor, when they understand the pain that this budget brings, the people of Canberra will have their say.

MR RATTENBURY (Molonglo) (3.21): The Greens are a party built on four pillars, four principles; those are social justice, ecological sustainability, peace and non-violence, and grassroots democracy. Those pillars underlie our decisions as best as possible and guide our policies.

I have been pleased to be able to bring those values to the budget cabinet process, and this budget is an amalgam of the values of the ALP and the values of the Greens.

There is no doubt that we share a range of values. Working on this budget with my ALP colleagues was a collaborative affair. There was give and take, there were wins and losses, and there were compromises on matters of principle that one stands up for in cabinet. That is the nature of the relationship that my party, the Greens, has with the ALP in this place. We do not always agree, but, most importantly, we are prepared to work together for the benefit of the people of this city.

Canberra is weathering a storm at the moment, and this budget is an umbrella against that storm. This budget must respond to the significant federal pressures that the ACT is under at the moment. We have an obligation to the people of Canberra to ensure that they are protected from the worst of what the federal government is serving up for them.

However, this budget must also keep an eye on the future of our city. There is a need to trust in Canberra, and to embrace opportunities that will build this city into a place that we are proud of in years to come, a place that changes over time as it grows, but changes in positive ways. The people of Canberra do not expect their government to keep an eye on just their immediate needs; they expect us to look to their children and their grandchildren, who also want to live happy, fulfilling and interesting lives in this city.

This is not the time to shy away from investing in Canberra. It is irresponsible for any government to ignore the longer term challenges and opportunities, perhaps because they are distracted by the short-term political cycle. It is sometimes difficult for governments to be strong in their resolve to invest in the future, with the short-term bickering that goes on in politics, but the Greens have always believed in governing for the future, in long-term thinking, and in a responsibility to those who come after us, in decades or even a century from now. We cannot pretend that there will not be economic storms in the future, and we need to build the resilience of our community, our city and our economy.

The ACT government has a commitment to return to surplus in 2017. In the context that we are operating in this year, moving into debt to finance investment in this city is a sensible decision. The ACT is facing significant extra and somewhat unexpected pressure from the budget handed down by the federal coalition government last month; and, while the budget has not yet passed the two houses of parliament, it will impact on some of the most vulnerable and disadvantaged people across our country. That includes the ACT.

Against that backdrop, cutting spending now would impact too heavily on the people of Canberra. It would mean that we cannot invest in those projects that we believe will help build our city and our economy.

But as I have said before, the concept of "sustainability" should apply across the board, including to our budget bottom line. We cannot afford to be constantly in deficit. And, as the Treasurer indicated on budget day, we do not want to be building deficits because of overruns on recurrent spending. But there is no doubt that the objective of moving to surplus has been made much harder by the actions of the federal government in this year's budget. The territory's bottom line has taken a hit.

There is a triple whammy in the federal budget for the ACT community—direct cuts to ACT government grants; cuts to direct services provided here in the territory; and the job cuts that we expect to see rolling out in our major employer, the federal public service.

What will these cuts mean for the people of the ACT? The commonwealth are effectively cost shifting to the states and territories, and many in our community are going to feel the pain of that. These cuts will mean that the people of the ACT are likely to be looking to the ACT government to fill some of those gaps, to assist when there is no other assistance. The reality is that there is a limited amount we can do. However, in this budget, the ACT government has tried to ameliorate the impact on Canberrans and not join the federal government stampede to unfairly target those least able to pay additional and increased taxes and charges.

One of the concerns about the ideology of the federal government apparent in this budget is that they seem determined to move Australia towards an American-style, unregulated user-pays system that will disadvantage many Australians. Australians have repeatedly said no to that. We look across the Pacific and say clearly that we do not want to have a two-tiered education system, we do not want to lock people out of a university education, and we do not want to make it harder for people to go to the doctor.

The impact on our healthcare system not only directly affects our front-line services but also affects the strategic support system, Medicare local, and, obviously, patients themselves by way of the Medicare co-payment. This co-payment unravels the universality of the Medicare system which most Australians consider to be an accepted part of life and puts at risk those who can least afford it.

The deregulation of university fees for students will allow universities to charge whatever they like for courses. It seems that it was okay for those making these decisions now to get their free education in the seventies and eighties, but now we cannot afford to offer today's young people even the comfort of a regulated university sector.

There are cuts to legal services such as Legal Aid, the women's legal centre and the Environmental Defender's Office, again taking a hit at those who most need support in what are, almost by definition, challenging times—a hit at those who can least afford it, a hit at services that work harder than most to provide those services. This is at odds with the ACT government, which has announced $416,000 over four years to support and enhance the work of the ACT Aboriginal Legal Service.

We see cuts to core funding for environment peak body organisations. I suppose we probably should have expected that. It is simply a matter of ideology to cut money from those who are working to protect the environment.

Cuts to welfare support for our young people feature in the budget, putting at risk the financial wellbeing of those under 30 and increasing the risk of homelessness. Now we hear that there might be funding for "emergency payments" to assist those in real trouble. What a rotten welfare system we are heading for when we push people into that kind of situation where they become desperate enough to need "emergency payments"!

We see cuts to the funding for renewable energy. Thankfully, here in the ACT we are continuing to support that, and we have a climate change policy that acknowledges the realities of what the science is telling us about the state of our planet and acknowledges the fact that if we do not tackle climate change we will see increasing costs to the ACT government that will undermine our ability in the future to spend on the things that matter.

There has been a resounding silence from the federal government about the future of funding for housing and homelessness, creating great uncertainty. The ACT, however, have not walked away from their responsibilities. We will continue with matched funding on the national partnership agreement on homelessness in this year's budget. For the sector, this 12-month transitional agreement, with no further commitments being made by the commonwealth, is not ideal, but I am happy that the ACT has stepped up to the plate, at least for this period.

This budget has a number of key areas which I believe are delivering essential services to the people of Canberra, such as health care, hospital beds and walk-in centres. These are critical services for our community; and while we bear the storm of the federal budget cuts, it is vital that the ACT continues this important work. The Greens value the investment in the walk-in and community health centres in Belconnen and Tuggeranong. There is a good balance between preventative and acute health care provided by these facilities.

I am particularly pleased that a range of health items identified in the parliamentary agreement have been funded in this budget, with funding for the secure mental health unit and other mental health funding such as $1 million per year for expanding the community mental health sector, $2 million for improving suicide prevention services and funds to implement the amendments to the mental health legislation.

I also welcome the additional funding towards the ACT concessions program, of $6.65 million. In direct contrast to the federal government, the ACT is seeking to insulate those who are most vulnerable against rising costs. The emergency responses for disability services and the continuation of the therapy assistance program are also very welcome initiatives.

A review of the TAMS parks and city services operations gave TAMS a strong endorsement in terms of being a lean and efficient organisation. This budget has allocated an additional $15.2 million over four years to cover the cost pressures that TAMS has had in maintaining our parks and open spaces.

This budget delivers $9.6 million over the next four years to cover the cost of servicing our new suburban areas, for things such as roads and paths, street lighting, garbage collection, mowing, litter picking and so on. These are the very services that I regularly get letters from people about, saying that these are important things. We see in this budget a real commitment to delivering those services.

While it is true that the ACT is under financial pressure at the moment, as the commonwealth storm passes through, I believe that we need to continue to invest in our city. We need to build resilience, while carefully managing our resources. We are a progressive city and we are a green city. I want to see Canberra continue to be a place of excellence in regard to sustainability.

Light rail is a good example of Canberra's continued progress despite the obstacles and challenges that are put in our way. The budget consolidates the capital metro project through ongoing funding for the Capital Metro Agency and through the large reserve of capital funding for this and other projects. Light rail is not just a vision for a more sustainable, vibrant and convenient Canberra. It is also a sound economic project that will stimulate jobs, stimulate the economy, stimulate activity and redevelopment and change the way our city is perceived. These all work as remedies to the economic constraints imposed by the commonwealth. Despite the one-eyed denigration from the Canberra Liberals—obligatory because it is in their political DNA—the evidence for light rail looks good, with an economic return of $2.30 for every dollar invested, thousands of jobs, and an unparalleled ability to stimulate development and to attract passengers.

The $1.5 million to fund the design and business case for the Australia forum is very welcome—an inclusion that we inserted into the parliamentary agreement. I am a strong supporter of this project and the benefits that it will bring to our city. The territory's conference and business events sector is a sector that has been growing steadily through the work of the Canberra Convention Bureau and others. The new convention centre has the potential to vastly expand this sector, by up to three times,

according to the Canberra Convention Bureau. The experience of other cities indicates the urban renewal benefits of having a landmark meeting place in the centre of a city. For us, it would be within walking distance of the lake and of existing hotels and restaurants.

The commonwealth has so far failed to come to the party on this project, despite calling itself the infrastructure government. The Prime Minister has indicated that the only kind of infrastructure he is interested in is roads. That demonstrates just how little he understands about the economic and environmental challenges we are facing in the 21st century. The ACT, again, is showing leadership on this for the benefit of the territory.

This budget contributes to several items in the parliamentary agreement. I am pleased that, despite the difficult economic times we are facing, this government continues to prioritise essential programs and initiatives that keep moving us towards a more green and progressive future.

Contrary to what the decidedly conservative and unprogressive Liberal Party might think, Canberrans will actually end up paying more if we fail to invest in modern transport systems, energy and water efficiency, preserving our natural ecosystems and low-carbon energy. A long-term strategy of sustainability helps mitigate threats and challenges like climate change and social disadvantage. It is a way to manage rising household costs, pressure on our infrastructure, increased pollution and traffic congestion, and declining health.

Despite the attention given to light rail recently, it is only one of many Greens-Labor parliamentary agreement items. The items stretch right across the policy spectrum and include other areas of transport. A sustainable transport system will not work without a frequent and reliable bus system, and the agreement calls for improved funding for ACTION buses. This budget provides $2 million to extend weekend routes to various unserviced suburbs for the first time. It continues investment in other sustainable transport, such as walking and cycling. These three layers of sustainable transport—light rail, buses and the active transport network—are key to building a well-functioning, environmentally friendly and equitable transport system. The alternative vision is an ever-expanding snarl of roads and cars, a reality I would prefer to avoid.

Additional funds allocated to enhanced biodiversity stewardship were also in this budget, with an additional $959,000 allocated for weed management, pest animal management and ParkCare support. These are very welcome. These programs are very important to manage our precious biodiversity and to manage pest plants and animals. It is important to maintain consistent funding to allow for follow-up work rather than wasting money on erratic funding.

Additional funding is included for the ongoing rollout of 30 new drinking fountains in key locations across Canberra, in town centres, near sporting fields, on cycle paths and in other busy areas, as well as water refill stations being made available at key public events such as the Multicultural Festival and Floriade.

I am pleased that the government shopfront in Gungahlin is being progressed; it is set to open early next year. This is an item from the 2008 parliamentary agreement which has been in the pipeline for a while and is now coming to fruition in conjunction with a new ACT government office building in Gungahlin.

Funding is in the budget to deliver the common ground project, which will support some of the most vulnerable people experiencing chronic homelessness by offering them a home that will support them to end the cycle of homelessness. This project is bricks and mortar, is concrete and real, and is far more substantial than the uncertainty that the commonwealth is creating in this space.

Finally, I would like to touch briefly on the funding for corrective services. While the need for more accommodation at the jail is real, it is just one part of the government's response to growing detainee numbers. The new focus on justice reinvestment, with $689,000 over four years to develop the new strategy, means that we are looking at the whole picture—focusing on a holistic package, with a collaborative long-term approach to reducing recidivism both inside and outside the actual jail itself. I firmly believe that this is our only hope of achieving real change in the justice system. It is of note that even the significant amount of money allocated to fund the increase in the size of the jail is not just about increasing the jail's capacity; it is money that will improve staff and detainee safety, a critical objective for any correctional facility. It will also deliver better outcomes in regard to detainee rehabilitation by providing for a dedicated special care facility and increasing corrections' ability to effectively move detainees between programs.

This is a budget that has responded thoughtfully to the context that we here in Canberra find ourselves in. Under difficult circumstances, it contains care and concern for the people of Canberra. It also takes a long-term view for building investment and confidence in our city. It is a budget that seeks to tackle some of this city's big issues while focusing on what the community need right here and now in their suburbs, in their streets. It is a budget that builds momentum towards a progressive, exciting and diverse future for the people of Canberra. I look forward to voting in support of the budget.

MADAM ASSISTANT SPEAKER (Ms Lawder): Before I call Mr Smyth, I understand it is the wish of the Assembly to debate this bill cognately with executive business order of the day No 5, Appropriation (Office of the Legislative Assembly) Bill 2014-2015. That being the case, I remind members that in debating order of the day No 4, executive business, they may also address their remarks to executive business order of the day No 5.

MR SMYTH (Brindabella) (3.39): The government must clearly be very fond of the Abbott government because I note that for approximately the first time in seven years Mr Barr and his colleagues have something else to blame besides the GFC for their economic mismanagement. It would appear the federal budget is now the flavour of the month. Indeed we had a wonderful expose, apparently, for most of Mr Rattenbury's speech, of the ills of the federal government.

But if you are going to complain about the job cuts that are in the federal budget this year, it is a bit late. That avalanche started last year and those opposite were all mute. They all had a chance in budget debates to decry the cuts of the Gillard-Rudd years, and did nothing about it. As a consequence 14,473 jobs were slashed under Labor. If this government had paid attention or taken note last year, they could have started to genuinely get the ACT budget in shape to cope with that downturn. They would have genuinely increased the rate of diversification of the ACT economy, and they would have genuinely prepared capital works projects that were budget-ready to put out immediately, to take up some of the slack that will occur in the economy. But they did nothing.

They were quiet. They were mute. They went quietly into the night because they did not want to attack their Labor colleagues. As a consequence, they have let down the people of the ACT and they have let down all those who treasure this place as their home.

The ACT Treasurer characterised his budget on Tuesday as "a budget that values Canberrans". He tells us that he is borrowing for productive infrastructure, and he used the analogy of the territory's debt as simply a mortgage, and that the government is not borrowing to pay the electricity or food bills. "Prudent borrowings," he tells us. "These are creating jobs."

He has defended his decisions by saying, "Would I run any size deficit? No." Rhetorical phraseology like this is all relative. The tenor of this budget might be subdued, but the message, as pointed out so ably by the Leader of the Opposition, is still the same—spend, spend, spend, borrow, borrow, borrow, debt, debt, debt.

The Treasurer promised that he would deliver a typical Labor budget, and he has. And what he has not told us is how they will get us out of these problems. There will be a forecast operating loss of $333 million, with net borrowing requirements of $862 million. Just the capital works budget is telling. It has increased by 97 per cent, from $1.27 billion to $2.5 billion, including $1.3 billion in capital provisions.

The Treasurer talks of strategic infrastructure into the future, yet 92 per cent of the new works will occur between 2014 and 2016. And even when you factor in the government's projects under this capital provision plan, over 55 per cent of the capital spending is in the 2014-15 and 2015-16 allocations.

Madam Assistant Speaker, when you look at the budget papers, the government's new additional GGS borrowings in 2014-15 are expected to be $505 million, a 28 per cent increase from the previous budget. Net debt has increased by approximately 133 per cent from 2013-14, from $527 million to $1.2 billion. And it grows. It continues to grow over the forward years, in fact, by approximately another 47 per cent.

Given this government's inglorious track record with infrastructure delivery, I do not believe that we will see in the coming years the UC public hospital, capital metro, city to the lake, the Australia forum or any of this government's legacy projects realised within this time frame, because they are not shovel-ready. This is not a government

that prepared for the downturn, even though their last five budget documents have said consistently that the greatest threat to the ACT economy and the ACT budget is a downturn in government spending. This is a government, and particularly a Treasurer, that have had their blinkers on and their hands over their ears, going "La, la, la, la, la."

The Treasurer has spun the infrastructure projects as job creation initiatives to pick up the slack from the federal government job cuts. Is he seriously proposing that commonwealth public servants be used to build this government's legacy infrastructure projects? Is this budget chairman Barr's plan for his great leap forward?

There is a very glaring fallacy here. The government has planned for big capital projects but has not made provision for workforce capacity to accommodate capital spending requirements. I think we all know this will come from interstate. This is definitely not a budget for getting on with it.

In fact they talked the talk during the course of the budget week. They are definitely spending, and Canberrans are definitely paying, but for what? At this stage I do not think we really know. This is what they thought about their own infrastructure growth. This is from the budget papers:

> The higher borrowings in the forward years are partly due to the future works provision for capital projects, which has been increased to account for some high value projects for which budgets are either yet to be settled or are commercially sensitive.

This is a government that is getting on with the job, members. Let me say that again:

> The higher borrowings in the forward years are partly due to the future works provision for capital projects, which has been increased to account for some high value projects for which budgets are either yet to be settled or are commercially sensitive.

Of course, unless it is capital metro, when we know no price is too much. So after millions of dollars of taxpayers' funds have been spent on reports, studies and plans, this government still do not know what it wants to build, when or how much it will cost. But they are increasing the territory debt all the same. Cut through the government spin, and in effect they are asking for a blank cheque budget, and Mr Rattenbury is willing to oblige them.

The last time we saw this government hide behind commercial-in-confidence on capital works projects, we had the huge blowouts at the Cotter Dam. Of course the last time the government worked out a budget and disclosed their costings, they then foolishly decided to look for private sector partners after having flagged the costs.

On the Australia forum project, the Chief Minister quite unequivocally stated last month:

> We have not taken ownership of the project. Nor do I believe we should.

We now have a Treasurer committing $1.5 million to the project. So is the government in or out of this project? I welcome the money. We hear on the grapevine that there is another $8 million behind it, so it looks to be close to $10 million. We asked for it last sitting week, and the government, aided and abetted by the Greens, voted it down.

If you need to parse this budget, in simple terms this budget can be summed up in two words: more debt. It is debt which future generations will have to pay for, it is debt that has already increased taxes and charges, and it will stifle growth, economic diversification and household confidence.

It is no coincidence that gross state product output growth is decreasing from an actual 2.7 per cent in 2012-13 to 1.75 per cent in 2014-15. The ACT has experienced such low GSP levels only twice since 1991.

So how does this all play out? The fundamental point that the Treasurer misses is that public works means more taxes and charges, and taxes discourage production. It is no wonder that we see taxes going up.

Madam Assistant Speaker, you were there on Tuesday night when Mr Gentlemen let the cat out of the bag, when he told the Tuggeranong Community Council that conveyances would be phased out in the next four or five years. Four or five years! The Treasurer can laugh, but Mr Gentleman let the cat out of the bag. Conveyancing is gone in four to five years. Here is the would-be minister, in answer to a question on rates, "Will they triple?" saying, "No, but the conveyancing is going in four to five years." Thanks, Mick, for letting that one out of the bag.

Let us look at the other taxes that are rising. Parking will increase by 30 per cent. Transport costs for families will increase by an average of 8.5 per cent. Utilities will increase by up to 8.5 per cent. For general rates, the take is up 13 per cent and the average is up 10 per cent. Land tax is up 18 per cent, payroll tax by eight per cent, motor registration fees are up six per cent, and of course the fire and emergency services levy is up 28 per cent. Well done, Mr Corbell, for trying to hang that one on the Abbott government as well. The fire and emergency services levy is a consequence of this government's inability to negotiate with the Gillard-Rudd governments, and it is the Gillard-Rudd governments that have refused to pay for the fire service that we provide. So well done, Mr Corbell!

These are the budgetary signals to the government's political smoke, but these are just the headline percentages. It is about real people getting their bills. This morning, for instance, Pialligo residents woke up to learn that their rates have increased by 35 per cent. Businesses will have a 35 per cent increase in their fire and emergency services levy. For certain types of rental properties, land tax will be tripling. This is on top of the rates increases that we all know about—10 per cent on 10 per cent on 10 per cent triples your rates in just over a decade, not in the latter half of the century, as Mr Barr tried to fool Canberrans with, but again he has been caught out.

Let us return to Mr Barr's mortgage analogy. This budget's debt is not just like having a mortgage, as he claimed. It is more like having a mortgage that you cannot afford and do not want to have because you had no say in it. In simple truth, this government spends and spends and spends, and Canberrans yet again end up footing the bill.

It is interesting, when you look at their documents, Madam Assistant Speaker, that there is this miraculous recovery in the 2014-15 year. It is a fantastic chart. It suddenly goes ballistic. It goes up, up, up at a gradient that would be almost impossible to determine. Suddenly, after 13 years of spending, the government are going to find restraint. It is interesting when you look at how they bring back that difference in the coming year. It is simply on the back of the fact that they stopped spending—or so the Treasurer would have you believe. This year the spending has increased by $272 million, but next year—indeed, probably the year when a majority of the job cuts from the federal government will occur, the legacy of the Rudd-Gillard governments—the increase in spending is only $36 million. It is miraculous!

The following year it goes up by $176 million and the year after it goes up by another $172 million. I cannot wait for next year's budget and I cannot wait for the Treasurer to deliver this budget with increased growth of only $36 million. It is not going to happen. It has never happened because these people cannot constrain their spending.

We also have the problem that we need to look at what is happening to business. It was only yesterday that the Frontier Centre for Public Policy released its entrepreneurial index results comparing state, territory and provincial government business policies in Australia, Canada and New Zealand. Overall the ACT government's policies were ranked last among jurisdictions in Australia and last among those three countries of Australia, Canada and New Zealand. So much for a government looking after business.

The centre's key considerations included whether government policy would encourage or diminish the capacity for individuals to start up businesses. Let us take a few moments to see what the Treasurer has by way of directly supporting local businesses in this budget. Indeed, other analysis by SmartCompany and other websites have said there was not very much in this budget for business in the ACT.

He has $300,000 to help young people get advice to start their own businesses, $150,000 for target advice for small businesses and $150,000 for advice to help public servants transition into the private sector and start their own businesses. That is not a great deal, Madam Assistant Speaker. If you look further into the budget papers you will see that these initiatives are only for one year. Read the program descriptions further and what you see is that these programs are limited to advisory services. Why not just announce a $600,000 package for consultants? This is the Treasurer's perverse take on the ACT being a knowledge economy.

Yes, he talks about the $2.8 million CBR innovation network over four years, but this is from existing money, not new, and one would wonder what has had to give way to fund this initiative. The rest of the $4.4 million does not go directly to local businesses. Also, let us not forget this government's underspend of approximately $500,000 for

their global connect program in the last budget. Add all these points to the unfriendly tax and charges regime in the ACT, and it is no wonder that we rank last for government policy in supporting businesses across the three countries.

Of course, the government claims that it is raising the payroll tax threshold to $1.85 million. The government also noted that, together with cuts to payroll tax in 2012, businesses now will be paying on average $25,000 less in payroll tax each year. Furthermore, with the government's decision to remove the "genuine employer exemption", which relates to contractors employed through recruitment agencies, payroll tax for ACT businesses is, in effect, increasing. I have already had a number of complaints about these changes.

If we attempt to nut out what the government is doing in regard to a surplus, it really is just magic pudding. This is a government that is simply waiting for the commonwealth government's good times to return. *(Time expired.)*

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

Estimates 2014-2015—Select Committee
Reference

MR BARR (Molonglo—Deputy Chief Minister, Treasurer, Minister for Economic Development, Minister for Sport and Recreation, Minister for Tourism and Events and Minister for Community Services) (3.55): Pursuant to standing order 174, I move:

> That the Appropriation Bill 2014-2015 and the Appropriation (Office of the Legislative Assembly) Bill 2014-2015 be referred to the Select Committee on Estimates 2014-2015.

Question resolved in the affirmative.

Papers

Ms Gallagher presented the following papers:

> Remuneration Tribunal Act, pursuant to subsection 12(2)—Determinations, together with statements for:
>
> ACT Civil and Administrative Tribunal—Determination 4 of 2014, dated 30 April 2014.
>
> Clerk of the Legislative Assembly—Determination 5 of 2014, dated 30 April 2014.
>
> Full-time Statutory Office Holders—Determination 3 of 2014, dated 30 April 2014.
>
> Head of Service, Directors-General and Executives—Determination 2 of 2014, dated 30 April 2014.
>
> Members of the ACT Legislative Assembly—
>
> Determination 1 of 2014, dated 3 April 2014.
>
> Determination 7 of 2014, dated 30 April 2014.

Retired Master of the Supreme Court—Determination 6 of 2014, dated 30 April 2014.

Review of entitlements—Members of the Australian Capital Territory Legislative Assembly—Final report, prepared by the ACT Remuneration Tribunal, dated April 2014.

Gene Technology Act, pursuant to subsection 136A(3)—Operations of the Gene Technology Regulator—Quarterly report—1 October to 31 December 2013, dated 6 March 2014.

Financial Management Act—instruments
Papers and statement by minister

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

Financial Management Act—Instruments, including statements of reasons, pursuant to—

Section 14—Directing a transfer of funds within the Environment and Sustainable Development Directorate, dated 23 and 27 May 2014.

Section 16—Directing a transfer of appropriations from the Justice and Community Safety Directorate to the Environment and Sustainable Development Directorate, dated 23 May 2014.

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

Leave granted.

MR BARR: As required under the FMA, I table two instruments issued under sections 14 and 16, advice on each instrument's direction and a statement of reasons as required to be tabled in the Assembly within three sitting days after it is given. Subsections 16(1) and (2) of the FMA allow the Treasurer to authorise the transfer of appropriation for a service or function to another entity.

I present one section 16 instrument today in relation to the carbon neutral fund which transfers $41,137 in net cost of outputs appropriation from the Justice and Community Safety Directorate to the Environment and Sustainable Development Directorate.

Section 14 of the FMA allows for the transfer of funds between appropriations, as endorsed by myself and another minister. I present one such instrument today transferring $41,137 from the Environment and Sustainable Development Directorate's net cost of outputs appropriation to a capital injection controlled appropriation, again—as the amount is identical—in relation to the carbon neutral fund.

Additional details regarding all instruments are provided in the statement of reasons accompanying the instruments I have tabled today.

Papers

Mr Barr presented the following paper:

> Statement of Government policy—The new Extension of Time Fee Framework, dated June 2014.

Mr Corbell presented the following papers:

> Crimes Act, pursuant to section 374—Statutory review of section 374, undated.
>
> Coroners Act, pursuant to subsection 57(5)—Report of Coroner—Deaths of Brody Oppelaar, Justin Williams, Scott Oppelaar and Samantha Ford—
>
> Report, dated 20 January 2014.
>
> Executive response.

Plastic Shopping Bags Ban Act—review
Paper and statement by minister

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

> Plastic Shopping Bags Ban Act, pursuant to subsection 9(2)—Review of the Plastic Shopping Bags Ban, dated April 2014.

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

Leave granted.

MR CORBELL: I know members opposite have been waiting for this one. I am pleased to table today the legislative review of the ACT government's Plastic Shopping Bags Ban Act 2010. The act came into effect on 1 November 2011. The act provides for a review of the ban after two years of operation. This review satisfies that requirement. In November 2012 the Environment and Sustainable Development Directorate completed an interim review of the ban following the first 12 months of operation. This current review compares and builds on the results of that interim review. The review indicates considerable and ongoing support for the ban.

As part of the 2012 interim review, in September 2012 a telephone survey was conducted for 600 Canberra residents identifying as primary shoppers. A further survey was conducted in March this year. The 2014 survey adopted the same methodology as the 2012 survey so that results could be directly compared. The survey results indicate that consumers have maintained their support for the plastic shopping bags ban. The latest survey results show that support for the ban has increased to 65 per cent, up from 58 per cent in the 2012 survey. Accordingly, the

proportion of primary shoppers who oppose the ban have fallen from 33 per cent to 26 per cent. When asked if they would prefer to have the ban overturned, 71 per cent of primary shoppers disagreed. This is consistent with responses from the 2012 survey. Furthermore, a substantial majority of respondents agreed that the ban has had a positive effect on the environment.

With regard to the ban's impact on litter in the territory, the interim review noted that, while litter was seen to reduce in the immediate post-ban period, there was insufficient data available at the time to determine whether the ban has had an impact on the number of plastic shopping bags in the ACT's litter stream. Data provided by the Keep Australia Beautiful national litter index audits, adding a further three data points to the interim review in November 2012, May 2013 and November 2013, shows an ongoing reduction in plastic bag litter following the ban's introduction.

In the four Keep Australia Beautiful audits conducted since the ban was implemented, an average of less than nine plastic bags were found for each audit compared to the pre-ban average of 22 bags. Furthermore, the analysis shows that, while there has been an increase in the sales and distribution of heavier boutique-style shopping bags, their presence in the litter stream has not increased in the post-ban period. This latter point would indicate that these reusable bags are being put to a more valuable use rather than being unduly discarded.

With the assistance of major shopping retailers, the review also analysed the effectiveness of the ban in reducing plastic generation by assessing store data on changes in volumes of sales of bin liners and reusable shopping bags. The data available to the government showed that the number of bags being distributed has decreased substantially following the introduction of the ban. In the six months period immediately prior to the ban, approximately 26 million single-use plastic shopping bags were distributed through supermarkets in the ACT. This equated to around 182 tonnes of plastic that ultimately ended up in Canberra's landfill.

In comparison, the review has found that the number of boutique-style bags distributed in the territory numbered around four million in the six months to 31 October 2013 and, even though these bags are heavier than the single-use plastic shopping bags they replaced, their combined weight totals only around 114 tonnes, a reduction in plastic bag waste of 36 per cent. In addition, the review has not identified a substantial increase in sales of bin liners following the ban's introduction.

Retailer compliance to the ban is monitored by the ACT government Office of Regulatory Services within the Justice and Community Safety Directorate. The Office of Regulatory Services reported in the six months immediately prior to the ban that they undertook 1,734 inspections to determine if retailers were preparing for the ban and to educate retailers with regard to their responsibilities. From the introduction of the ban until October 2013, ORS undertook a further 714 inspections.

Of the retailers inspected since the introduction of the ban, there have been four breaches detected in contravention of the act. Two businesses were given verbal warnings and two were given formal written warnings. No infringement notices have been issued.

ORS also reported acting on feedback from the community through such avenues as Canberra Connect. More recently, the ORS investigated an inquiry from a community member regarding the compliance of bags provided by retailers through online shopping services. The Office of Regulatory Services found that the bags provided, while similar in appearance to the now banned single-use bags, were not in breach of the legislation.

The review identified a number of issues raised by ACT retailers. The Plastic Bag Advisory Group, comprising major and smaller retailers, continued to report increased loss rates of shopping baskets and shopping trolleys following the introduction of the ban. Retailers also reported ongoing customer complaints regarding the unavailability of single-use bags, even though suitable alternative bags were provided. These complaints appear to be the exception rather than the norm.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank those retailers who have contributed important confidential sales data to assist in the preparation of this review and for their patience and support throughout the implementation period.

It is clear from the review that the plastic bags ban continues to receive strong support from a majority of consumers with most primary shoppers continuing to use reusable bags when embarking on their weekly shopping trips. It is also worth noting the images that appear on the cover of the review showing the Mugga Lane landfill facility both before and after the introduction of the ban. It is clear from these images that the ban has been effective in reducing plastic bag litter and enhancing the visual appearance of the territory. Retailers have cooperated constructively with the ban and have provided low-cost alternatives for those of us who occasionally forget to bring our own bags.

From the data available, the ban appears to have reduced the plastic bag material going to landfill and decreased the number of shopping bags being distributed. The review recommends that the government undertake a further review of the ban in 2017. A review at this time will assess the ongoing effectiveness of the ban but also provide an insight into the impact of the plastic bag alternatives currently available or any changes to consumer behaviour. I support this recommendation and will instruct ESDD to undertake such a review at an appropriate time. Furthermore, TAMS will separately account for single-use plastic bags, textile bags and bin liners in ongoing landfill audits.

The review makes two further recommendations to the government: that the government continue the operation of the ban in its current form and further investigate options to further reduce plastic waste being interred in landfill. In response to the first recommendation, the government will continue the operation of the ban in its current form. In response to the second recommendation, the government will continue to investigate options to further reduce plastic waste being interred in landfill. I commend this review to the Assembly.

Paper

Mr Corbell presented the following paper:

> Ministerial Delegation to China—25 March to 1 April 2014, dated 5 June 2014.

Education and Care Services National Law—regulations
Paper and statement by minister

MS BURCH (Brindabella—Minister for Education and Training, Minister for Disability, Children and Young People, Minister for the Arts, Minister for Women, Minister for Multicultural Affairs and Minister for Racing and Gaming): For the information of members, I present the following paper:

> Education and Care Services National Law—Education and Care Services National Amendment Regulations 2014, dated 8 May 2014

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

Leave granted.

MS BURCH: As Minister for Education and Training, I am today tabling the Education and Care Services National Regulations 2014 amendment. These amendments were agreed by all education ministers in April to improve the operation of the national quality framework for early childhood education and care. While many of these amendments are relatively minor, they directly respond to feedback from the sector and will resolve some of the issues that were raised with the introduction of the NQF.

The amendments provide flexibility for staffing arrangements, and the amendments also streamline the supervisor certificate approval process to cut red tape for services and regulatory authority. This government remains committed to the national quality framework as it delivers benefits to children, families and education and care services.

Order of the day—postponement

Ordered that order of the day No 1, executive business, relating to the Holidays Amendment Bill 2014, be postponed until the next sitting.

Disability Services (Disability Service Providers) Amendment Bill 2014

Debate resumed from 15 May 2014, on motion by **Ms Burch**:

> That this bill be agreed to in principle.

MR WALL (Brindabella) (4.10): The Disability Services (Disability Service Providers) Amendment Bill seeks to make changes to the existing act to ensure that minimum service standards are maintained once the NDIS trial commences here in

the ACT at the end of this month. The bill seeks to make changes in two main areas. The first is a change to the notification requirement that the official visitor must provide should they wish to inspect a service provider. Currently the official visitor is required to notify the director-general 24 hours prior to visiting a premise. The amendments will now require the official visitor to instead provide the notification directly to the service provider 24 hours in advance. Essentially these changes place no new restrictions on the ability of the official visitor to conduct their duties but ultimately these changes will allow the official visitor to inspect a wider range of services as the funding relationship with the territory is no longer required.

The second and slightly more complex aspect of this bill is the creation of specialist disability service providers. A specialist disability service is defined in the amendment as:

> (1) a service provided specifically for people with a disability; and
>
> (2) is of a type declared by the minister.

Examples that have been used in the act that the minister may choose to declare include services such as accommodation services, advocacy services, case management, personal care services and respite care. The reason for the creation of this definition is to ensure that the standards that currently apply to disability service providers continue to apply under the NDIS. Currently they apply to service providers by nature of their funding relationship with the territory. Under the NDIS, the territory will no longer be directly funding these services. Therefore a change to this aspect of the act was required.

An example of the practical application of this definition in practice would be an aged care facility that provides care to an individual who is a participant in the NDIS. Such a facility would, for the purposes of this act, be considered a specialist service provider. Likewise, a gym or a personal training centre that provided a program specifically for people with a disability would be required to adhere to these standards. However, should a gym choose to provide a mainstream service or a service that is open to the general public and an individual that was accessing the NDIS chose to use some of their funding to access it, that service would not be considered a specialist service under the premise of this act.

It is also important to note that there are a couple of exemptions to the definition of a specialist service provider. Family or extended family that provide care for a family member are exempt from needing to conform to the service standards. I believe that this is an appropriate exemption as it will allow for family to continue to meet the needs of a relative to the best of their ability without unnecessary interference from the state.

The other exemption applies to the territory itself. For the purposes of this act, the territory will not be bound to the standards as approved by the minister. This exemption is of some concern to the opposition. The application of a standard, in essence, is establishing a minimum acceptable level of service, a minimum standard that must be met by all service providers. Given that the NDIS ultimately results in all

service providers having to compete against each other in a competitive marketplace, it is only fair that all standards are applied fairly and equally across the board. Exempting a service provider from the need to meet the same standards of service as another can skew the marketplace and has the potential to provide an advantage to one provider over another. Given that the territory is remaining a service provider under the NDIS, if only for a short term, we do believe that all rules should be applied consistently across the market.

Just briefly before I close, I would like to note that the minister, during the budget debate, was questioning Mr Smyth on whether or not we would be supporting this bill. I would just like to remind the minister that my office is always open. If she has any questions on whether or not a bill which she has brought into this place is going to be supported by us, she is always welcome to give me, the shadow minister, a call. But in this instance, for some reason, she did not feel that need.

The opposition will be supporting these changes today. However, we will be paying close attention to the changes as they are implemented to ensure that consistency is maintained and that the standards throughout the NDIS trial do not advantage or disadvantage one provider over another.

MR RATTENBURY (Molonglo) (4.15): The Disability Services (Disability Service Providers) Amendment Bill 2014 is a bill that seeks to make the changes required to ensure disability standards are maintained as the national disability insurance scheme comes into play on 1 July this year. At the beginning of last year this Assembly made amendments to the Disability Services Act around disability service standards. The intent of that bill was to ensure there was a legislative framework for the ACT government to adopt the national disability service standards as law rather than having service standards linked to funding agreements.

This bill formalises that shift to ensure that there are ongoing standards and safeguards during the trial period of the NDIS and removes the requirement that disability service organisations have a funding relationship and an agreement with the minister to be captured by the scope of the regulatory regime. As such, it changes the language in the bill from "government funded organisations" to "disability service organisations" as an acknowledgement that services will be moved into the non-government sector and that having a funding arrangement with the territory is no longer the defining criteria.

It ensures that the ACT government can continue to regulate disability standards even when there is not a funding agreement in place. And these standards can include the national disability standards or other standards as set by the minister. There was an intention for nationally consistent standards prior to the first NDIS trial. However, that has not been achieved. As such, the ACT as a trial site needs an interim measure until such time as the national quality framework is agreed. The intention is that new providers and current providers will have the same standards apply and that the same standards and provisions will apply as they currently do.

This bill also clarifies the scope of activity to be undertaken by the official visitor so that visitable places include all service delivery providers and are not limited to territory-funded organisations, which is obviously consistent with my earlier remarks.

With the bill today, the minister has put forward two disallowable instruments: one that defines that types of services that count as a disability service, and the other that lays out the standards that are applicable. My understanding is that the disability sector has been well consulted on this process of transitioning standards and consistent quality assurance as the ACT moves into the NDIS—and, indeed, they had significant discussions with the directorate prior to this bill being drafted—and that any concerns they had were addressed.

I certainly have not had any feedback from the sector that would cause alarm. So on that basis the Greens will be supporting this bill today because we believe it delivers the mechanisms necessary to enable us to move one of the pieces of the puzzle to facilitate smooth transition to the NDIS.

MS BURCH (Brindabella—Minister for Education and Training, Minister for Disability, Children and Young People, Minister for the Arts, Minister for Women, Minister for Multicultural Affairs and Minister for Racing and Gaming) (4.18), in reply: I am proud today to be here to debate the Disability Services (Disability Service Providers) Amendment Bill 2014. This bill was introduced in May of this year and is a significant step in preparing the territory for the trial of the national disability insurance scheme commencing on 1 July this year. This amendment is about the important issues of safeguards and quality standards in the delivery of disability services—considerations that are most relevant during a time of transition to the NDIS, a transition that brings reform on a scale previously unseen within the disability sector.

The principal objective of this bill is to enable the territory to maintain existing quality standards and safeguards relevant to the types of disability services for which it currently has responsibility during the trial. This bill will strengthen the status of safeguards and the quality standards by moving compliance from a contract to law. The existence of quality standards in legislation will support the delivery of quality services.

When the territory signed the intergovernmental agreement for the national disability insurance scheme at the launch in 2012, we committed to maintaining existing safeguards and quality assurance frameworks. Enshrining these in legislation demonstrates to the ACT community the importance that this government places on these protections.

The NDIS is a revolutionary development for the disability sector. While it provides significant benefits to people with disability, it will be a major transition for the ACT government, the disability sector and people with a disability.

One of the major transitions brought about by the NDIS will be the way that disability services are funded. This will mean a change to the role of the territory in both the funding and the delivery of these services. There will be a phasing out of contracts between the territory and the current disability service providers. The loss of contracts will eliminate the authority to mandate compliance with the obligations contained in those contracts.

It has been 13 years since the Disability Services Act was passed in the territory. The primary purpose of the act was to establish a system for the administration of funding for the providers of services to people with a disability. Up until now, that system has been contracts. Many in the community may be unaware of the complexities and the detail that currently exist in the contracts for the delivery of disability services. Much of this detail enables the administration of funding and monitoring of the delivery of those services; however, there is some critical detail that ensures that safeguards exist for people when they receive those services.

This bill is a complex and important piece of legislation reform. I recognise that sometimes the ease of understanding the value of measures is lost in the technicality. "Safeguards" and "quality frameworks" are not necessarily terms commonly bandied about in the community, but that does not minimise their significance. A safeguard is a measure taken to protect someone or something, to prevent something undesirable. This bill provides the community with assurance that they will be able to expect the same quality and safeguards from disability services that they currently enjoy. These include standards for specialist disability service provider staff and volunteers, compliance with relevant national quality standards, access to international independent avenues for the resolution of complaints, and an obligation to report critical incidents.

This bill establishes what and who constitutes a specialist disability service provider for the purposes of the act and allows for the approval of standards with which they are obliged to comply. It also amends the act to remove reliance on a funding relationship with the territory, to enable the disability official visitor to visit disability accommodation.

It is significant that the government can maintain key protections for people with a disability in the ACT by embedding them in legislation.

I will go to the key provisions in the bill.

Clause 5, new part 1, outlines what is a specialist disability service for the purpose of the act. It provides that services are in the scope of the act by virtue of the "type" of service that is provided and because the service is provided specifically for people with a disability. This is an important distinction between this bill and the act being amended, which defines providers on the basis of their funding relationship with the government. Service types that fall within the scope will be detailed in a disallowable instrument.

Clause 4, section 5, establishes that a specialist disability service provider is a person or an entity. It states that the territory is not considered a specialist disability service provider for the purpose of the act. It further states that where a close relative is engaged directly to provide services to a person with a disability, they are not considered to be a specialist disability service under the act.

Clause 5, section 5A, gives the minister the authority to approve standards with which specialist disability services must comply. These standards will be detailed in a disallowable instrument, as will quality standards applicable to each type of specialist disability service.

Clause 7 omits section 6(2)(c) as it references the territory as the funder of disability accommodation. In the NDIS environment, the territory will no longer have a funding relationship with accommodation providers.

Clause 9, section 8A, inserts a new definition to provide that an operating entity for a visitable place by an official visitor is defined in the Official Visitor Act 2012.

In clause 9, section 8A, definition of a visitable place, paragraph (a) omits the reference to territory as a funder.

Clause 11, section 8C(1), provides that notice of a visit must be given to an operating entity at least 24 hours before a visit. This is in recognition that the director-general will no longer have a funding relationship with the provider.

The ACT government currently funds and regulates a range of disability services, excluding employment services. This bill confers power onto the territory to monitor those services against a regulatory framework.

The current landscape of government-funded disability services is complex and varied. Not all of the disability services currently funded and regulated by the ACT government are funded under the Disability Services Act 1991. In fact, they sit across three directorates: the Community Services Directorate, Education and Training Directorate, and Health Directorate. Contracts across these three directorates will be phased out as a result of the introduction of the NDIS.

When analysed as a whole, the current regulatory environment is also complex. Program areas in each directorate require disability services to meet different industry and service standards. This reflects the diversity of types of service that the ACT government funds and regulates.

In seeking to maintain existing safeguards and quality standards, it is necessary that the solution adequately capture the suite of relevant service types and standards. The bill also needs to accommodate and capture the growth in the sector, including relevant new providers entering the market. This bill achieves those objectives.

There are an additional three instruments that will sit under the bill. They contain significant content, which goes to the operation of the act. The government was on the front foot in tabling a copy of the draft instruments in May to provide members with context and transparency regarding how the bill will interact with subordinate instruments.

As I touched on earlier, the instruments comprise draft regulation that establishes the penalty provisions for non-compliance; two disallowable instruments which set out the service types that fall within the scope of the act; and the standards that apply to those services. Section 12 of the Disability Services Act 1991 authorises the development of regulation that will support this bill.

The development of the legislation reform that captures such a breadth of services, safeguards and qualitative frameworks understandably engages a range of stakeholders across community and the government. Gaining the support of stakeholders and garnering their expertise was integral to shaping the bill and its subordinate instruments.

To this end, the government established a representative safeguards policy working group, comprising people with a disability, the Disability & Community Services Commissioner, the disability official visitor, members of the NDIS ACT Expert Panel, the National Disability Insurance Agency, National Disability Services and other key representatives.

Entrenching safeguards and quality standards in legislation offers people with a disability in the ACT assurance of the government's commitment to maintaining safeguards in the delivery of disability services during this time of major reform. The absence of contractual arrangements with disability service providers makes this amendment even more important. The transition to a national safeguarding and quality assurance framework, once developed, will work to achieve national consistency. As the first jurisdiction to accept all eligible residents into the scheme, these amendments will support that effort by maintaining comprehensive safeguarding and quality assurance measures in the trial conditions that mirror the full scheme.

Let me say something in response to some of the comments by Mr Wall around the territory as a provider not being in the scope of this act. The territory is not in scope as a provider. This is consistent with the Disability Services Act 1991 as it currently stands, where the territory is not considered a provider.

The territory is, however, subject to significant oversight and rigour in its contact and conduct and as a provider of services. The ACT government as a provider is a public authority under the Human Rights Act and is subject to the oversight of the Disability & Community Services Commissioner, the Health Services Commissioner, the Human Rights Commissioner and the Discrimination Commissioner. The safeguard policy working group has recognised this and has noted that we are subject to the oversight of the ACT Auditor-General and a number of pieces of legislation and degrees of rigour far above the community sector.

From the director-general all the way down to staff members providing service to people with a disability, the government is subject to oversight and rigour, including, though it is not an exclusive list, the Privacy Act 1988, health records act, Public Sector Management Act 1994, working with vulnerable people act of 2011, Human Rights Act 2004, Children and Young People Act 2008, Official Visitor Act 2012, Financial Management Act 1996, Auditor-General Act 1996, public sector management ACT public service code of conduct of 2013, public sector management standards of 2006, Territory Records Act 2002, Discrimination Act 1991, Human Rights Commission Act 2005, Freedom of Information Act 1989 and Ombudsman Act 1989. They are just a few of the acts that are covered, Mr Wall.

I also go to the juvenile response about your door being always open, with you saying I could have asked. Mr Smyth was over here talking about how we would close the day, how he would talk, how we had finished. I said in passing, "I am assuming you are passing and supporting this bill." For you to continue to come in here with a juvenile political play about some things such as the importance of how we ensure safeguards—

MR ASSISTANT SPEAKER (Mr Gentleman): Order! Minister, could you please address your comments through the chair.

MS BURCH: Thank you. Through you, Mr Assistant Speaker, I think it is more telling of your attention to this. I hope that in future, when we are talking about something of such importance, to provide security, safeguards and quality assurance for services for people with a disability, you can keep your juvenile antics to yourselves.

In closing, I want to thank everybody—including the two officials here who were part and parcel of putting together this amendment act, all the subordinate material and the regulations that went with it. It is a significant piece of work, an important piece of work. I commend the bill to the Assembly.

Question resolved in the affirmative.

Bill agreed to in principle.

Leave granted to dispense with the detail stage.

Bill agreed to.

Adjournment

Motion (by **Ms Burch**) agreed to:

> That the Assembly do now adjourn.

The Assembly adjourned at 4.32 pm until Tuesday, 5 August 2014 at 10 am.

Appendix 1

Citizen's right of reply: Response by Mr Jorian Gardner pursuant to continuing resolution 4 and the resolution of the Assembly on 5 June 2014 that report 2 of the Standing Committee on Administration and Procedure—Application for Citizen's Right of Reply—be adopted

I refer to a sitting of the ACT Legislative Assembly, Tuesday 25 February 2014, that saw a motion of no confidence debate in Minister Joy Burch raised by Mr Jeremy Hanson, Member for Molonglo and Leader of the Opposition.

During the some two-hours or so of debate, I was the subject of personal attack and criticism on a number of occasions by some members. It was my role as Director of the Fringe Festival which was under scrutiny, an event that recently ran alongside the National Multicultural Festival and is funded through ArtsACT - arts and multicultural affairs both being portfolios of Minister Burch. It is clear to those who were in attendance at this extraordinary first sitting of the 2014 ACT Legislative Assembly or by any reasonable persons reading of the Hansard record that I, Jorian Gardner, have been the subject of clear, direct and personal attack and criticism and that my privacy has been unreasonably invaded by references made by some MLA's.

- Mr Hanson (MLA) refers to Minister Burch on several occasions: "she appointed the director without due process." ".....The minister ignored due process and appointed Jorian Gardner as the director of the fringe." ".....She funded this event from a public purse and she appointed the director without due process."

  Ms Jones (MLA): "He was appointed without process." "...because it was the well-known modus operandi of the director who was given the job without due process." ...There should have been an acknowledgement that this director, with a long litany of previous poor judgement, should not have been given this directorship." "...to a director known to the general community as having questionable judgement, and considered in the arts community as being poorly trained"

  These statements and similar on the record are untrue and misleading. This implies there was something non compliant in my appointment. No laws or rules of ACT Government process were broken and even members of the ACT Liberal Opposition seem to agree therefore contradicting their own leader and other members on this point. I refer to a statement in this debate by Mr Brendan Smyth (Libs MLA) referring to Fringe in the ACT Government budget. ".. Funding was deliberately placed as a separate line item in the budget intended to allow for more flexibility in employing the director." This statement is correct and shows that it was the Minister and her department's right to appoint me. I have complied with an ACT Government Deed of Grant as with any other contractor to government in a similar situation. Any other individual and organisation also had the legal right to lobby the government for this appointment and the fact they didn't take advantage of this opportunity available to them should not reflect poorly on me because I in fact did. These

statements have adversely affected me in reputation and dealings in the arts and business community by inferring something "shadowy" has occurred when no such thing has happened at all.

I object to the suggestion that I should not have even been considered to be appointed or that I have poor training or judgement. To justify this I simply say that at the time of my appointment I had directed six Fringe Festivals in Canberra; produced, directed, and acted in hundreds of other festival and theatrical related productions; held senior positions with the Museum of Contemporary Art, The Australian Theatre Institute, & ArtsLink; edited the Australian Performing Arts Directory and been an arts journalist for well over a decade including six years as the arts editor of a prominent local Canberra publication. My first professional production was in 1988. I stand by my record.

- Mr Hanson (MLA) on my appointment: "....Mr Gardner was being given $20,000 by the minister to run the festival". This and other similar statements imply I was actually paid this amount personally to run the event - I was not. It was the cash budget for the event that I administered. I in fact was not paid a salary, ran the event for free and as producer took a loss in the many thousands. This money went to ACT artists. This continual reference adversely affects my dealings with others who may think I have been untrue regards my budgetary arrangements - I have not. Any level headed person could see that this small amount of money to produce a major four-day event in Civic (plus logistic support) leaves little for the event producer and why (at no cost to the ACT taxpayer I may add) the event was in the negative.

- Members referred to some problems I have had in my personal life which had zero to do with my appointment or my job running Fringe 2014.

  Mr Smyth (MLA): "She settled for a festival director towards the end of last year who faced arrest for missing his court date not once but twice".

  This was a cheap attack that had issues relating to my health that have not been revealed to the public and nor should they be unless I reference them and was also a more complex legal situation that was not to be dismissed in such a quick statement. These other statements should not have been made and had members been aware of the circumstances surrounding the minor offence and my health I am convinced they would not have been.

  Mr Smyth (MLA): "...(he) lost his job at a radio station for distastefully commenting that the former Prime Minister was "up skirted" by a "penis cam" in a cabinet meeting.

  This statement is incorrect and, again, has nothing to do with my appointment as Fringe Director. I did not leave my job in radio because of this issue. This incident in fact occurred a fair while before I resigned my job in local radio. Even simply by evidence of time-line this statement is factually incorrect and both statements have clearly invaded my privacy having little to do with the debate at hand.

- Several factually incorrect and irrelevant statements referring to me personally and the management of my event, its history and my appointment were made. Amongst the many are:

  Ms Jones (MLA): "One member of the Canberra arts scene said his work is usually base, unsophisticated and embarrassing." There was no reference to any individual here and is a value judgment. If I am to be "named and shamed" by the Assembly - embarrassed, defamed and made fun of in public; in parliament - by the members - why are unattributed judgments like this allowed to be referenced?

  Ms Jones: "A fringe festival is meant to be related to the main event; some would even say that it should complement the main event. Fringe festivals were born out of the experience of the Edinburgh Fringe Festival, which was an opportunity for those who could not be on the main stage to perform in a low-cost environment. It should be a chance for others who cannot be a Timomatic on the main stage to get a gig and show their talent. The performances, if they are to be directed and carefully selected, should have a narrative that complements the main event."

  This is not fact. If members have no competence in arts practice and are not aware of how an event like this fits into a cultural or historical landscape, how can any of their assessments of the event be taken seriously. By making incorrect statements about the event, its history and how it should be run on the public record, a person who reads this as fact could therefore mistakenly assume I have not done my job properly, thus adversely affecting my reputation. Members should not make comment on cultural areas they have not been correctly briefed on.

- Mr Hanson (MLA) referred to the following statement by the head of multicultural forum. "...(*the event) insulted quite a few people along the way, definitely the German community and of course our friends in the Jewish community, it is just simply unacceptable." The person who made this statement was not at the event. I have spoken with senior representatives of each of the communities referred to, and they had no complaint to make to me. This statement is untrue. This statement adversely affects my reputation amongst this community and should not remain unchallenged on the public record.

- It has been referred to by members, and therefore has damaged me personally and professionally, that my arts practice is offensive and has racially vilified others and that somehow I need to be "overseen" - something no other artist in the ACT is subjected to. I refer to Mr Shane Rattenbury's statement who demonstrates clearly the odds at which the ACT Liberal Opposition in the references to me and my practice are with their federal counterparts.

  Mr Rattenbury: "The relevant part of the Racial Discrimination Act which Mr Wilson and the Liberals have vowed to repeal is section 18C. It says it is

> unlawful for someone to do a public act that is reasonably likely, in all the circumstances, to offend, insult, humiliate or intimidate another person or group of people, and the act is done because of the race, colour, or national or ethnic origin of the other person or of some or all people in the group. What an irony that this is the exact claim the local Liberals are now trying to prosecute. At the federal level, the Liberals want to repeal the protections against racial vilification, and yet today they are trying to prosecute a case for racial vilification."

Career-wise these statements and others made during this debate are incredibly damaging to have on the public record for me and there can be no doubt those words have had an effect on me professionally and most importantly personally. This was but one event I do, and my career depends on being able to apply and lobby for funding for projects from both business and government. Given the extremely hurtful and adverse personal and professional statements made by members of the ACT Legislative Assembly who are respected in the community and their obvious government ties, my future business opportunities in some areas are now severely limited. Such political interference has damaged my reputation and my dealings with government and arts community contacts.

Members of the ACT Legislative Assembly should be made aware that their words about non-elected, ordinary members of the public whether negative or positive carry weight. Scoring political points at the expense of someone's career and well-being was never the intended use of privilege and certainly doesn't live up to the high standards that I, as a citizen of the Australian Capital Territory, expect from my elected representatives.

Answers to questions

Housing ACT—properties (Question No 271)

Ms Lawder asked the Minister for Housing, upon notice, on 6 May 2014:

(1) How many concentrations exist, whereby there are more than 40 Housing ACT units in one location.

(2) What suburbs are these concentrations located in.

(3) What is the breakdown of ACT Housing properties by suburb.

(4) How many people have taken up the Shared Equity Scheme since its introduction in 2010.

(5) How many ACT Housing properties become vacant on average every year.

(6) What is the average turnover rate of a property.

(7) How many properties does each housing manager within Housing ACT manage.

(8) How many couples without children (a) are on the Housing ACT waiting list, and (b) occupy a house within Housing ACT.

(9) Understanding that the terms of the Residential Tenancies Act 1997 stipulate that a lessor may inspect the premises twice each period of 12 months, how many times on average does Housing ACT actually inspect its properties.

(10) How does the Total Facilities Manager (TFM) rank the urgency of repairs and maintenance?

(11) What categories are repairs and maintenance classified in.

(12) What is the average response time for the TFM on (a) urgent repairs and maintenance, and (b) non-urgent repairs.

(13) With respect to repairs and maintenance (a) what are the terms of the lease for tenants, (b) what repairs are tenants responsible for, and (c) are these repairs enforced.

(14) What options are available to neighbours who are having difficulty with Housing ACT tenants.

(15) What criteria are used for Housing ACT purchasing new properties.

(16) How many homes have been purchased by Housing ACT in the last five years, broken down by year, and what was the age of those homes at time of purchase.

(17) In the last five years, broken down by year, how many homes have been (a) built by Housing ACT, and (b) sold by Housing ACT, including the number sold to current Housing ACT occupants.

(18) What is the average market value of Housing ACT properties, by size (bedrooms).

(19) What proportion of Housing ACT properties are occupied by Indigenous Australians.

(20) What is the (a) current income threshold to be eligible for a Housing ACT property, and (b) process (i) for keeping up to date with tenants' incomes and (ii) to be followed when a tenant is known to be breaching the income threshold.

(21) What financial contribution did the ACT Government make to the National Rental Affordability Scheme.

(22) How does this compare with the funds provided by the Commonwealth.

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

(1) 29.

(2) Ainslie, Belconnen, Braddon, Dickson, Griffith, Kambah, Lyneham, Lyons, Mawson, Narrabundah, Red Hill, Reid, Rivett, Turner, Waramanga, Watson, Weston, Wanniassa.

(3) A breakdown of Housing ACT properties by suburb is at **Attachment A**.

(4) At 5 May 2014, 62 Shared Equity sales have been completed.
Three (3) of the 62 sales have also paid out the remaining 30% equity share.
At 5 May 2014, there were a further five applications being progressed.

(5) Between 1 July 2008 and 30 June 2013 the average was 811 properties.

(6) Please note clarification was sought and obtained from your office regarding this question. The average time taken between properties becoming vacant and being re-let is:

2008-09	**2009-10**	**2010-11**	**2011-12**	**2012-13**
36.2 Days	36.1 Days	38.2 Days	37.1 Days	39.8 Days

(Source ROGS 2013, Table 17A.28 Attachment Table)

(7) Housing Managers have a portfolio of approximately 250 properties each.

(8) At 5 May 2014,
(a) Housing Register: 94
Transfer Register: 45
(b) 780 either joint tenancies or tenant and spouse with no other occupants in the household

(9) Properties are inspected once within the first three months of the commencement of a tenancy and thereafter annually.

(10) The Fact Sheet at **Attachment B** – "Repairs and Maintenance – important information from Housing ACT" provides detailed information about Repairs and Maintenance in public housing properties.

(11) See Answer to question (10)

(12) See Answer to question (10)

(13) (a) (b) (c) – Answers to this question can be found in the Schedule to the *Residential Tenancies Act 1997* – clause 55 (1) (2) (3), clause 56, clause 57, 58, 59 and 60 (a) – (m) clause 62 (a) – (d) and clause 63 (a) – (c)

(14) Neighbours would generally firstly be advised to speak with their neighbour about the matter to see if an amicable resolution can be reached. If this is not successful or not an option a neighbour is comfortable pursuing, then neighbours are encouraged to contact Housing ACT's customer assistance line. The customer assistance line will formally record the matter and provide written advice of receipt. The matter is investigated by the relevant Housing Manager. This may include speaking with both parties, suggesting the involvement of the Conflict Resolution Service, or where the matter is more serious and can be substantiated, legal action may be commenced. For example, serving a Notice to Remedy. The outcomes of the investigation process are advised formally within 21 days.

Neighbours should also:

- Report criminal behaviour or suspected criminal activity to ACT Policing.
- Report matters relating to animals causing problems in the neighbourhood to the Domestic Animal Service; and
- Report matters relating to excessive noise to the Environmental Protection Authority (EPA).

The Improved Support Stronger Communities (ISSC) team established in May 2012 supports individuals and communities affected by public housing tenants who engage in disruptive behaviour.

(15) Consistent with the Public Housing Asset Management Strategy 2012-17, properties are purchased or built to best meet the identified needs of tenants and applicants. This is determined based on location, size, type, level of adaptability for special needs etc. Housing ACT seeks to maintain the principle of 'salt and peppering' public housing across the ACT and limiting concentrations.

(16) **Attachment C** provides details about Housing ACT properties purchased over the last five years.

(17) (a) Houses built by Housing ACT in the last five years

2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13
36	80	314	99	107

(b) Houses sold by Housing ACT in the last five years

2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13
148	62	74	42	58

(18) Average market value of Housing ACT properties, by size (bedrooms).

No. of Bedrooms	Value	
	Houses	Flats
Bedsits	Not Applicable	$220,000
1-bedroom	$467,000	$318,000
2-bedroom	$455,000	$351,000
3-bedroom	$432,000	$390,000
4-bedroom	$450,000	Not Applicable
5-bedroom	$540,000	Not Applicable
6-bedroom	$600,000	Not Applicable

(19) 7% of public housing properties are occupied by tenants identifying as Indigenous Australians.

(20) (a) Eligibility for public housing – information about income thresholds is at **Attachment D**.

(b)(i) Market rent is charged for public housing properties. A rental rebate is available for tenants. To be eligible for a rental rebate tenants are required to lodge an application and provide details about household income. Tenants are then required to lodge a fresh application annually or where a change to the household income has occurred. Tenants are charged 25% of their weekly income or market rent whichever is the lowest. Where a tenant is no longer eligible for a rental rebate they are charged the market rent and are required to provide details of their income annually. It is the responsibility of the tenant to advise Housing ACT about any change to their household composition.

(ii) Tenants who are paying the market rent are reviewed annually. Where a tenant and/or domestic partner have an annual gross income in excess of $94,855.70 for two consecutive years a multi-disciplinary panel will assesses the sustainability of their income and the capacity of the tenant to consider other housing options.

(21) The ACT Government typically provides National Rental Affordability Scheme contributions in kind, with the form determined on a case by case basis.

(22) State and Territory contributions are equivalent to one third of the Commonwealth's contribution.

(Copies of the attachments are available at the Chamber Support Office).

Alexander Maconochie Centre—prisoners (Question No 273)

Mr Wall asked the Minister for Corrections, upon notice, on 8 May 2014:

(1) What was the average number of (a) sentenced prisoners, and (b) remandees incarcerated at the Alexander Maconochie Centre (AMC), by month, from October 2013 to April 2014.

(2) What was the highest recorded number of prisoners incarcerated at AMC in each month from October 2013 to April 2014.

(3) On how many days between October 2013 and April 2014 were there over 300 prisoners in total incarcerated at AMC.

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

(1) The average number of sentenced prisoners and remandees incarcerated at the AMC by month from October 2013 to April 2014 are as follows:

Month	Remand	Sentenced	Total
Oct-13	87.77	253.1	340.87
Nov-13	80.87	255.5	336.40
Dec-13	82.39	258.8	341.16
Jan-14	83.16	255.2	338.35
Feb-14	84.07	242.9	326.93
Mar-14	84.06	236.0	320.10

Source: *JOIST*

Note: The average AMC April 2014 data is not available at this stage.

(2) The highest number of detainees incarcerated at the AMC in each month from October 2013 to April 2014 was as follows:

October 2013 – 346
November 2013 – 340
December 2013 – 343
January 2014 – 343
February 2014 – 330
March 2014 – 326
April 2014 – 345

(3) On every day between 1 October 2013 and 30 April 2014 there were over 300 detainees incarcerated at the AMC.

Alexander Maconochie Centre—prisoner jobs (Question No 274)

Mr Wall asked the Minister for Corrections, upon notice, on 8 May 2014:

(1) What is the total budgeted amount allocated for prisoner wages for the Alexander Maconochie Centre (AMC) in the 2013-14 financial year.

(2) What jobs are available for prisoners at AMC.

(3) For jobs listed in part (2), (a) how many are classified as apprenticeships or traineeships, (b) what is the pay rate for each job, and (c) what penalty rates are paid.

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

1. ACT Corrective Services does not allocate a specific separate budget for detainee wages.

However, I can report the year-to-date expenditure: at 20 May 2014 ACT Corrective Services has expended $436,422.97 on detainee employment, education, programs and unemployment payments.

2. The jobs available to detainees in the AMC are split into two main categories, general services and grounds maintenance, with the bulk of those within the general services category. Within those categories there are sub-categories, for instance grounds maintenance has jobs such as labourer or mower. In general services, jobs include cleaner and laundry. Some cleaner jobs are specific to certain accommodation areas. The list of jobs is provided at Attachment A.

Detainees can also progress through employment levels 1 to 3, with each providing greater responsibility and a higher level of detainee employment pay.

In addition to these jobs, low-risk detainees approaching release housed in the Transitional Release Centre may undertake paid employment or work experience as part of the Work Release Program.

3. (a) None of the jobs available inside the AMC are classified as an apprenticeship or traineeship.

The availability of apprenticeships or traineeships for current detainees participating in the Work Release Program is dependent on the nature of employment and at the discretion of the employer.

(b) Detainees receive remuneration for participating in approved programs, education and employment while detained at the AMC.

Detainees are remunerated for a minimum 30 hours per week and a maximum of 42 hours per week. The payments per hour by category as set out in the Prisoner Remuneration Policy are as follows:

Category Amount Notes
Non worker Nil Sentenced detainees in this category have declared they do not wish to work (or have been dismissed). This classification is reviewed on a weekly basis

Unemployment $0.50 This relates to either sentenced detainees prepared to work but no work is available or non-working remand detainees

Level 1 $0.83 Lowest class of work or level of responsibility
Level 2 $1.17 Intermediate class of work or level of responsibility
Level 3 $1.67 Highest class of work or level of responsibility

Work Release Program participants are paid by their employer according to award conditions.

(c) No penalty rates are paid for in-gaol jobs. Participants in the Work Release Program are paid according to award conditions, including penalty rates if/when applicable.

ATTACHMENT A

Jobs available to detainees in the AMC (May 2014)

Position	Duties include (but not limited to):
General services	
Activities /Training Room (TRC) clerk	Cleaning, storage and distribution of gym equipment Assist in the organisation events Assist with paperwork Assist staff with equipment audits and orders Clean kitchen, kitchenette and restock supplies (TRC)
Barber	Hair cutting Maintain appointment book Clean and sanitise work room and tools.
Barista	Preparation of beverages to visitors and detainees Cleaning duties Ordering and restocking
Buy-ups	Clean and maintain buy-up area Distribution of stores to accommodation areas
Domestic cleaner	Cleaning responsibility for at least one of the following: , sweeping, cleaning floors, windows, cell yards, officer stations, bathrooms, admission, blood spills or specific accommodation areas (i.e. women's, remand, health, CSU).
Dixie	Assist kitchen staff in delivery of meals Count meals and rations Cleaning
Education Assistant	Provide assistance to other detainees with regard to computer use, literacy, numeracy Support education staff
Fitness leader	Cleaning and sanitisation of gym equipment Assist in fitness assessments Set up training area Instruct in the proper use of equipment
Garbage/Bins	Empty bins within Cell Block accommodation area Remove rubbish from unit to hoppers
Garbage run	Empty garbage hoppers throughout the AMC
Kitchen	Assist in the preparation of food in the main kitchen Cleaning
Laundry	Clean and maintain laundry area Wash and dry laundry Return clean clothing to detainees
Library Assistant	Clerical duties Check of all collections, bar-coding, labelling and covering books Annual stock-take Provide daily loans and returns from the library collections Assist Librarian additionally as requested
Myna bird cage construction	Assist in the construction of myna bird cages Ensure the work room is kept clean, tidy and free from hazards
Painter	Prepare, paint and finish interior surfaces of cell block walls, ceilings and doors

Position	Duties include (but not limited to):
Recycling	Empty recycling bins throughout AMC Clean bins Sort Recycling into various receptacles e.g. organics, green waste, recycling and landfill Compress cardboard
Teacher's Assistant	Research and compile the literacy and numeracy education package for delivery to low literacy detainees Provide literacy and numeracy tutorial support to fellow detainees
Tutor	Clerical duties Assist directly with the training of level 1 and 2 detainees Supervision of fellow students Provide assistance to other detainees with regard to computer use, literacy, numeracy Support education staff
Unit delegate	Liaise with Unit staff on a regular basis regarding any Unit/Centre issues of concern Collect, collate and report all WH&S issues Mentor/counsel employed detainees on their work performance Attend monthly meetings
Unit kitchen	Keep appliances and kitchen area in cell blocks clean Clean tables and chairs
Grounds maintenance	
Labourer	Weed and remove any unwanted plants as directed Prepare soil for replanting as directed Distribution of new plants as directed
Mower	Lawn mowing of grass areas with ride-on mowers Remove clippings Maintain equipment Pruning of trees and shrubs. Fertilising of trees and shrubs. Pest management activities using horticultural chemicals
Leading Hand	Work team supervision Ensuring serviceability of Grounds Maintenance equipment Provision of garden maintenance and landscape technical skills Liaising with and support of Grounds Maintenance Officer

TRC	
General services - Domestic cleaner	Clean floors, windows, patios, outside smoking areas Sweeping all concreted areas Cleaning AMC vehicles
General services - Garbage run	Empty bins in TRC yard, facilities building Recycling sorting Pressure wash bins
General services/Grounds maintenance	Lawn mowing of grass areas with ride-on mowers Pruning of trees and shrubs Fertilising of trees and shrubs Pest management activities using horticultural chemicals Planting of trees and shrubs Slashing of natural grass areas using the tractor Weeding of garden beds Lawn mowing of grass areas with push-mowers

Grounds maintenance - Machinery	Lawn mowing of grass areas with ride-on mowers Slashing of natural grass areas using the tractor. Trimming of lawn edges Pest management activities using horticultural chemicals
General Services – Stores/Kitchen hand	Receive goods Clean appliances Check temperature controlled Goods Pick and pack AMC Kitchen orders Pick and pack weekly Cottage orders Empty rubbish bins to hopper Use forklift to unload trucks as required Cleaning
General Services - Stores (Bulk)	Clean cool rooms and portable trailer Receive goods Check temperature controlled goods Pack bulk meats Pick and Pack AMC kitchen/cottage orders General cleaning duties

Alexander Maconochie Centre—drug tests (Question No 278)

Mr Wall asked the Minister for Corrections, upon notice, on 8 May 2014:

(1) What is the total number of drug tests by (a) urinalysis and (b) blood test conducted on (i) Corrections Officers and (ii) other staff in the Alexander Maconochie Centre, by month, between 1 December 2011 and 31 March 2014.

(2) How many tests indicated in part (1) returned a positive result and for what substances.

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

ACT Corrective Services does not conduct drug tests on staff.

Bimberi Youth Justice Centre—drug tests (Question No 279)

Mr Wall asked the Minister for Disability, Children and Young People, upon notice, on 8 May 2014:

(1) What is the total number of drug tests by (a) urinalysis and (b) blood test conducted on (i) Custodial Officers/Youth workers and (ii) other staff at the Bimberi Youth Justice Centre, by month, between 1 December 2011 and 31 March 2014.

(2) How many tests indicated in part (1) returned a positive result and for what substances.

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

(1) No youth workers (youth detention officers) have been drug tested under s239 of the CYP Act 2008, between 1 December 2011 and 31 March 2014.

(2) See answer to (1).

Environment—former petrol station sites (Question No 282)

Mrs Jones asked the Minister for the Environment and Sustainable Development, upon notice, on 13 May 2014:

(1) What steps are being taken to remediate the vacant former petrol station sites in Campbell and Watson.

(2) How far through the remediation process are these sites.

(3) When will remediation be complete.

(4) What plans are there for future development on each of the sites post remediation.

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

(1) What steps are being taken to remediate the vacant former petrol station sites in Campbell and Watson.

Watson (Block 1 Section 17)
Hydrocarbon impacted soils currently remain on-site pending commencement of soil excavations associated with the proposed basement development at the site. These impacted soils will be remediated at the time of excavation, in accordance with an accredited environmental Auditor approved remedial action plan, and will include the use of sustainable bioremediation technologies approved by the Environment Protection Authority (EPA).

Identified impacts to groundwater are being remediated by means of multi-phase vapour extraction technologies. This involves the extraction of hydrocarbon (petrol) impacted water and hydrocarbon vapours from the groundwater aquifer beneath the site.

EPA is awaiting submission of a statutory Site Audit Statement.

Campbell (Block 1 Section 49)
Hydrocarbon impacts to soil at the site have been remediated by means of EPA approved bioremediation technologies. Remediated soils from the site have been approved for beneficial reuse off-site or disposed to facilities suitably licensed by the EPA.

A human health and environmental risk assessment is currently being undertaken to determine whether groundwater remediation is required at the site. This will be considered by the independent Auditor in issuing the Site Audit Statement for the site.

EPA is awaiting submission of the independent Auditor's statutory Site Audit Statement.

(2) How far through the remediation process are these sites.

Timeframes are determined by the respective site re-development programs.

Watson
Soil remediation is yet to commence.

Groundwater remediation is nearing completion; however, pending the results of the human health risk assessment for the site mitigation measures may be required to be built into the proposed building structures to mitigate any ongoing on-site vapour risks. Once completed, including any recommendations regarding mitigation measures required, this will be provided to the independent Auditor for review.

Campbell
EPA records indicate that soil remediation at the site is complete.

A human health and environmental risk assessment is currently being undertaken to determine whether groundwater remediation is required at the site. Once completed this will be provided to the independent Auditor for review.

(3) When will remediation be complete.

Watson
The developer of the site has advised that on-ground remedial works are expected to be complete in the latter half of 2014.

Campbell
Pending a favourable human health and environmental risk assessment it is understood remediation at the site is complete and a Site Audit Statement from the independent Auditor could be submitted to the EPA.

(4) What plans are there for future development on each of the sites post remediation.

Watson
EPA records indicate that development approval was issued by the ACT Planning Authority in December 2010 for "the erection of a two-storey building containing a shop, restaurant and offices with basement car parking and associated landscaping, paving and other site works" subject to conditions including completion of the environmental audit into the suitability of the site from a contamination perspective for the proposed and permitted uses.

Campbell
EPA records indicate that a lease variation was approved by the ACT Planning Authority in June 2009 to use the site for one or more of the following uses:

(i) ancillary use;
(ii) community use;
(iii) non-retail commercial;
(iv) residential use;
(v) restaurant, restricted to a maximum gross floor area of 300 square metres;
(vi) shop; and
(vii) veterinary hospital;

subject to conditions including completion of the environmental audit into the suitability of the site from a contamination perspective for the proposed and permitted uses.

Environment—former petrol station sites (Question No 283)

Mrs Jones asked the Minister for the Environment and Sustainable Development, upon notice, on 13 May 2014:

(1) Which vacant petrol station sites have "complex remediation issues", as you stated on 15 May 2013.

(2) What are the complex remediation issues.

(3) What action has been taken to ensure that the remediation process will be completed as quickly as possible.

(4) When will the remediation process be complete on each site.

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

(1) Which vacant petrol station sites have "complex remediation issues", as you stated on 15 May 2013.

The following vacant petrol station sites have complex remediation issues:
Blocks 16 & 17 Section 29 Braddon – Former Ampol Service Station
Blocks 1 & 2 Section 25 Griffith – Former Mobil Service Station
Block 10 Section 12 Higgins – Former Shell Service Station
Block 3 Section 41 Lyneham – Former Caltex Service Station
Block 13 Section 28 Narrabundah – Former Ampol Service Station
Block 1 Section 17 Watson – Former Mobile Service Station
Block 1405 Tuggeranong – Former Caltex Service Station

(2) What are the complex remediation issues.

As outlined in my statement of 15 May 2013, the remediation of some service stations can be very complex and potentially time consuming if, for example, contamination of groundwater has occurred and/or the location is geologically complex.

Groundwater impacts have been identified at each of the sites mentioned earlier.

Remediation at these sites is complex due the complex nature of the geology in the ACT. Groundwater in the ACT is typically stored in fracture rock aquifers. The groundwater in these aquifers is stored in the fissures, fractures and cavities within the bedrock. Access to the groundwater is greatly dependent on the size and nature of the fractures and their interconnections.

Where fractures and interconnections are 'tight', access to this groundwater can be difficult. When hydrocarbons permeate from the surface into these fractures it adsorbs (sticks) onto rock and soil particles making it very difficult to remove. As groundwater levels vary seasonally or, as has been the case recently in the ACT, where periods of drought have been followed by periods of heavy rain, these hydrocarbons "smear" onto the rock and soil surfaces making it even more difficult to completely remove them.

(3) What action has been taken to ensure that the remediation process will be completed as quickly as possible.

Whilst timeframes are determined by the development process, the Environment Protection Authority (EPA) constantly monitors the progress of all sites in the Territory undergoing remediation.

Where phase separated (free) hydrocarbon (PSH) product is identified at a site the EPA requires, consistent with nationally adopted criterion, that it all be removed as a matter of urgency due to the potential explosive nature of vapours associated with this material. Developers and Oil Companies understand the risks associated with this material and undertake the necessary remediation in a timely manner.

As explained earlier, due to the complex nature of our geology PSH can reoccur as hydrocarbons "smear" from the surrounding rock and soils move back into groundwater, with fluctuations in groundwater levels making the task complex and potentially time consuming.

Following the removal of PSH, hydrocarbons dissolved in the groundwater (dissolved phase impacts) must then be removed so as to remove any vapour risk associated with this material. The remediation (removal) of PSH and dissolved phase impacts is typically performed in the ACT by means of multi-phase vapour extraction (MPVE) technologies. This involves the extraction of hydrocarbon (petrol) impacted water and hydrocarbon vapours from the groundwater aquifer beneath a site. This is contemporary practice for this type of contaminant.

(4) When will the remediation process be complete on each site

As I have pointed out, remediation of sites with hydrocarbon impacts to groundwater is complex and will be completed as quickly as possible.

Below are anticipated completion dates provided to the EPA by the Developer/Oil Companies of each site:

Blocks 16 & 17 Section 29 Braddon – Late 2014 to early 2015

Blocks 1 & 2 Section 25 Griffith – 2015

Block 10 Section 12 Higgins – Late 2014

Block 3 Section 41 Lyneham – 2015

Block 13 Section 28 Narrabundah – 2015

Block 1 Section 17 Watson – Late 2014

Block 1405 Tuggeranong – 2015

These are subject to change depending upon the complexities encountered as outlined above.

Environment—former petrol station sites (Question No 284)

Mrs Jones asked the Minister for the Environment and Sustainable Development, upon notice, on 13 May 2014:

(1) When did the remediation process for the vacant former petrol station site in Chapman begin.

(2) When will the remediation for this site be completed.

(3) When will re-development for this site commence.

(4) What is the expected completion date of this re-development.

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

(1) Remediation commenced in March 2011 with the demolition of the building structures at the site. Soil remediation commenced following the removal of the fuel storage infrastructure in December 2012.

(2) Remediation of hydrocarbon impacts to soil at the site was completed in September 2013. Following validation works the independent Auditor issued his statutory Site Audit Statement, into the suitability of the site for the then proposed development, in December 2013. The Environment Protection Authority (EPA) endorsed the findings of this audit in December 2013.

Subsequent to the issuance of the December 2013 audit the site developer proposed a change to the development footprint of the site. As required by the conditions of the December 2013 audit, a subsequent review of the suitability of the site for this development was undertaken by the Auditor. The findings of this audit are expected to be submitted to the EPA for review and endorsement in mid to late 2014.

(3) On 4 March 2014 a development application was approved for the construction of twenty-four units with basement car parking. In accordance with the conditions of this approval, it will not take effect, until the lessee receives the final endorsement of the independent Auditors statutory Site Audit Statement from the EPA.

(4) The lessee will have two years to construct the development from the date that the approval takes effect.

Environment—former petrol station sites (Question No 285)

Mrs Jones asked the Minister for the Environment and Sustainable Development, upon notice, on 13 May 2014:

(1) What progress has your Directorate made with the lessee in finding a suitable development for the vacant former petrol station site in Page since your last update in May 2013.

(2) When does the extension of time granted to the lessee expire.

(3) If a suitable development has been found for the site, when will work commence.

(4) When will work be complete.

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

(1) In January 2014 ESDD approved a residential development for 7 three bedroom units and associated works.

(2) The extension of time will expire on 30 April 2015.

(3) Redevelopment of the site has already begun. Inspections by ESDD officers in March 2014 indicated that a concrete slab has been poured and initial sewerage and drainage systems are under construction.

(4) In accordance with the extension of time granted to the lessee, the Government expects works will be complete by 30 April 2015.

Environment—former petrol station sites (Question No 286)

Mrs Jones asked the Minister for the Environment and Sustainable Development, upon notice, on 13 May 2014:

(1) What is the status of the vacant former petrol station site in Rivett.

(2) Has a development been approved for the site.

(3) When will work on re-development of this site commence.

(4) When will re-development of this site be completed.

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

(1) The site has been fully remediated, and the lessee is currently marketing the land for an auction set for 5 June 2014. Currently there are no breaches of planning laws or of the Crown lease, and the purpose clause allows for multiple uses including non-retail commercial use, shops and multi-unit housing.

(2) There is currently no approved development for the site.

(3) Once a development is approved, the lessee will be guided by the commencement time in that approval.

(4) Once a development is approved, the lessee will be guided by the completion time in that approval.

Environment—former petrol station sites (Question No 287)

Mrs Jones asked the Minister for the Environment and Sustainable Development, upon notice, on 13 May 2014:

(1) What is the status of the vacant former petrol station site in Garran.

(2) When will work on the re-development of this site commence.

(3) When will on the re-development of this site be completed.

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

(1) The site has been fully remediated, and an inspection conducted by ESDD officers in March 2014 found that the buildings and other structures on the site have been demolished and excavation for the basement carpark has begun. There will be a two storey commercial development with basement car parking.

(2) As advised the redevelopment has already commenced.

(3) As a condition of the planning approval, the approved development shall be completed within 24 months after the date of the approval. This means the lessee has until 13 December 2015 to complete the development.

Environment—former petrol station sites (Question No 288)

Mrs Jones asked the Minister for the Environment and Sustainable Development, upon notice, on 13 May 2014:

(1) What is the status of the vacant former petrol station site in Braddon.

(2) When will work on the re-development of this site commence.

(3) When will on the re-development of this site be completed.

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

(1) Redevelopment has commenced to construct a six storey development for commercial and residential uses with basement car parking.

(2) Redevelopment has commenced.

(3) The lessees have recently provided ESDD with a program of works where they estimate completion of the development in January 2015.

Health—compensation claims (Question No 292)

Mr Coe asked the Minister for Health, upon notice, on 15 May 2014:

(1) How much has the Health Directorate paid to patients of the obstetrics department in medical compensation in each of the past 10 financial years.

(2) How many cases of medical compensation occurred in each of those years.

(3) What is the average value paid to each patient in each of those years.

(4) What is the annual cost of (a) external legal, (b) medical and (c) administrative services to assist in resolving medical compensation claims.

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

(1) These amounts reflect payments made by ACT Health for litigated medical negligence matters within the areas of obstetrics and gynaecology.

Financial Year payments made	Compensation paid for Medical Malpractice Claims
2003/2004	$152,500.00
2004/2005	$495,734.75
2005/2006	$257,155.91
2006/2007	$400,000.00
2007/2008	$233,863.06
2008/2009	$4,764,000.00
2009/2010	$985,000.00
2010/2011	$652,778.42
2011/2012	$4,863,258.78
2012/2013	$2,785,715.05

(2) This table reflects the number of obstetrics medical negligence claims received by ACT Health during the past 10 financial years. This data includes all claims within the areas of obstetrics and gynaecology.

Financial Year claim commenced	Number of Medical Malpractice claims
2003/2004	2
2004/2005	18
2005/2006	6
2006/2007	3
2007/2008	3
2008/2009	4
2009/2010	5
2010/2011	5
2011/2012	6
2012/2013	12

(3) This table reflects the average cost of medical negligence claims during the past 10 financial years based on the compensation payments identified at question 1. This amount can be grossly overestimated where high cost claims have been paid out in a given year.

Financial Year	Number of claims paid out in Financial Year	Average Compensation paid for Medical Malpractice claims
2003/2004	3	$50,833.33
2004/2005	3	$165,244.92
2005/2006	2	$128,577.96
2006/2007	1	$400,000.00
2007/2008	2	$116,931.53
2008/2009	5	$952,800.00
2009/2010	4	$246,250.00
2010/2011	5	$130,555.68
2011/2012	2	$2,431,629.39
2012/2013	2	$1,392,857.53

(4) Costs for external legal, medical or administrative services are borne by ACTIA for all insured claims and are all inclusive within the premium. For the minority of claims outside our insurance policy terms, the annual cost to ACT Health, based on an average of the last four financial years, for all medical negligence claims is $6,365.80.

Commerce and Works Directorate—staff (Question No 295)

Mr Smyth asked the Treasurer, upon notice, on 15 May 2014:

(1) Does the 2012-13 annual report of the Commerce and Works Directorate report that Shared Services Division has 918 staff; if so, what is the numeric breakdown of these staff in (a) information technology and (b) human resources services.

(2) Are the staff of the human resources services organised into teams by directorate; if so, how many are there in each team serving each directorate; if not, how are they organised and what are the numerical breakdowns.

(3) Are the staff of the information technology services organised into teams by directorate; if so, how many are there in each team serving each directorate; if not, how are they organised and what are the numerical breakdowns.

(4) What is the number of staff by classification and/or grade of the (a) information technology and (b) human resource services.

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

(1) Yes. Of this:

(a) Shared Services Information Technology (SSICT) staff numbers are 424.

(b) Human Resources Services (HRS) staff numbers are 216.

(2) Within HRS pay teams are organised by Directorate. This structure is likely to change in 2014 as a result of the implementation of the Administrative and Related Enterprise Agreement. The structure of the pay teams totalling 74 is as follows:

(a) Health Directorate - 26 staff divided into three teams;

(b) Education Directorate and CIT - 22 staff divided into three teams;

(c) Community Service Directorate - a team of five;

(d) Territory & Municipal Services Directorate and the Environment and Sustainability Development Directorate - a combined team of four and ACTION a division of Territory & Municipal Services - a dedicated team of five;

(e) Justice and Community Directorate - a team of six; and

(f) Chief Ministers & Treasury Directorate, Commerce & Works Directorate, Economic Development Directorate, EPIC, The ACT Auditor General Office, Contract Executives, Ministers and their staff - a team of six;

In addition to these teams, there are other direct support functions totalling 16 that are not directly aligned to Directorates. These are:

(a) A Workers Compensation team of 10 staff; and

(b) A Superannuation team of six staff.

There are also other support functions that are not Directorate specific comprising the balance of the 126 staff.

Inclusive of SS HRS staff servicing Directorates specifically the breakdown by function of the 216 SS HRS staff base is as follows:

Function	**Headcount**
Payroll and Personnel	96
Recruitment Services	16
Information and Data	16
Employee Relations and Training	20
HR Systems	14
Salary Packaging	11
Record Services	35
Territory Records Office	6
Executive Support	2
Total	**216**

(3) Of the 424 SSICT staff, there are nine teams that service Directorate specific requirements including CIT. The numeric breakdown for SSICT staff members is as follows:

(a) Health Directorate - 58;

(b) Education Directorate and CIT - 45;

(c) Economic Development Directorate and Legislative Assembly - one;

(d) Community Service Directorate - 11;

(e) Territory & Municipal Services Directorate - nine;

(f) Environment & Sustainability Development Directorate - five;

(g) Justice & Community Directorate - 24; and

(h) Chief Minister's & Treasury and Commerce & Works Directorates - 15.

The remaining 256 staff members are deployed across SSICT serving all Directorates and are organised by ICT business functions in Branches.

Inclusive of SSICT staff servicing Directorates specifically the breakdown by function of the 424 SSICT staff base is as follows:

Function	**Headcount**
Business Development	37
Business Application Management	246
Infrastructure Services	87
Operations	16
Security	13
Customer Engagement & Business Analysis	6
Solutions Architecture	3
Executive support including Graduates	16
Total	**424**

(4) The numbers of staff by classification and/or grade of (a) information technology and (b) human resource services is as follows:

(a) Information Technology (SSICT)

Classification	**Classification Headcount**
Administrative Services Officer 1	1
Administrative Services Officer 3	5
Administrative Services Officer 4	15
Administrative Services Officer 5	30
Administrative Services Officer 6	32
Contract Executive	5
Graduate Administrative Assistant	10
Information Technology Officer 1	51
Information Technology Officer 2	87
Information Technology Officer Trainee	4
Senior Information Technology Officer A	2
Senior Information Technology Officer B	17
Senior Information Technology Officer C	66
Senior Officer Grade A	22
Senior Officer Grade B	28
Senior Officer Grade C	49
Total	**424**

Human Resources (HRS)

Classification	Classification Headcount
Administrative Services Officer 1	12
Administrative Services Officer 2	24
Administrative Services Officer 3	4
Administrative Services Officer 4	88
Administrative Services Officer 5	3
Administrative Services Officer 6	43
Contract Executive	1
Graduate Administrative Assistant	1
Senior Officer Grade A	7
Senior Officer Grade B	7
Senior Officer Grade C	26
Total	**216**

Questions without notice taken on notice

Hospitals—bed occupancy rates

Ms Gallagher *(in reply to a question and a supplementary question by Ms Lawder and Mr Hanson on Thursday, 15 May 2014)*: Every year ACT Health reviews its Strategic and Accountability indicators.

The 2013 review resulted in ACT Health changing the bed occupancy target to 90% (while still maintaining the long term target at 85%) due to the demand for inpatient services.

Strategic and Accountability Indicators are included each year in the Territory's Budget Papers.

Alexander Maconochie Centre—execution of search warrants

Mr Rattenbury *(in reply to a supplementary question by Mr Hanson on Thursday, 15 May 2014)*: There have been four search warrants executed by ACT Policing in the AMC in the last 12 months. All four were executed on the evening of 13 May 2014.

Environment—biodiversity offsets policy

Mr Rattenbury *(in reply to a supplementary question by Mr Smyth on Wednesday, 14 May 2014)*: As per the conditions of the approval decision for the development at Ngunnawal 2C, which is available of the TAMS website, an offset has been established at Bonner 4 East which is now included as part of an extended Mulligans Flat Nature Reserve. As environmental offsets are designed to bring long term biodiversity outcomes, an analysis on the delivery of these outcomes cannot yet be completed as the Ngunnawal 2C offset has only been in place for a relatively short period of time. However, TAMS manages this environmental offset in accordance with the Bonner 4 East Offset Management Plan and reports against Commonwealth conditions on an annual basis.

Initially, $200,000 was made available to implement the actions outlined in the Offset Management Plan. Approximately $150,000 is remaining and will be allocated over the coming years to additional biodiversity programs in line with the Management Plan.

Environment—biodiversity offsets policy

Mr Rattenbury *(in reply to a question and a supplementary question by Ms Lawder on Wednesday, 14 May 2014)*: A report demonstrating how the ACT Government has complied with the conditions in the approval decision for Ngunnawal Estate 2C during 2013-14 was submitted to the Commonwealth Government on 30 April 2014. Once approval is received from the Commonwealth Government the report will be available on the TAMS website.

As per the conditions of the approval decision for the development at Ngunnawal 2C, a management plan was developed for the offset at Bonner 4 East which is now included as part of an extended Mulligans Flat Nature Reserve. As previously advised the offset management plan is available on the TAMS website at:
http://www.tams.act.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0003/594102/Bonner-4-East-Offset-Management-Plan.pdf

Transport—Woden bus depot

Mr Rattenbury *(in reply to a question and a supplementary question by Mr Coe on Wednesday, 14 May 2014)*: The Woden Bus Depot remains in use by both a government and a number of non-government tenants while the tanks are being removed. The area surrounding the tanks has been isolated and alternative access arrangement implemented allowing the tenants to operate as usual during the course of the tank removal program.

Environment—Molonglo Valley annual report

Mr Barr *(in reply to a question by Ms Lawder on Thursday, 15 May 2014)*: Public release of the Molonglo Valley Plan for the Protection of Matters of National Environmental Significance Annual Report 2012-13 has not yet occurred due to delays in the coordination and receipt of input.

In order to progress the matter responsibility for coordinating, drafting and delivering the report has been transferred to the Office of the Coordinator-General within EDD. The Annual Report has now been prepared and delivered to the Commonwealth Department of the Environment for review and endorsement. Upon endorsement by the Commonwealth, the report will be published on the EDD website.

The Office of the Coordinator-General is currently drafting the 2013-14 Annual Report, which is on track.

Construction—Hewatt Earthworks

Mr Barr *(in reply to a supplementary question by Mr Smyth on Tuesday, 13 May 2014)*: The answer to the Member's question is as follows:

Contract #	Contract	Amount ($)	Directorate	Execution Date	Expiry Date	Status
2013.21048.110	Horse Park Drive Extension - Burramarra Avenue to Mirrabei Drive	9,007,966.66	Economic Development Directorate	26/02/2013	31/10/2015	Work has re-commenced on site. Anticipated completion in accordance with the costs and program laid out in the budget
2012.19125.338	Horse Park Drive Extension to Moncrieff Group Centre	16,903,438.27	Economic Development Directorate	03/07/2012	15/04/2015	Work has re-commenced on site. Anticipated completion in accordance with the costs and program laid out in the budget
2011.15244.320	Molonglo Infrastructure - - Cotter Road / Kirkpatrick Street Intersection Reconstruction	9,072,600.03	Economic Development Directorate	20/10/2011	25/07/2013	Completed and in Defects Liability Period
2012.20891.310	Exhibition Park in Canberra (EPIC) Summernats Burn-Out Track Extension	300,703.70	Territory & Municipal Services Directorate	31/10/2012	14/12/2014	Completed
2013.21704.110.05	Panel of Civil Contractors	0	Economic Development Directorate	09/05/2013	13/05/2014	Panel deed terminated on 13 May 2014
2012.18038.320	Sutton Road Pavement Rehabilitation – Separable Portion 1	2,108,002.54	Territory & Municipal Services Directorate	04/04/2012	01/07/2013	Completed and in Defects Liability Period
2010/13215.320	Kings Highway Southern Deviation	13,895,312.52	Territory & Municipal Services Directorate	22/12/2010	18/04/2013	Completed and in Defects Liability Period
2010.11643.430	Molonglo Infrastructure Stage 1A (Molonglo North South Arterial Part 1 and North Weston Pond)	38,250,934.43	Territory & Municipal Services Directorate	21/01/2010	05/09/2012	Completed and in Defects Liability Period