



Debates

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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.

Marriage—definition
Paper and statement by member

MR WALL (Brindabella): I seek leave of the Assembly to table a petition from some Australian Indigenous elders and to make a brief statement.

Leave granted.

MR WALL: I present the following paper:

Marriage—Copy of petition from Indigenous elders (illegible).

Joining us in the chamber this morning are representatives of Indigenous communities from around our country who have come to Canberra to present a petition to the Prime Minister defending the traditional definition of marriage and highlighting the importance of the traditional definition of marriage amongst Indigenous culture. We welcome them here to our Assembly today. They ask that a copy of the petition be presented in this place as an out-of-order petition, so that the Assembly can also take note that there is a wide and diverse range of views on the issue of marriage, not just within the ACT but around the country.

I am happy to welcome those members of the Indigenous community here and also make mention of the Canberra house of prayer, who have helped facilitate their time and presence in Canberra and have been giving them some much needed support whilst they have been here.

The Uluru bark petition is a petition to the Prime Minister, the House of Representatives and the Senate and the ACT government declaring that the Aboriginal people, as first nation people of this great southern land, and in support for marriage between a man and a woman as something very sacred to Aboriginal people, are calling on the rejection of the redefinition of marriage because marriage to them is between a man and a woman, is sacred and is to be treasured. Once again I welcome you to Canberra and to the Assembly, and thank you for taking the time to join us this morning.

Health, Ageing, Community and Social Services—Standing Committee
Report 6

DR BOURKE (Ginninderra) (10.03): I present the following report:

Health, Ageing, Community and Social Services—Standing Committee—Report 6—Inquiry into the exposure draft of the Drugs of Dependence (Cannabis Use

for Medical Purposes) Amendment Bill 2014 and related discussion paper, dated 10 August 2015, together with a copy of the extracts of the relevant minutes of proceedings.

I move:

That the report be noted.

On 7 August 2014 Mr Shane Rattenbury MLA presented the Drugs of Dependence (Cannabis Use for Medical Purposes) Amendment Bill 2014 exposure draft—the draft bill—in the Assembly, along with a discussion paper prepared by the ACT Greens dated July 2014 entitled “Medicinal Cannabis”.

The draft bill and discussion paper were referred to the Standing Committee on Health, Ageing, Community and Social Services for inquiry and report. The committee received 35 submissions from a range of stakeholders. The committee also held public hearings on 13 and 31 March 2015 and on 9 April 2015, and heard from a range of individuals and organisations as well as government officials.

The committee also attended a conference on 23 September called “Better understanding evidence-based options for medicinal cannabis in the ACT”, which was co-hosted by the ACT Alcohol Tobacco and Other Drug Association ACT, the Public Health Association of Australia and the AIDS Action Council. Some members of the committee also attended the ATODA drug policy forum held on Tuesday, 10 March 2015, presented by Professor Beau Kilmer. The forum was called “What will we need to do to keep a legal therapeutic cannabis market separate from the illegal market and the implications of the USA experience for ACT policy, legislation and practice”.

The committee also met with the New South Wales Legislative Council’s General Purpose Standing Committee No 4 of their 55th parliament, which discussed the key findings and learnings from their 2013 inquiry into the use of cannabis for medical purposes.

The evidence presented to the committee does suggest that cannabis has medical potential and that the ACT should therefore look further into the regulation, costs and medical trials needed to progress a medicinal cannabis scheme. The committee made seven recommendations covering a range of matters. Most notably, the committee recommended that the ACT Legislative Assembly reject the proposed Drugs of Dependence (Cannabis Use for Medical Purposes) Amendment Bill 2014. The committee was of the opinion that the draft bill was naive and ill considered.

Whilst the committee does support the compassionate principle behind the bill and respects the concern to help those in need, especially those who are terminally ill or have serious medical conditions, unfortunately the bill does not provide a workable regulatory framework or a proper means of supply. The bill also raises significant medical, legal and public health risks, and under any scheme there needs to be an assurance of a quality supply of medicinal cannabis.

The committee supports a national approach to medicinal cannabis, suggesting that state, territory and commonwealth governments work together on advancing a national scheme as well as clinical trials of cannabis-based pharmaceutical products and crude cannabis. I also draw the Assembly's attention to the recent tabling in the Senate of the standing committee on legal and constitutional affairs report on the Regulator of Medicinal Cannabis Bill 2014, which also supports that approach.

The committee also made recommendations which included support for medical research on cannabis and cannabis products as well as on access to cannabis-derived or synthesised pharmaceutical products. The committee has outlined a number of features that it felt should form part of any medicinal cannabis scheme, including the use of government-sourced or controlled cannabis, the issuing of a prescription from a medical practitioner, and ongoing education and training for medical practitioners and the community.

The committee recommends that if the ACT government acts independently of the commonwealth or other state and territory jurisdictions on a medicinal cannabis scheme it needs to address the regulatory concerns raised in this report.

I thank my fellow members of the committee—Mr Andrew Wall MLA, deputy chair, Ms Nicole Lawder MLA and Ms Meegan Fitzharris MLA, as well as Ms Yvette Berry MLA, who was a member of this committee during the initial period of the inquiry. I appreciate their diligence and fulsome cooperation in the inquiry and their work towards the consensus which the committee reached on this potentially divisive topic. I thank the secretary of the committee, Nicola Kosseck, for her insights and fine work in bringing this report to fruition.

I appreciated hearing from the witnesses who gave evidence, and especially those who shared their heart-wrenching stories of struggling to find relief for conditions where conventional drugs and therapies have failed or were simply inadequate. Some had resorted to use of cannabis for medicinal purposes and found some relief. Others wished to try it but did not want to break the law or use a drug where there is much contradictory medical and anecdotal evidence.

The evidence presented to the committee does suggest that cannabis has medical potential, and the ACT should therefore look further into those regulations, costs and medical trials needed to progress a medicinal cannabis scheme. However, the committee recommended, as I said, that the government reject the draft bill.

We heard from a number of witnesses, including the Chief Police Officer, who spoke frankly of the dangers of an unregulated, essentially unpoliceable, regime as presented in the draft bill. As I said, whilst we support those compassionate principles for those who are terminally ill or have serious medical conditions, we need a proper regulatory framework.

I note that this has been a long and hard piece of work for the committee. I thank all those involved who have given us a way forward, and particularly the recommendations that I have mentioned already from the Senate standing committee,

which enabled us to approach this as a national issue rather than having to do something on our own. I commend the report to the Assembly.

MR WALL (Brindabella) (10.11): I would like to echo some of Dr Bourke's comments in thanking the committee secretary, Nicola Kosseck, for her tireless efforts in assisting the committee during this inquiry. Not only was it a fairly controversial issue for many people within the community but it was also one that invoked great discussion and a wide number of submissions. There was a fairly substantial number of submissions, totalling about 35. Having regard to the difficulty of managing a committee that had some very diverse views on this issue, I think it is a testament to how the committee has been structured and how the committee is run. On this issue specifically, the delivery of report No 6 of the health committee brings together the common ground that we could find between the four individual members of the committee.

The report points out the need for further research in a clinical setting and also in research trials to determine the efficacy of cannabis for treating medical illnesses. I refer also to recommendations 3, 4 and 6, that state that the ACT government should be focusing on delivering a national scheme rather than on the preference of going it alone.

Recommendation 5 highlights that there are significant flaws with the draft bill which was submitted by the Greens, around which we were asked to conduct the inquiry. Certainly, having regard to my personal experience of this inquiry, my view on the issue has changed and transformed from various positions as the inquiry evolved. As with so many things, you go into it with a pre-conceived position. As you hear evidence, have discussions and talk to people on all sides of the debate—those in favour, those ambivalent and those vehemently opposed—you start to get a better understanding and a better feel for the issues. Certainly my position on this has changed somewhat over time.

It was also interesting to have some personal interactions with people who I knew while growing up and who have delved into the world of medicinal cannabis, in contrast to what the law stipulates, and to see what effect that has had on them as individuals compared to the person that I knew while growing up. That too plays a part in forming a view on what is the right way to go when it comes to medicinal cannabis.

I suggest to members that the report the committee has put forward under the chairmanship of Dr Bourke is quite comprehensive. It addresses a large number of issues, from supply, to use, to how it should be distributed under a potential scheme and, most importantly, the fact that the scheme should be done in conjunction with a national approach.

The committee waited for some considerable time in anticipation of the Senate delivering their report into a medicinal cannabis scheme. Even on the day of deliberations we were still waiting for that report to come through. We were hoping for an inquiry of the commonwealth parliament to guide some of our recommendations and a way forward. Unfortunately, the stars did not align to allow

that to happen. I hope members do find, in perusing this report, some good ways of alleviating some of the concerns around a medicinal cannabis scheme, while also taking particular note of the safeguards that need to be introduced to ensure that it is a safe scheme and that there is not leakage.

That was one of the biggest concerns, raised particularly by the Chief Police Officer, who indicated that there were significant concerns regarding individuals growing and using their own cannabis or acquiring it off the streets from the black market, in that it should be through a controlled process or a controlled supply chain. They are things that we need to be conscious of. There will always be the propensity, when you are dishing out what is a black market substance for medical purposes, as to what the risks might be of that ending up in the wrong hands and being used by those that should not be acquiring it.

Once again I say thanks for the 35 submissions that we received, the witnesses that came before the committee and shared some very personal stories, and also the direction from the committee secretariat, under Nicola Kosseck, in putting together this comprehensive report.

MS FITZHARRIS (Molonglo) (10.15): I join today with my colleagues on the committee and thank all the people who contributed to the discussion of this issue: to Mr Rattenbury in the first instance for his draft bill, to the specialist adviser, Professor Arnold, to all the submitters and witnesses, to my colleagues on the committee, and, of course, as Dr Bourke outlined, to Nicola Kosseck for her fine work in pulling together what I think is a comprehensive and very thoughtful report for the committee.

I valued the opportunity for the committee to inquire into this issue. It is important that we ensure people who are suffering and in pain, especially those nearing the ends of their lives, have access to the services and products they need to ease pain and ease suffering.

I joined this committee at its halfway point, but I was able to be part of all of its hearings and deliberations. I started out very open to this issue and very open to the idea that medicinal cannabis should be accessible to people suffering ongoing and severe pain from their medical conditions, especially those nearing the end of their lives. But I also took into this committee a serious intent, and it is one that I will do throughout my time in this Assembly—that is, to seriously weigh up the issue, to examine its opportunities and risks, to take the wide view and understand what it means in practice to make a significant policy change—in this case legalising medicinal cannabis—and to examine a piece of legislation that enables this policy intent to be realised.

We must look at what it means in practice to develop legislation and regulation that enables such a significant policy change, and we must always have the wellbeing and success of individuals and our community as our core driving principle. This is always, though, a balancing act. As members have noted, this was a hard task. We all learned along the way, and other members of the committee have raised this morning the diversity of views that were presented to us.

The committee could not support the draft bill in its current form. For reasons my colleagues, in particular Dr Bourke, have outlined, we were unable to support this bill on a number of grounds. Mr Rattenbury in a subsequent submission to the committee asked two important questions, and I took them very seriously as well: what level of imperfection is tolerable in exchange for allowing sick and dying people access to a treatment that can assist and help relieve suffering and, secondly, what action do we take while waiting for the completion of clinical trials or for TGA-approved drugs or for a coordinated model of government supply?

Supply is, indeed, a key issue. If we enable supply through the proposed methods in the draft bill, we support some current users—I should add that we heard it is clear not all current users would have been eligible to access the scheme under the draft bill—but we open up exposure to other users currently not with access to the scheme.

There were technical details which, again, crossed the threshold in my view of what is tolerable for the broader community. I was surprised at the level of community input; I had expected more from users of medicinal cannabis. As a result, it was unclear how many people currently use cannabis for medicinal purposes and certainly how many would use it for the purposes that would have made them eligible for legal use under the scheme. Of course, for those suffering terminal illnesses, I was very aware that they may have passed and could therefore not come before the committee and, equally, that there would be many people who would not want to go public with their use of cannabis.

I have some glimpse into the daily pain of people suffering. One contributor suffers ankylosing spondylitis, something my dad has lived with for over 50 years. To say my dad is a bit of a trooper on this is an understatement, and I know he is in pain every day. Some days are better than others.

On the question of the ACT going it alone, we could have gone alone. I do not believe in the perfect outweighing the good, but our sheer size would make this extraordinarily difficult and costly. Cost is an issue, not an excuse. In every case it is the opportunity cost. What cost, for example, to establish our own scheme and what use could that funding be otherwise put to? The equity of the proposed draft bill would be profoundly inequitable. Could parents of a young child dying of cancer learn all the skill necessary to grow their own cannabis and could an elderly couple access the black market? Equity issues are important.

One contradiction I found in the evidence presented to us was that many proponents of medicinal cannabis told us lawmakers and bureaucrats should leave the details of the decision to patients and their practitioners. Yet the clear evidence from health professionals to the committee was that this was not something they endorsed. In that case we must find a better way, and lawmakers and bureaucrats have a role to play here. Bottom line: I think this was a bit of cop-out from some proponents, although I found evidence from the AMA that they were unaware of any doctor with a patient accessing medicinal cannabis slightly incredulous.

Health professionals want a more scientific approach. Some, I believe, may set their bar too high and this is where a trial like that about to get underway in New South Wales is valuable. I do not think trials are a cop-out. They should go down the path to developing a safe and consistent pharmaceutical product. It is clear to me that the illegality of cannabis has prevented proper research. We must find a way to change this. Drugs save lives, and although not part of the evidence to the committee, my reading of community debate is that sometimes we can be complacent about the research and development and effectiveness of pharmaceutical products in this country, as we have seen tragically recently around the debate on childhood immunisation and preventable deaths from whooping cough.

It is an irony—if it was not so serious it might be amusing—that many of the fiercest proponents of a science-based approach to climate change, for example, with whom I totally agree, do not find the same strength in their arguments on pharmaceutical products, for example, like vaccinations. I want to see the long-term goal of cannabis-based products that are rigorously researched and tested and become part of mainstream research.

Patients and those in pain and their families deserve treatments that are reliable, safe and proven. They need to know, especially if it is children. I acknowledge that it is a long way away, and if it were my child I am sure I would struggle with that wait. But progress is made in stages. Unfortunately, it was clear for me and the committee that the thresholds we were asked to weigh up, the action we were asked to consider, could not be crossed.

I want to thank again everyone involved, especially Mr Rattenbury for bringing this bill to the Assembly. It has started the conversation, one that is now national and widespread. I believe we have crossed the Rubicon on this issue; there is no going back from the genuine recognition that cannabis-based products can relieve enormous suffering, but the risk to users and the risk to our community, the imperfections, are too high to endorse this bill.

As the committee notes, we recommend the ACT government write to the commonwealth minister requesting further support is provided for affordability and access to Sativex and Marinol for more patients and for more guidance to medical practitioners. We recommend the poisons standard be amended to facilitate medical and scientific research into medicinal cannabis. We recommend the ACT government work with all other states and territories on further clinical trials, and I will be very interested to follow the New South Wales trial. We also encourage the government to work to make sure there are ACT patients who can access the trial if possible.

We also outline a number of significant regulatory concerns raised in this report. There are no simple answers to any of these concerns, most especially around supply but we must take these seriously and act with compassion in our hearts and our minds on the realities of a scheme that will work. Unfortunately, this bill did not get us there, but I am sure a national approach will. We should play an active role in this.

MS LAWDER (Brindabella) (10.24): I am pleased to make some brief comments about the inquiry into the exposure draft of the Drugs of Dependence (Cannabis Use for Medical Purposes) Amendment Bill 2014. As a member of the committee it was fascinating to hear the stories of those people who have had cause to use cannabis for medicinal purposes and the views of many other stakeholders involved. As a MLA and in other roles I have had in the community, including as a family member, I have heard many stories about people with a terminal illness or chronic disease and the compassionate grounds for allowing anything that will assist someone in those dire circumstances. I am sure many of us here have had similar approaches from people in the community.

As members of the committee we understand that some individuals who are suffering are keen to seek access to medicinal cannabis and indemnity from prosecution in order to help them manage their illness or condition. There are compassionate grounds that support that. But what I feel is really important is to have the evidence base to support that, and at this time it does not appear as though there is sufficient research and trials to make that case. I would like to see research and trials take place.

There is not unanimous community support in principle for a medicinal cannabis scheme, but I believe the support the committee heard outweighed the views against. It is also worth noting, though, that there are some health risks associated with the use of cannabis, both known and unknown at this point, especially with regard to long-term usage. The effects of long-term cannabis use are relatively unknown. Whilst the committee does not support the bill in its current form, it has been a really useful catalyst for the Assembly to have this discussion and move forward on the medicinal use of cannabis. That is a positive thing.

Of all the recommendations in the committee's report, the one I would really like to draw attention to is recommendation 6, which supports a national approach to medicinal cannabis and encourages the ACT government to continue to work with the commonwealth, states and territories on a national medicinal cannabis scheme. As some of my colleagues on the committee have outlined, we have been waiting for the report at the federal level which has not yet been made available. We heard strong support for a national approach from the AMA, ACT Policing and the Deputy Chief Health Officer. For a range of reasons, a national approach will be what suits the ACT best.

I thank my fellow committee members; it was a collaborative discussion we held with deliberative meetings. Thank you to Dr Bourke, Ms Fitzharris and Mr Wall and the previous committee member, Ms Berry, for their assistance. I also thank the secretary, Ms Nicola Kosseck, and Ms Jenny Mundy, Ms Sara Redden and Ms Lydia Chung for their assistance during both the public hearings and the deliberations of the committee.

Most especially I thank all of those who appeared or made submissions. For many of those who made submissions or appeared before the committee in the public hearings, they were very, very personal stories about people who had gone through one of the most traumatic times in their lives—parents of young children with terrible diseases, adults with elderly parents perhaps nearing the end of their lives and in terrible pain.

To those people who shared their personal stories, I applaud their bravery and courage in coming forward to talk about their use of something that is, for all intents and purposes, illegal at this time in the ACT. To those people, thank you so much for your willingness to share your views on how medicinal cannabis might work in the ACT.

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

Crimes Legislation Amendment Bill 2015

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

Title read by Clerk.

MR CORBELL (Molonglo—Deputy Chief Minister, Attorney-General, Minister for Health, Minister for the Environment and Minister for Capital Metro) (10.29): I move:

That this bill be agreed to in principle.

The Crimes Legislation Amendment Bill 2015 makes a number of important amendments to the criminal law of the ACT. The government is committed to continuous improvement to our criminal law. The amendments in this bill bring forward changes to ACT legislation as a response to issues and concerns raised by a range of stakeholders in the justice system including ACT Policing, the Aboriginal Legal Service of New South Wales and the ACT, Access Canberra and the commonwealth Director of Public Prosecutions.

I take this opportunity to highlight several key amendments in this bill. Firstly the bill includes important amendments to the Crimes Act 1900 by providing authority to police officers to take certain material from suspects under 18 years of age for identification purposes. This material includes fingerprints, palm prints, photographs and voice recordings. Magistrate approval for the taking of this material is required for any suspect under the age of 16 years, a young person who is in an impaired state or a young person who is not in police custody. Police officers are authorised to take material without a magistrate's order where the young person is aged 16 and 17 years of age at the time of committing the alleged offence and in circumstances where the young person is in police custody and not in an impaired state at the time the material is taken.

Where material is to be taken, a police officer is to inform the suspect about the purposes for which the material is required, the offence which the young person is believed to have committed or is charged with and that the material may be used as evidence in proceedings in relation to an offence. The material must also be taken in the presence of a person with parental responsibility for the child or young person if it is practicable to do so and the child or young person does not object. Where this is not practicable an interview friend is to be present when the explanation is given or the material taken. This amendment will streamline identification procedures used by police and ensure that the person is detained for a minimal amount of time while their identity is being determined.

The bill also makes a number of key amendments to the Crimes (Forensic Procedures) Act 2000 which have been raised by the Aboriginal Legal Service of New South Wales and the ACT and ACT Policing. The first amendment includes a requirement that a police officer, when intending to ask an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander person to consent to a forensic procedure, inform a suspect that the Aboriginal Legal Service will be notified. These amendments build on a significant body of law that makes special provision to protect Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and their rights in the context of their contact with law enforcement generally.

Secondly, a mechanism has been inserted in the act to allow an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander person to decline the presence of an interview friend or lawyer during a forensic procedure. This recognises that Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander people in police custody will at times have a lawyer assisting them in relation to another matter. Allowing an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander person to waive the right to have an interview friend or lawyer present will allow police officers to take material without delay in circumstances where it is appropriate to do so.

Thirdly, the definition of incapable in the act has been expanded to include adults who are incapable or temporarily incapacitated and unable to give consent to a non-intimate forensic procedure. This includes, but is not limited to, situations where the person is incapacitated by the effect of drugs, alcohol or sedation. The class of people authorised to give consent for a non-intimate forensic procedure on behalf of the incapable or temporarily incapable adult has also been expanded to include "close associates".

This new category of authorised people includes a domestic partner, a carer, a close relative or close friend of the incapable person. The close associate must be over 18 years old and have decision-making capacity. This amendment will streamline procedures and allow a broad class of people to provide consent where a person is incapable of making an informed decision and an authorised person cannot be located.

The bill also makes amendments to schedule 1 of the Bail Act to correctly reference part 9.1 of the commonwealth Criminal Code Act 1995 which reflects the change already made to commonwealth law for serious drug offences. This amendment gives effect to the original intention of the Bail Act by applying a neutral presumption for bail in relation to serious drug offences in the ACT criminal code. The amendments to the Bail Act raise important human rights issues which have been addressed in the explanatory statement.

The Bill also proposes amendments to the Crimes (Sentencing) Regulation 2006 to allow the use of victim impact statements for category 2 offences under the Work Health and Safety Act 2011. This will be limited to offences where there is exposure to a risk of death or serious injury or illness actually resulting in death, serious injury or illness. Currently industrial manslaughter under part 2A of the Crimes Act and category 1 offences under section 31 of the Work Health and Safety Act are the only offences that allow for a victim impact statement to be used. However, due to the high thresholds to prove these offences there are occasions where it is only possible to lay a category 2 charge, despite there being a death, serious injury or illness. This amendment will allow a victim impact statement to be used more often.

In addition to the amendments I have already mentioned, the bill also makes a number of minor amendments to criminal legislation to ensure efficiency and consistency within the criminal justice system. The bill provides extra protections and support to members of the community and makes tangible steps in promoting many of the government's priorities by extending appropriate protections to disadvantaged or vulnerable groups. I commend the bill to the Assembly.

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

Victims of Crime (Victims Services Levy) Amendment Bill 2015

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

Title read by Clerk.

MR CORBELL (Molonglo—Deputy Chief Minister, Attorney-General, Minister for Health, Minister for the Environment and Minister for Capital Metro) (10.37): I move:

That this bill be agreed to in principle.

I am pleased to present the Victims of Crime (Victims Services Levy) Amendment Bill 2015. This bill amends the Victims of Crime Act 1994 to implement a \$10 increase in the victims services levy. The bill increases the prescribed amount in section 24(2) of the Victims of Crime Act 1994 from \$30 to \$40. The victims services levy is imposed on adults who are ordered by the court to pay a fine in relation to an offence. A \$10 victims services levy was first introduced in 2007 and was last increased in 2013. The levy is also included within the prescribed amount for traffic infringement notices. The increase ensures those who offend also take responsibility for assisting victims through this modest levy.

The increase to the levy made by this bill was reflected in the 2015-16 budget and is projected to generate sufficient revenue to offset the administrative and transition costs of the new victims of crime financial assistance scheme. The Victims of Crime Commissioner will administer the new scheme to provide for holistic case management and support for victims of crime applying for financial assistance. The funding raised by the increased levy will cover the costs of additional staff in Victims Support ACT required to implement the new financial assistance scheme.

This scheme will make the process of accessing financial assistance more user friendly, timely and predictable for victims of crime. A proportion of the revenue will also be used for set up costs including office equipment and a future review of the scheme.

Schedule 1 includes technical amendments made under the government's technical amendment program to correct oversights in consequential amendments which meant that offences committed under the heavy vehicle national law and four parking

offences were not previously included in schedule 2 of the Victims of Crime Regulation 2000. These technical amendments will ensure that the victims services levy does not apply to any parking offences and that the victims services levy is consistent with the heavy vehicle national law. This bill contributes to improved support and access to justice for victims of crime in the ACT. I commend the bill to the Assembly.

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

Crimes (Child Sex Offenders) Amendment Bill 2015

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

Title read by the Clerk.

MR CORBELL (Molonglo—Deputy Chief Minister, Attorney-General, Minister for Health, Minister for the Environment and Minister for Capital Metro) (10.40): I move:

That this bill be agreed to in principle.

Today I am presenting the Crimes (Child Sex Offenders) Amendment Bill 2015. The purpose of this bill is to make a number of important amendments to the ACT's child sex offender laws. These amendments will further modernise the ACT's approach to the management of registered child sex offenders and provide ACT Policing with better tools to more effectively monitor offenders in the community and to administer the register.

Additionally the reforms proposed in this bill will enhance the police's ability to investigate and prosecute child sex offenders, supporting the primary purposes of the Crimes (Child Sex Offenders) Act 2005. Most importantly these amendments have been progressed with specific attention on the overarching objective of protecting the lives and sexual safety of children and their families in the ACT.

Today I will provide members with an overview of the amendments that the government is proposing and the policies that have driven these reforms. I will also provide members with information about the consideration that was given to operational and human rights implications during the development of the bill.

The purpose of the child sex offenders act is to reduce the likelihood that registered offenders will reoffend, to facilitate the investigation and prosecution of any future offences that registered offenders may commit, to prevent registered offenders working in child-related employment and to prohibit registered offenders engaging in conduct that poses a risk to the lives or sexual safety of children. To achieve this, chapter 4 of the act establishes the child sex offenders register which requires registered offenders to keep police informed of their whereabouts and other personal details for relevant periods as set out in the act.

This bill makes amendments to address issues raised by ACT Policing relating to the operation of the register and matters arising from national and international discussions about the best way to effectively monitor child sex offenders. For example, the efficacy of the available tools to monitor sex offenders has been the subject of ongoing national discussions. It is important to note that sexual offending against children is an incredibly complex issue and needs to be researched in greater detail.

It is also well documented in international and Australian studies that most child sex offenders are known to their victims. The 2005 Australian Bureau of Statistics personal safety survey indicated that of those who reported having been victimised sexually before the age of 15, 11.1 per cent were victimised by a stranger. More commonly child sexual offences are committed by a relative, a family friend, an acquaintance or neighbour or another known person.

In addition, since the child sex offenders act was notified on 29 June 2005 ACT Policing and their counterparts in other Australian jurisdictions have had the opportunity to assess the effectiveness of their registration schemes in the context of work on the Australian national child offender register and the benefit of information about operational experience in their local contexts. This has resulted in some jurisdictions making changes to their child sex offender laws to address monitoring and reporting issues unique to them. These discussions have provided ACT Policing with the opportunity to assess the effectiveness of our own scheme to identify potential amendments that would support their efforts to ensure and maintain the safety of children in the ACT.

The reforms strike an appropriate balance between the proposed police powers, the rights and safety of children and the community and the rights of registered offenders within the territory's human rights framework. The development of the proposals within this scheme was greatly assisted by consultation with a broad range of stakeholders including ongoing discussions with ACT Policing, the Director of Public Prosecutions and the Human Rights Commission about the operational and human rights implications of the proposals.

The amendments proposed by this bill fall into six broad categories, which are: amendments to introduce entry and search powers including access to encrypted information on an electronic device in relation to registered offenders, amendments to provide a power for the Chief Police Officer to apply for the registration of a previous offender, amendments to provide a power for the Chief Police Officer to apply to remove an offender from the register in limited circumstances, amendments to allow a young offender to apply to a sentencing court to not be registered, amendments to provide powers for the Chief Police Officer to issue public notices in limited circumstances and general amendments to streamline administration of the register.

I now turn briefly to each of these categories of amendment, firstly in relation to entry and search powers. The first category of amendment is the introduction of entry and search powers in relation to registered offenders which can include access to encrypted information on an electronic device. These amendments will allow a senior officer of the rank of sergeant or higher to apply to the Magistrates Court for a warrant for the purposes of verifying personal details reported by registered child sex offenders and confirm compliance with prohibition order conditions where applicable.

The government is introducing this practical amendment in order to enhance ACT Policing's ability to monitor registrable offenders and provide a further significant protection for the lives and sexual safety of children in the ACT. When issuing a warrant a magistrate must be satisfied on reasonable grounds that the registered offender has reported personal details incorrectly or breached an order prohibiting certain conduct or is likely to do either of these things.

The officer applying for the warrant will need to show why the registered offender is likely to report incorrectly or breach an order. This would include evidence that the registered offender has a history of similar breaches or was not cooperative with police on previous reporting occasions. The bill details the activity that is authorised by the proposed warrant, which includes searching premises and seizing things in or relevant to the warrant purposes. The warrant will also authorise an officer to seize other things that they believe on reasonable grounds to be connected with an offence punishable by 12 months imprisonment or more.

The bill clarifies that material obtained under the proposed entry and search powers is admissible in a proceeding under the child sex offenders act in relation to a class one or class two offence which is defined in the child sex offenders act and particularly relates to offences of a sexual nature against children. Evidence will also be admissible in relation to a proceeding under part 3.4 of the criminal code 2002 which deals with the provision of false or misleading information.

Limiting the admissibility of material obtained to these limited cases provides a balance of the rights of the offender to privacy with the rights of children to be protected against further sexual offences. The proposed maximum penalty for refusing to allow or assist police to enter premises will be imprisonment for five years, 500 penalty units or both. This penalty is consistent with other penalties in the child sex offenders act and provides a strong incentive for offenders to cooperate with police as they carry out their monitoring functions.

The bill also proposes that when making a warrant application a senior officer of the rank of sergeant or higher may apply to the court for an order requiring a registered offender to provide access to electronic data, to copy the data onto a storage device or to convert the data into documentary form. Although registered offenders are already required to routinely report details in relation to online profiles, this new power could require the registered offender to provide passwords and access codes to electronic devices.

Police require these powers to address continuous advancements in communications technology that provide offenders with secure access to potentially illegal material. This provision targets specific information particularly if held electronically that the offender may have hidden from an ordinary observer which the offender is required to unlock and provide access to police under the warrant.

If the offender refuses to provide access to electronic data, police are authorised to remain on the premises for up to four hours to attempt to access the information in question. This allows for the use of an expert who may need to use decryption

technologies to otherwise access inaccessible data. This time period can be extended to a maximum of eight hours if the court is satisfied that the information cannot be accessed within four hours. To ensure that this power does not unduly trespass on the privilege against self-incrimination, the bill proposes that the provision is accompanied by direct and derivative use immunity.

As the registered offender is compelled to provide this information to police or otherwise face criminal sanctions the material obtained under this power is not admissible in a proceeding other than a proceeding under the child sex offenders act or a proceeding under part 3.4 of the criminal code. This is consistent with other similar provisions in ACT law that compel a person to provide information that leads to disclosure of other information or evidence and aligns with the requirements under common law relating to the privilege against self-incrimination. The use of that further information is only permitted for strictly limited purposes.

If a registered offender fails to provide that assistance and is reckless as to the nature of the order they may be guilty of an offence punishable by up to 500 penalty units, imprisonment for five years or both. The offence provision provides strong incentives for registered offenders to provide the required assistance to police and also sends a strong message to offenders that their obligations throughout their reporting periods are serious and enforceable.

Turning to the amendments relating to the registration of a certain previous offender, the second category of amendments provides for the registration of a certain previously convicted child sex offender. Currently, the registration and reporting obligations in the child sex offenders act only apply to offenders who were convicted of an offence after the commencement of the act on 29 December 2005.

Accordingly, where there is insufficient evidence to support a further charge and conviction leading to registration, ACT Policing currently has no ability to monitor a person who has prior, historical convictions and poses an ongoing risk. The introduction of this power will support the purpose of reducing the likelihood that the person will reoffend and prohibit conduct that poses a risk to the lives or sexual safety of children. The intention of this amendment is to provide ACT Policing with tools to protect children and their families in specific circumstances where a person has been found guilty of a class 1 offence prior to the commencement of the act and continues to pose a risk to the lives or sexual safety of one or more people or of the community.

The bill outlines the matters that the court must consider before making a registration order in relation to a previous offender. These include the seriousness of the offending, the period since the offence was committed, the person's and the victim's ages and the difference in age between them when the person committed the offence, whether the level of risk that the person may commit another registrable offence outweighs the effect of the order on the person and anything else that is considered relevant.

Turning to removal from the register and non-registration, the third category of amendments will provide a power for the Chief Police Officer to apply to the Magistrates Court for the removal of a registered offender from the register and will also allow an offender who was a young person at the time of the offending to apply

for a non-registration order. The child sex offenders act imposes reporting obligations for a period of between four years and life, depending on the number, severity and timing of the offences committed and the age of the offender when an offence was committed.

These reporting periods are significant, appropriately reflecting the seriousness of child sex offences and the need to monitor those offenders who have committed sexual crimes against children. However, in certain circumstances the mandatory reporting period may be, or may become, inappropriate for individual registered offenders. The Chief Police Officer will be able to apply for the removal of a registered offender from the register in specified certain circumstances. This allows ACT Policing to account for the individual circumstances of certain registered offenders who, for all intents and purposes, should no longer be registered and subject to reporting obligations.

Determining the extent to which the registered offender's circumstances should be weighed up as part of this process is complex. This amendment will support the purposes outlined in section 6 of the child sex offenders act by ensuring that those offenders who are assessed as no longer likely to reoffend or engage in conduct that poses a risk to the lives or sexual safety of children are no longer required to report. As a result, ACT Policing will better use existing resources to monitor those registrable offenders who continue to present a risk to the community.

When making an application to remove an offender from the register the Chief Police Officer may take reasonable steps to identify and give notice of the proposed application to each victim of the registered offender. Prior to giving notice the Chief Police Officer must also consult with the Victims of Crime Commissioner about the process.

The notice will provide that the victim can make a written submission about the application which the Chief Police Officer will consider when deciding whether to make the application to the Magistrates Court. The submission may also be presented to the court by the Director of Public Prosecutions if the application is made. This will ensure that victims are given the opportunity to have their say on any proposal to remove an offender from the register.

If the Chief Police Officer makes an application, the court may make an order if satisfied on reasonable grounds that it would be inappropriate for the offender to remain on the register. When making this decision the court must consider a number of factors, including the severity of each offence that resulted in the offender being on the register, the level of harm to the victim and the community caused by each offence, the period for which the offender has been included on the register, any attempts at rehabilitation by the offender and whether the offender poses a risk to the lives or sexual safety of one or more people or of the community more broadly.

The third category of amendments also includes a proposal to allow an offender who was a young person at the time that the registrable offence was committed to make an application to not be registered. The purpose of this provision is to recognise that registration may not be appropriate in all circumstances.

This application is a matter for the defence at sentencing and requires the court to turn its mind to a set of considerations different to those outlined in the Crimes (Sentencing) Act 2005. These considerations include the severity of the offence and seriousness of the surrounding circumstances, the age of the person at the time of the offence, the level of harm to the victim and the community, attempts at rehabilitation, whether the person poses a risk to the lives or sexual safety of one or more people in the community and any other circumstances that the court considers relevant.

Turning to public notices, this fifth category of amendments gives the Chief Police Officer or the Deputy Chief Police Officer the power to issue a public notice about a registered offender, in limited circumstances, where they believe on reasonable grounds that there may be a risk to the lives or sexual safety of one or more people or of the community in general. The child sex offenders act currently prohibits ACT Policing or any other agency releasing information from the register as it is considered to be personal information for the purposes of the registration scheme. The purpose of this category of amendments is to ensure that ACT Policing can effectively monitor registrable offender activities and ensure that a registrable offender who is not meeting their reporting obligations is located, maintaining the safety of children and the community.

The amendments provide an appropriate balance between the need for police to protect the community while still necessarily protecting the identity and security of registrable offenders. This public notice would state that the person is required by police to answer questions. The power limits the offender's human rights to the least extent possible by also requiring that before a notice is published police must be satisfied that the offender has failed to comply with reporting requirements, cannot be located and that the applicant believes on reasonable grounds that publication of the notice will reduce that risk. The ACT government does not support, and will not introduce, laws to create a public sex offender register.

The effectiveness of the available tools to monitor sex offenders has recently been the subject of ongoing national discussion. At the Law, Crime and Community Safety Council meeting in October last year ministers agreed not to support a proposal to publish a national public register including the personal details of all convicted sex offenders. This is because available empirical evidence demonstrates that public registers are largely ineffective to prevent child sex offences and other sex offences. Ministers decided instead to continue to monitor evidence on the efficacy of schemes involving limited disclosure of sex offenders' details, such as those operating in South Australia and Western Australia, with a view to discussing that evidence at a later date.

Turning to general amendments, the category of general amendments further strengthens ACT Policing's ability to monitor registered child sex offenders and to ensure the safety of children and the community. The general amendments will create administrative efficiencies for ACT Policing, the Director of Public Prosecutions and the courts in carrying out their functions under the act.

These amendments include altering the fault element for failure to report annually from intention to recklessness and strict liability, the introduction of provisions to provide that a police officer may order that photographs be taken of a registered

offender in certain circumstances, providing that the Director of Public Prosecutions may apply for prohibition orders under chapter 5A of the act and amendments to ACT legislation to ensure that all references to child pornography are updated to read “child exploitation material”. (*Extension of time granted.*)

This bill engages a number of human rights. The bill engages and places limits on the rights to recognition and equality before the law, protection of family and children, privacy and reputation, freedom of movement, right to liberty and security of the person, fair trial and rights in criminal processes. The bill also supports and promotes the rights of children and others to the right to life and security of the person. The explanatory statement analyses these human rights issues at length and I encourage all members to consider it along with the bill.

In closing, the limitations contained in this bill are proportionate and justified in the circumstances. The limitations on rights are the least restrictive means available to achieve the purpose and to protect the human rights of others, in this case children and young people and their families. I commend the bill to the Assembly.

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

Corrections Management Amendment Bill 2015

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 Justice, Minister for Sport and Recreation and Minister assisting the Chief Minister on Transport Reform) (11.02): I move:

That this bill be agreed to in principle.

I am pleased to present the Corrections Management Amendment Bill 2015. The bill amends the process for random drug testing at correctional facilities. Currently, section 221 of the Corrections Management Act 2007 provides that random drug testing be used for statistical purposes only and that no record of the donor be kept. When originally enacted, the purpose of the provision was to obtain statistics about the prevalence of drug use within the prison that could be used to facilitate research papers or to inform operational policy.

ACT Corrective Services has found that a number of operational imperatives are frustrated by the current inability to identify random drug testing sample donors. For example, ACT Corrective Services has a duty of care for people who are suffering from a drug addiction as well as for other detainees who do not want to be exposed to drugs or the side effects of drug misuse.

As a result, the bill repeals section 221 of the Corrections Management Act and amends the drug testing provisions to provide that discipline and referral for

appropriate treatment and programs are appropriate and should be available for managing detainees who test positive as a result of random drug testing.

The amendment will allow random drug testing to be used to target drug use when identified and for offender management. The amendment will enhance Corrective Services' capacity to meet its duty of care obligations to detainees. In particular the amendment will improve Corrective Services' ability to case manage detainees, including providing rehabilitation and referral for treatment of detainees within the Alexander Maconochie Centre and on release.

The amendment will support the integrity of rehabilitation and related programs, including transitional release through approved leave from the AMC. Currently a number of programs are run at the AMC to address substance addiction and abuse amongst detainees. The amendment will inform how these therapeutic interventions should be focused in ACT correctional centres based on the substances being used in the AMC as well as ensuring that detainees with a substance abuse problem are identified and directed to appropriate treatment.

I have directed that the relevant policy regarding drug testing be examined by the AMC Health Policies and Services Advisory Group created in response to the Knowledge Consulting and Burnet reviews of service provision, including health services, in the prison. This will ensure that the ACT government maintains its strong commitment to the national harm minimisation principles and that any new referrals to rehabilitative or therapeutic services that arise as a result of this bill will be in line with best practice approaches.

Finally, the amendment will improve Corrective Services' ability to make evidence-based decisions in relation to prison operations and detainee management. The amendment does not require a person to be disciplined for returning a positive sample; rather, it provides another possible tool to support detainee management. If a positive result is returned from a random drug test and disciplinary proceedings follow, a detainee may request the decision of the presiding officer to be internally reviewed. Following this, an external review mechanism is available under the Corrections Management Act.

The amendment is proposed to commence six weeks after the act is notified so detainees can be informed of the change to procedure. Detainees will be made aware of changes to random drug testing provisions through appropriate mechanisms within the AMC. This typically includes written notification and discussion with the detainee delegates. The detainee handbook and induction process will also be updated, as appropriate, to reflect the policy and legislative change. Advice to detainees will be delivered in a way that ensures they understand their rights and obligations under the random drug testing regime.

This bill also clarifies that an interstate leave permit can be renewed for seven-day periods. Currently the legislation is silent on whether or not an interstate leave permit can be renewed for further seven-day periods. This amendment will ensure that appropriate mechanisms are in place to allow a detainee to stay interstate for a genuine purpose for a period longer than seven days. For example, a detainee may

require a mental health or other health service that cannot be provided in the ACT. Or it may be more appropriate for the detainee to receive treatment outside the ACT. In such cases, the detainee may require leave for a period longer than seven days.

A renewal of an interstate leave permit will be subject to the same safeguards that already exist in part 12.2 of the Corrections Management Act. In particular, under section 208(4) the director-general can make an interstate leave permit subject to any condition they believe on reasonable grounds to be necessary and reasonable. This may include a condition that an escort officer accompany the detainee.

Furthermore, the amendment will provide that the executive director of ACT Corrective Services must notify the director-general of the renewal of a leave permit for the fourth renewal and any subsequent times. This means that a leave permit can only be in place for 28 days before its renewal is brought to the attention of the director-general, but Corrective Services' flexibility to manage detainees is still retained. If a detainee does not agree with the decision-maker or opposes a condition of the permit, they may apply to have the decision reviewed by the decision-maker. Further appeal mechanisms are available under the Administrative Decisions (Judicial Review) Act.

The Children and Young People Act 2008 will also be amended in a similar way to allow interstate leave permits for young detainees to be renewed. A renewal of an interstate permit will be subject to the same safeguards that are currently available under division 6.8.2 of the act. The amendment does not affect the power contained in part 5.2 of the Children and Young People Act to transfer custody of the young offender to another jurisdiction.

I commend the bill to the Assembly.

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

Executive business—precedence

Ordered that executive business be called on forthwith.

Appropriation Bill 2015-2016

[Cognate bill:

Appropriation (Office of the Legislative Assembly) Bill 2015-2016

Cognate papers:

Estimates 2015-2016—Select Committee report

Estimates 2015-2016—Select Committee—government response]

Debate resumed from 12 August 2015.

Detail stage

MADAM SPEAKER: I remind members that in debating order of the day No 1, executive business, they may also address their remarks to executive business order of the day No 2.

Health Directorate—schedule 1, part 1.11.

MRS JONES (Molonglo) (11.10): I am very pleased to stand and talk on this area of the budget—in particular, mental health, this important and evolving area—to highlight some of the key failings that the government has when it comes to the issue of mental health. We know that across Australia approximately one in every five Australians will experience serious mental illness in any 12-month period. That is nearly 20 per cent of our population, which is why getting the care in this area right and appropriate is so very important.

If we look back on the area of mental health here in the ACT over the last 12 months, we can see several areas that are lacking and in need of urgent attention. We have the adult mental health unit, which is struggling to be staffed and which, during this period, has been deemed unsafe at times for nursing staff and community teams, who have been under massive pressure for years.

In September last year, I moved a motion calling on the government to:

- (a) review security and nurse safety of the Adult Mental Health Unit at TCH and for the review to be tabled in the Assembly no later than November 2014;
- (b) update the Assembly on the program for, and implementation of, improvements in both March 2015 and August 2015;
- (c) introduce permanent measures that will significantly reduce or prevent incidents of violence and abuse directed at staff; and
- (d) adopt a model of care that serves employee safety as well as patient care, and that neither one be weighted as superior to the other.

Either the review was not done or not taken seriously or the government have no strong commitment to the safety and wellbeing of their valuable nursing staff within the facility. During estimates this year the government clearly stated that they are concerned about staffing, recruiting and retention. Ms Bracher stated that it was the “biggest corporate risk” that needed to be managed in this area.

We know from the provisional improvement notice that was served at the adult mental health unit last year that this facility is far from safe. The hardworking staff suffered 57 assaults in the facility in the 12 months leading up to July last year.

We also know from estimates that we have a rising seclusion rate in the AHMU and we have aggression going up. Seclusions, as I said, are going up. It is just not good enough for those who are doing the heavy lifting, caring for those in our community with mental health concerns, to be placed in danger, to be assaulted and then to face mental health concerns themselves. We need to do better than this. I understand that the department is planning to bring in something for managing aggression—a plan of some sort. That was explained during the estimates hearing, but will this plan actually make our nurses safe at work?

With such a challenge in recruiting and retaining staff for the adult mental health unit, I have serious concerns as to how the impending secure mental health unit will be staffed and if the staff will be safe. Will they leave their homes each day, heading off to work, fearful that they might be attacked whilst doing their job? Has a clear plan been established as to how many staff will be needed for the new facility and how they will be recruited? Will we see a repeat of what has happened at the adult mental health unit, where not all the beds could be used in the initial stages because there were not sufficient staff?

The secure mental health facility, I am pleased to see, has finally had a contractor appointed. However, it is concerning that the time frame for the facility seems to continue to slip. This facility was originally announced in 2005 and then announced again in 2008 with an expected completion date of sometime in 2011. We are looking at a facility that may be completed over a decade after it was announced. How many people in our community have suffered over this time—struggling to access appropriate treatment and care while this project has been announced, re-announced and used to gain hope for those in need all over the community while being used for political point scoring.

I hope that we do not see the same thing that happened with the AMC as we head into next year's election. Those in the chamber will recall that the Alexander Maconochie Centre was opened with great fanfare and glossy ribbon cutting weeks before the 2008 ACT election to take advantage of a photo opportunity when it was not actually ready for inmates until March 2009. Yes, the minister stood there and cut the ribbon for the election campaign, with no clients in the facility until some nine months after the supposed opening. I hope we will not see a repeat of that kind of dishonesty.

I was surprised that the recommendation for a review into the number of patients within the AMHU suffering with drug-related or ice problems was rejected as a recommendation of the estimates committee. It is well known that the AMHU is overflowing with people who are struggling with ice addiction. As we start to learn more about the effect of ice in our community, I would have thought the government was willing to study how many people are flooding our mental health units with what is substantially a drug dependency issue rather than necessarily an underlying mental health concern.

Obviously in many cases those with ice and other dependency issues also suffer from mental health concerns, but the professionals in this area have explained that there is a real difference in the way that you treat and the way that cases present when they are organic mental health issues or exacerbated issues brought on by drug use. I note that additional funds have been allocated for drug-related problems, for ice management and for opiate overdose responses. It is a start. I hope it will help in redirecting addicts out of the AMHU so that it can be used for what it is designed for.

I note that \$26.1 million has been allocated over the next four years to mental health services. I hope the money will be spent on the services that are really needed. I am pleased to see that there is a plan for a Gungahlin regional community service and an early identification program for children with emerging mental health issues. There has been a serious lack of services for people in the Gungahlin area for some time. There has also been a lack of services for young people struggling with mental health issues across Canberra. I hope that this will start to deal with the ongoing issue.

I see that the mental health community teams are expected to increase their contacts with clients by 8,000 per annum as a result of the budget. I am hopeful that the additional funding and the promised 15 additional staff, including seven new staff for the CAT team, will happen soon. They are well overdue. I hope that they will ensure the wellbeing of clients and staff and a better outcome for all involved in that service.

Additional funding for mental health clients who are not eligible for the NDIS needs to be further explained. I will seek a briefing on this issue to ensure that clients are well informed as to what is available to them. As we see the rollout of the NDIS, we are starting to understand that it does not cover everybody who expected to be covered. This was a concern raised for some years on our side of the chamber.

Looking at the facility that Calvary has in the mental health space, ward 2N, I understand that ward 2N deals with some suicidal people but clearly not everyone. During the estimates hearings Mr Smyth raised the case of a young person who was admitted through ED to a general ward because 2N was full and, once beds were available, was discharged into the community rather than admitted to 2N, causing a suicidal young person to be left in the community without appropriate supervision, according to their family. The explanation given was that by having people cross two separate wards during their treatment period, the treatment period was, on average, longer. However, it seems to me that the desire for a shorter overall treatment period in this instance led to inadequate care for this young person.

In the same vein, while I was off on maternity leave I was at the Canberra Hospital with my young baby last month, and I sat with a mother who was there with her teenage daughter, absolutely distraught because she had been in EDs from Calvary to the Canberra Hospital with her suicidal daughter for a total of 13 hours without anyone being available to see her.

Fortunately, just as she reached her own limit of being able to cope and was about to walk out the door, she was taken through for assessment. I can only imagine how the mother's own mental health was being challenged as she waited and waited to seek help for her daughter. I was absolutely amazed that it would take 13 hours and two emergency departments to even start an assessment on her daughter. The proposed improvements to help the emergency department with patients exhibiting mental health concerns are a positive. I have heard from many families that they have struggled in getting appropriate help for their loved ones whilst waiting at ED.

In conclusion, there is in the budget only a very minor addressing of the staffing risks that we know are an ongoing concern in mental health. We do not have enough nurses and nurse practitioners to staff the facility that we have, let alone an additional facility. I note that the budget has—(*Second speaking period taken.*)

That the government has announced 10 scholarships to try and address this area seems a bit of a drop in the ocean when you think about the number of people that will be required to staff the facility. However, it is good to see. We see a start to the addressing of mental health patient needs in the two emergency departments, which is also probably quite overdue. We are seeing more long-awaited money for CAT and other community-based teams, and that is welcome.

In conclusion, there is an ongoing safety concern for staff at the adult mental health unit. Those are precious staff that are hard to come by; there is recognition of that in the scholarships that are being offered. More needs to be done to give them safety at work in accordance with our own occupational health and safety legislation in the ACT. The secure mental health unit is now 11 years behind schedule; I hope that it will be concluded soon.

DR BOURKE (Ginninderra) (11.21): Canberrans rightly expect governments to provide quality health services that keep pace with demand. This government is absolutely determined, in the face of pressure from federal liberal government cuts, to meet that expectation. In Belconnen, this government is planning for the future with a new public hospital and extensive upgrades to Calvary. The new University of Canberra public hospital will be a purpose-built subacute facility, providing rehabilitation, aged care and mental health care facilities. It will have 140 inpatient beds and 75 day places.

Importantly, its co-location with the University of Canberra campus will allow for new training and research opportunities. The government has chosen this model to meet the needs of a growing Belconnen and, indeed, a growing north side, keeping in mind what an ageing population means for health care. Construction will begin next year, and this budget also includes funds for the provision of 400 parking spaces at the site.

Calvary Hospital is Belconnen's most vital health facility, and the government is improving it with the upgrades and equipment that it needs to continue providing Belconnen and the north side with quality, modern hospital care. This budget invests \$12.4 million in Calvary upgrades, including: \$5.6 million for a complete refurbishment of the operating theatres, including new equipment; \$3.1 million for development at Calvary to enable 12 new acute beds; and \$3.7 million for new imaging services, including a second CT scanner.

Construction is also underway on the new five-storey car park at Calvary, which will have over 700 parking spaces. All of this follows on from the work this government has done in establishing the Belconnen nurse-led walk-in centre in 2014, part of the Belconnen Community Health Centre.

Another key initiative in the budget is funding to expand the hospital in the home program. This program provides medical and nursing support in the home environment so that people who have had surgery or other treatment can undergo their rehabilitation, to a large extent, at home. Funding in this year's budget allows for the expansion of hospital in the home by six bed equivalents across Canberra.

The initiatives for health in this budget continue the ACT Labor government's strong record of continual investment in our health system. In every budget, we have assessed the community's health needs, calibrated responses, and made significant new investments. I am proud to say that the initiatives in this year's budget respond to the needs of Belconnen residents and plan for the future.

MR CORBELL (Molonglo—Deputy Chief Minister, Attorney-General, Minister for Health, Minister for the Environment and Minister for Capital Metro) (11.24): I welcome the opportunity to speak about the health budget in this year's 2015-16 ACT budget. I am very pleased to speak about the continued investment this Labor government is making in the area of health services and the importance we attach to maintaining this investment.

The health of Canberrans will always be Labor's top priority and the 2015-16 ACT budget invests further in our health system. The budget alone invests \$1.5 billion to increase and support health services for the Canberra community—the biggest level of expenditure ever and nearly one-third of the total ACT budget. This means better services, better equipment, better facilities and more beds. The budget invests more than \$161 million in new health funding over four years to deliver better support, better services, better equipment, better facilities and more beds right across Canberra.

My priorities as Minister for Health are well known and my focus and my priorities will continue to be delivering hundreds of thousands of quality healthcare services across the health system, raising awareness of mental health issues and improving access to care for those who need it, ensuring that the health infrastructure program continues to enable Canberrans to get the right care at the right time in the right place, and promoting proactive health initiatives and steps to manage the growing level of obesity in our community.

In the ACT we are privileged to have a wonderful service and staff that provide high-level care to people around the clock, every day of the year. This budget will continue to fund the expansion of health services and improvements in service delivery to meet the needs of the Canberra community now and into the future.

We are investing \$40.6 million in funding for more beds and services. There is \$23 million for new general hospital beds at the Canberra Hospital and Calvary to open 16 new general acute beds across the public hospital system—12 of these at Canberra and four at Calvary public.

There is a continuation of the significant increase in hospital beds by the Labor government since coming into power in 2002. The 16 beds will mean up to 29 new full-time equivalent positions comprising doctors, nurses and other healthcare professionals. There is also funding for two new intensive care beds to come online at Canberra Hospital worth \$10.2 million for these beds and \$1.4 million for six new hospital in the home bed equivalents across both hospitals.

This budget also provides for care in the right places with more outpatient, primary care and community services. These services will assist in limiting the growth in hospital-based services and provide care in the most appropriate environment for a person's condition through greater integration of community, outpatient and primary care services. These include multidisciplinary clinics, increased medical staff for oncology services, the establishment of a central intake service, a new urgent ambulatory care service for specialist review and medical imaging, more subacute rehabilitation services, expansion of the pain management service, and non-government sector community and home-based care.

The budget also provides more support for women and children's services, with the opening of six new beds at the Canberra Mothercraft Society Queen Elizabeth II Family Centre. This centre provides invaluable services for families who are experiencing complex health and behavioural difficulties in the first three years of an infant's life. Canberra Hospital will also expand outpatient services to cater for increasing birth rates and paediatric demand. Women and children's services provided by the non-government sector will also be increased to assist the flow of patients out of the hospital sector into more appropriate community settings.

There is more money for elective surgeries. Elective surgery waiting times continue to be a focus for the government and this year's budget will provide a further increase in the number of elective procedures undertaken. \$14.8 million over two years will be provided for an extra 500 elective surgeries, taking the total to 12,500 a year. This means that numbers of elective surgery to be performed in this financial year will be at record levels. The additional 500 elective surgery procedures are scheduled in this coming financial year, with the major focus being within the specialties of orthopaedics and ear, nose and throat surgery.

Funding has also been provided for an additional 500 endoscopy procedures and to continue a bariatric surgery program aligned with the new obesity management service which incorporates a multidisciplinary approach to lifestyle and dietary changes to improve the health of obese people.

Within this budget there is funding to supplement existing palliative care services within the ACT and surrounding region. The funding builds the non-hospital capacity of palliative care services in consultation with specialist palliative care community services, local GPs and community nurses. This includes in-home services designed to keep people in their own homes for longer and in many cases supports end-of-life care at home.

More access to drug and alcohol services is also a priority in this budget. We know that demand for ACT drug treatment services has been increasing. The 2014 commonwealth review of the drug and alcohol prevention and treatment services sector highlighted a significant under-investment in alcohol and other drug treatment, relative to population prevalence. The ACT alcohol, tobacco and other drug strategy notes the significant changing trends in the patterns of use of crystal methamphetamine, or ice as it is known, in the ACT and is guided by the principles of harm minimisation, the social and cultural determinants of health and minimising the burdens of harm.

The government will be investing additional resources to increase the non-government sector's capacity to treat these patients and also to roll out the naloxone overdose management pilot program. This program has already proved successful in delivering timely interventions and is proving a lifesaving asset in the challenging battle against an insidious and dangerous drug.

I am very pleased to say that this budget sees the largest single year increase in funding for mental health services since this government was first elected—

\$26.1 million over four years. Through this funding we will provide more adult community mental health services, including a local service for the Gungahlin region; additional intensive psychogeriatric care for people living in residential care or transitioning from an acute inpatient unit; a self-harm diversion service; a 24-hour supportive accommodation service; more in-home support for people experiencing acute mental health problems; and a redesign of the adult mental health services focusing on clinical management, psychological therapies, crisis care and home-based support.

In providing these services, one of our key goals as a government in the area of mental health is to destigmatise this condition and generate significant improvements in the health outcomes of patients with these issues. There will be more specialised services for patients at Canberra Hospital with extended operation of both the alcohol and drug and the mental health consultation and liaison services and the establishment of a new program of early identification for children presenting with emerging mental health illnesses or disorders.

This budget also continues the significant capital investment through the government's health infrastructure program which has been underway since 2007. A further \$33.8 million in this budget will take the level of allocation to over \$900 million. This budget will fund a range of projects including a new \$17.3 million central sterilising services facility at Canberra Hospital; 20 more beds across the public hospital system; \$12.4 million for theatre upgrades and new medical imaging equipment at Calvary public including a new CT scanner; and, in addition, a new five-storey car park providing 704 spaces, an overall increase of 515 spaces for the Calvary hospital campus.

The health infrastructure program has delivered many projects, including, of course, the Centenary Hospital for Women and Children, the Canberra Region Cancer Centre, the adult mental health unit, a multi-storey car park at Canberra Hospital, and Gungahlin, Belconnen and Tuggeranong health centres. Over the next three years the health infrastructure program will deliver a substantial expansion of the emergency department at Canberra Hospital, the new secure mental health facility at Symonston, a bush healing farm, and continued redevelopment and upgrading of a number of other areas at the Canberra Hospital.

In addition this year we will see the commencement of delivery of the University of Canberra public hospital, which will be the first facility of its kind in the ACT. It will provide a new and innovative model specifically for rehabilitation and mental health care, it will be a teaching hospital to continue the integration of clinical and teaching environments, and it will provide research opportunities to benefit not only this facility and our community but the broader healthcare sector as well.

This ACT Labor government is also investing in health promotion and prevention services to reduce the increasing burden of chronic disease and related, more costly healthcare impacts. These initiatives will also increase business productivity in the ACT and health-related education outcomes.

Current estimates suggest that up to 80 per cent of heart disease, stroke and type 2 diabetes and more than one-third of cancers worldwide could be prevented by eliminating shared modifiable risk factors such as those associated with smoking, an unhealthy diet, physical inactivity and the harmful use of alcohol. Investing in campaigns to reduce smoking during pregnancy is expected to have a direct health benefit to the mother and their newborns by reducing low weight at birth and subsequent neonatal care costs.

The specific programs supported in this budget include the healthier work, ride or walk to school programs; kids at play, it's your move; fresh tastes; smoking cessation; and a new interactive web-based data platform. The programs support the ACT government's priority to invest in preventive health services to promote physical and emotional wellbeing and prevent disease across the ACT community, in line with our commitments to support the government's zero growth target.

This budget also continues implementation of a sustained smoking cessation social marketing strategy targeting Indigenous people in the ACT. The "beyond today" social marketing campaign is a community-based approach to research that enables Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who have successfully quit or have been affected by smoking-related illnesses to express themselves in their own voice, have ownership over the campaign and ensure that there are culturally valid messages being communicated to other Indigenous people.

Comprehensive promotion of the campaign and its materials, including media advertising and participation in all major Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander events, are all components of this funding. It will also enable continued collaborative working relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations and community representatives. The funding also allows for the implementation of lessons learnt through the implementation and evaluation of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander tobacco control strategy 2010-14, outcome evaluations of the social marketing campaign, and scoping of targeted initiatives, particularly those focused on smoking in pregnancy.

This Labor government has delivered strong results for the people who use, rely upon and work in our high-class healthcare system. I would like to acknowledge the excellent work undertaken by the staff of ACT Health and health-related non-government organisations, as well as those many volunteers and carers who support the health system every day across the ACT and in the surrounding region. These committed individuals provide a professional and modern health service with compassion and integrity, and their efforts should be commended.

This budget invests \$1.5 billion to increase, improve and support health services for the Canberra community. It is the biggest budget allocation we have ever made and it is a clear commitment by this government to better health services for all Canberrans.

Proposed expenditure agreed to.

Housing ACT—schedule 1, part 1.12.

MS LAWDER (Brindabella) (11.38): I am pleased to speak today about housing in the budget. In the estimates hearings I asked a number of questions about housing along the Northbourne Avenue precinct relating to public housing tenants, especially Owen flats residents. Using the Owen flats residents as an example, I asked whether residents would be moved into available public housing properties before people on the published waiting list for ACT Housing—which is available from the ACT Housing website—or would Owen flats residents be added to the priority housing waiting list. In response, Mr David Matthews, the Executive Director of Housing and Community Services ACT, said:

... the answer to that question in short is no. They have a different status. They are a management-initiated transfer or an out-of-turn transfer. So they do not appear on that priority count.

They have a “different status”, Madam Deputy Speaker. The Northbourne Avenue public housing tenants are added to the management-initiated transfer waiting list, also referred to as the out-of-turn transfer waiting list. We have the published social housing waiting list, which covers the housing register waiting list and waiting times, and the transfer register with the waiting list and waiting times. As at 3 August 2015 there are a total of 2,166 people on the waiting list for ACT Housing, with 98 of those being categorised as priority—that is, they need priority housing. People assessed as requiring priority housing wait on average 238 days. That is approximately six months. You have been assessed as needing priority housing, but you are waiting approximately six months to get that housing.

If you are on the standard housing list, good luck to you ever getting housing from Housing ACT. There are 764 people in the standard housing category, and they wait on average two years and three months. Then, of course, there are people on the transfer list. These are people who have been able to get a public housing property, which is great—probably after waiting for quite a considerable time, might I add—but they find that it is perhaps not in the area that best suits them. We talk about people needing to feel connected to their community—being close to their family and other members of their community. It might be a church group, maybe close to their children’s schools.

People who may be quite desperate take a public housing property, but they want to be more connected to the community they have left behind. They will wait a very, very long time. It takes pretty much a year to get a priority transfer. And now we hear there is a third list. These poor people who have been on the list for years now hear there is another list. Why is there another list? Because this government is pursuing light rail down the Northbourne Avenue corridor. They are moving those people onto that management-initiated or out-of-turn transfer list instead.

What this means is that those people on the priority housing, high needs housing or standard housing waiting lists will have to wait even longer than the times currently specified on the Community Services Directorate’s website: priority housing,

approximately, six months; high needs housing, approximately two years; standard housing, approximately two years and three months. In addition, there is the management-initiated waiting list.

Back in 2007 the former Chief Minister Jon Stanhope presented an affordable housing action plan. Recently in June former Chief Minister Stanhope spoke about one of the greatest regrets of his time as Chief Minister being the lack of action by this government on the affordable housing action plan. I will read an excerpt from page 5 of that plan:

The strategy aims to support the supply of affordable housing and to ensure that all individuals, irrespective of circumstances, are able to access accommodation suitable to their needs. The Strategy adopted by the Government is to:

1. allow the housing market to operate as efficiently as possible through ensuring sufficient supply of land and stabilise house prices in a period of growth;
2. maintain a planning and land release system that supports the delivery of an adequate supply of land and is responsive to changing demand;
3. ensure competition in the market to deliver cost efficiencies;
4. facilitate diversity in housing products and prices through the planning regime to deliver an innovative, affordable house and land package;
5. facilitate growth in the community and not for profit housing sector and encourage shared equity;
6. make efficient and effective use of public housing assets;
7. support the delivery of adequate supplies of private rental properties to stabilise rental vacancy rates; and
8. encourage industry cooperation in demonstration villages and estates and through advisory processes, and through support of projects that complement the Government's affordable housing objectives.

Exactly what is this government doing to implement this strategy, or has it dropped off the government's radar now because all they are thinking about is light rail? A second version relating to housing for older Canberrans was released, I think in 2009. Another recommendation in this year's estimates report is about addressing the housing needs of older Canberrans. We have these strategies. This government is great at coming up with plans and strategies and releasing concept drawings, but where is the action on addressing affordable housing for vulnerable Canberrans? Why is the government not doing more about housing affordability? Why is it not presenting us with updates and status reports on the affordable housing action plan?

Page 15 of affordable housing action plan outlines the objectives and initiatives relating to public housing. One of those initiatives is:

Housing ACT aim to house top priority waiting list applicants within three months.

But we know from the list that the waiting time is actually six months—more than double what was outlined in the 2007 affordable housing action plan. I sometimes feel a little sorry for Minister Berry—only a little bit—because I think she is a little bit out of touch with community expectations. She thinks that by focusing on light rail and saying they are moving people out of the Northbourne Avenue precinct to improve public housing for people that she is going to feel love from the community. But people want genuine responses to housing affordability, to getting people off the waiting list and to homelessness.

This government talks about how they are leading the world in renewable energy, which is a positive thing. But why are we not leading the world in our response to homelessness and housing affordability? Why are we not concerned about those vulnerable Canberrans who are out on the streets every night? Do not forget, Madam Deputy Speaker, that the ACT has the second highest rate of homelessness in Australia, which is completely shameful. Just how out of touch is Minister Berry on this issue? She said previously in this place that because someone is receiving a service from a homelessness service, they do not need housing. They are still technically homeless. Just because they are receiving a service does not mean that they are not still homeless.

Yesterday we saw another example of just how out of touch Minister Berry is. She thought she might pop into a photo with members of the community from the Telopea Park School and Mocca. I can tell you that they very quickly asked her to get out of their photo. She has had no involvement with the work to get a good community result for the Telopea Park School and for Mocca. Mr Doszpot has been working on this issue since the start of this year.

Just yesterday Mr Doszpot spoke very strongly in support of that community. Through that, and some manoeuvring from Minister Rattenbury, we got a good result for that community. Mr Rattenbury and Ms Berry were asked to remove themselves from that photo. Members of the community know it was Mr Doszpot who did that work. It is unfortunate when you have someone who is quite out of touch with what the community want.

In a way I think Minister Berry thought the housing portfolio would be a good thing. She spoke in previous committees about the importance of public housing. That is admirable, and I agree with her—it is very important. (*Second speaking period taken.*) But I think she has found over the past few months that it is a poisoned chalice because she has realised the complexities and the difficulties in the public housing and homelessness sphere. It is not just a matter of coming in and saying that you support public housing. There is a lot more to it, and she has been struggling to get across the detail and complexities involved.

There are specific recommendations in the estimates report relating to housing, especially along the Northbourne Avenue corridor, some of which the government have agreed to and some of which they have noted. There are also some relating to

housing and accommodation for older people. We also heard from the YWCA about the land rent scheme and their desire to get more involved in that, but there are some barriers stopping them. The recommendation relating to the land rent scheme was only noted by the government, not agreed to, which is a pity.

This government needs to stop thinking about having plans and strategies and all sorts of documents which then sit on a shelf and gather dust. They are not worth the paper they are written on. Another example during estimates was the compact with the community sector. That was signed I think a few years ago, and it is about consultation and communication with the not-for-profit sector. It outlines the roles and rights and responsibilities of each side—government and community sector organisations—but we saw in a related portfolio, and some of the housing-related organisations spoke about this, that the compact is not being followed.

The community sector reform levy was one example where there was no consultation with the sector about the reapplication of that levy. Those organisations involved in housing such as the YWCA, ACTCOSS, Youth Coalition of the ACT and UnitingCare Kippax—four examples off the top of my head—spoke about that lack of consultation from the government in the reapplication of the community sector reform levy. The government is out of touch. It needs to do a lot more on the public housing front. There are people who are waiting a very, very long time for public housing, people on the priority list.

One example I have spoken about several times in this chamber is a constituent of mine in Tuggeranong. His 12-year-old son has a disability and can no longer live with his father because his house is not disability accessible. He has been waiting for a home with disability access for quite a long time so his son can come to live with him. This is a very tragic case of a child with a degenerative disease who has been separated from his father because of the inability to provide housing with disability access.

While we have this third list—the management-initiated transfer list—the chances for people already on this ACT Housing social housing waiting list are getting dimmer and dimmer. That is a real tragedy for those people in our community who are waiting.

MS BERRY (Ginninderra—Minister for Housing, Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs, Minister for Community Services, Minister for Multicultural Affairs, Minister for Women and Minister assisting the Chief Minister on Social Inclusion and Equality) (11.52): I would like to take this opportunity to speak on part 1.12—public housing. Public housing is a core part of Canberra. It has played an important part in the growth of our city and in the diverse and socially inclusive community that we have become. This government is committed to providing high quality housing for the people in Canberra who have the greatest need.

The ACT continues to provide the highest number of public housing homes per capita of any Australian jurisdiction. We currently have almost 11,600 public housing properties and about 1,200 community housing properties. Collectively, this represents about 30 social housing dwellings for every 1,000 people in the ACT. With the national average sitting at around 17 dwellings per 1,000 people, the ACT is achieving almost twice the national average.

Public housing is targeted to those people most in need. In the last year around 97 percent of new tenancies have gone to the most vulnerable tenants. This is the highest level of targeted allocation across all jurisdictions. At this scale the way the portfolio of properties is managed has a significant impact on economic activity. The public housing portfolio is a highly valuable asset to the territory, valued at approximately \$4.5 billion. This portfolio is largely unencumbered and underpins the government's strong balance sheet. In a very real way, the public housing portfolio is a key enabler for the activities of the ACT government.

In 2015-16 the funding appropriated by government to manage the public housing portfolio and the administrative costs for managing Housing ACT amounts to \$136.6 million. This amount includes rental receipts from tenants of approximately \$86.6 million, after providing rental rebates worth about \$144 million to almost 95 per cent of tenants; interest and distributions on investments held in the territory banking account of \$1.2 million; and other income, largely derived from amounts recoverable from tenants, and insurance recoveries for claims for damage or loss and from third parties and other agencies. Other income also includes the profit on sale of properties and any other gains received. The total other income in 2015-16 is \$5.4 million. These moneys are deemed appropriations under the Financial Management Act 1996.

The government also directly appropriates moneys to meet the operating costs for Housing ACT for the provision of public housing and homelessness services. In 2015-16 this appropriation totals \$43.453 million and includes commonwealth funding under the national affordable housing agreement of \$21.7 million; commonwealth national partnership agreement on homelessness funding of \$1.520 million; ACT matching funding of \$1.520 million for the national partnership agreement on homelessness; ACT government funding of \$17.351 million for homelessness services; funding of \$0.321 million in support costs for the exciting new Common Ground complex in Gungahlin; and a further \$0.444 million over two years to enhance the better services program and the one human services gateway, providing integrated government and community services for housing, homelessness, disability and family support services.

The one human services gateway began last year and has helped to provide more streamlined and effective support services for some of the most disadvantaged in our community and for those who are experiencing family crisis. The government is continuing to deliver on its commitments to provide safe, affordable and appropriate housing that meets the needs and circumstances of low income and disadvantaged families.

In addition to this operational funding, the government is providing further capital funding to meet specific policy objectives. In 2015-16 we are providing \$14.187 million for capital upgrades and additional public housing stock to be delivered by Housing ACT. This is in addition to the investment in the public housing renewal program which will provide 1,288 replacement properties over the next four years.

The \$14.187 million is being allocated for the following purposes: \$4 million is being provided to improve the energy efficiency of public housing. This money will assist with upgrades to heating and hot-water units, the installation of insulation and water saving devices, the replacement of inefficient lighting and the conduct of property energy audits. \$0.5 million is being provided to improve security arrangements for elderly people living in public housing and, in particular, providing security screens on doors and windows. The response from older tenants has already been very positive. It is important that they should be able to age in place, and feel secure and safe in their own homes.

\$7.134 million will be spent on expanding the social housing stock. The government will continue its program of property renewal, replacing older, less efficient properties with newer, more sustainable and energy efficient homes of contemporary design and fit-out. The new housing stock will be more reflective of community standards and expectations and will better meet the needs of tenants.

\$1.817 million will be allocated for disability dual occupancy housing. This funding will provide people with a disability who need to live alone with the ability to do so through the provision of shared care arrangements to reduce the cost of support services. There is \$0.736 million for the provision of additional places at Karinya House under the a step up for our kids program that provides accommodation and support for expectant mothers and mothers with young children who are vulnerable.

This funding will contribute to the construction of a new, purpose-built residential facility as part of the expansion of Karinya House and will enable mothers and their babies to be provided with 24-hour support for up to three months. The balance of the funding for the construction of Karinya House, about \$2.76 million, is being provided through the Housing ACT capital program.

In 2015-16, 71 properties are to be sold, including 16 sales to tenants, which will provide \$35 million towards our capital program. This is in addition to the \$32 million available from prior year sales that has been held over, and the specific project funding of \$14.187 million that I have already referred to. These funds will be used to build 117 dwellings for housing low income and vulnerable families, including the elderly, people with a disability and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families.

The ACT government will also purchase another 54 properties from the market to provide greater housing choice for low income families and to continue the salt-and-pepper approach to the distribution of public housing across Canberra. The cost of these activities is expected to be almost \$64 million. Construction costs for the year are expected to be about \$40 million and property purchases are forecast to be about \$24 million.

In seeking to meet the housing needs of some of the most vulnerable members of the Canberra community, the ACT government will also continue to work closely with the community housing sector. Fourteen community housing providers are supported to provide more than 1,200 properties ranging from freestanding homes to single, shared or communal living arrangements.

These services are funded through the national affordable housing agreement, the national partnership agreement on homelessness and the national rental affordability scheme. The provision of social housing to those most in need is core to the inclusive character of Canberra. I commend the proposed housing appropriation to the Assembly.

Proposed expenditure agreed to.

Icon Water Ltd—schedule 1, part 1.13.

MR SMYTH (Brindabella) (12.00): Icon Water appeared before the committee and we had a broad ranging discussion on 16 June. There was some discussion about the change of name and a few other things that had happened. I was particularly interested in how water charges had gone up. Icon took it as a question on notice and have provided a great deal of detail.

It is interesting that the average 200-kilolitre household in 2004-05 paid \$276 for their water. In 2013-14, the last full year for which they had the details, they paid \$610 per household. If you put the \$276.50 into a CPI calculator and just assume that things go up by CPI over the period, the \$276, when treated for CPI, goes up to \$359 per household, yet they are paying \$610 per household—70 per cent over what the CPI was. It is the same for water and sewerage charges. In 2004-05 the households paid on average \$651; by the financial year 2013-14 they were paying \$1,102. If you put the \$651 into a CPI calculator for that decade, it only goes up under CPI to \$848. Again, it is almost 70 per cent over what they should have been paying.

It is quite interesting that at a time when we all know that most households have reduced their usage of water, we end up paying a lot more. So there is a real question regarding the way this government treat taxpayers—the way they squeeze them. Under the old Ted Quinlan adage, it was a matter of “squeeze them till they bleed but not until they die”.

We looked at the issue of Icon’s debt and dividend—the money they give to the government to assist with the budget, the return on the investment of the people of the ACT. We were told in the annual reports hearings, late last year or early this year, that they had a working group to see whether they could repatriate some capital from ActewAGL. It is a working group with Treasury, and that work is proceeding. The committee came up with recommendation 59, in which it recommended:

... that the ACT Government provide details to the Assembly of any changes to the Icon Water dividend policy that may result from the working group’s advice, within five sitting days of its receipt.

It is very important because Icon does provide substantial amounts of funds back to the budget. When one checks the government response, it is simply “noted”. The government says it is continuing to consider the current policy for Icon Water and that the working group has been established. It says that any changes would be publicly announced in due course. It is an important issue and it is something that we will certainly be keeping an eye on.

The other issue that came up in the public accounts inquiry into the future of clubs in the ACT is water usage by, for instance, the bowling and golf clubs. It is a huge impact on their budgets and on their bottom lines and it is a big cost to those clubs and affects their viability. We asked about usage and whether there was a price, for instance, in New South Wales for community use. Of course, all pricing is set by the ICRC but there was not such a level or tier in this jurisdiction. It is certainly something that the government should take into account.

We talked about the treatment of staff redundancies. Because of decisions made that are out of the control of ActewAGL and Icon, there are some redundancies, particularly in ActewAGL, but there are some in Icon as well. We asked questions about those, what was happening in regard to those people and how they would be treated. It is certainly something that we will be keeping an eye on. The other thing is the debt and how Icon covers their debt. There is a bit of a hump coming in a couple of years. Again it is something that we will monitor and keep an eye on.

MR BARR (Molonglo—Chief Minister, Treasurer, Minister for Economic Development, Minister for Urban Renewal and Minister for Tourism and Events) (12.05): Icon Water Ltd's four strategies for the period 2015-16 to 2018-19 are focused on its strategic objectives. These are: a culture that protects, engages and develops its people; excellence in asset management; to build a trusted brand; and financial management—sustainable returns and reduced gearing.

Icon Water's 2015-16 budget is underpinned by new prices set by the industry panel, which reviewed the ICRC's water and sewerage pricing determination of June 2013. The new pricing took effect from 1 July 2015. The industry panel decision provides three years of pricing certainty for customers and provides a solid foundation for future pricing determinations. The budget also anticipates the impact of the Australian Energy Regulator's decision to reduce electricity prices from 1 July 2015.

I commend the appropriation to the Assembly.

Proposed expenditure agreed to.

Independent Competition and Regulatory Commission—schedule 1, part 1.14.

MR SMYTH (Brindabella) (12.07): The ICRC appeared before the committee on 15 June. There were a number of discussions and points of interest that the committee looked at, ranging from the effect of the development of home storage battery devices on electricity prices to comparisons with other jurisdictions.

For me, of particular interest was the water pricing for community facilities. If members go to page 156 of the report, there is a section on it. In New South Wales there is special water pricing for community groups running community facilities, such as golf clubs and bowling clubs. In the ACT the minister noted that clubs in the ACT are eligible for a concession. So you get charged the full price in the ACT and then they work out whether or not you can have a concession, whereas in New South Wales they make a point of having a special price because they understand the value of these sorts of clubs. In recommendation 60 the committee recommends:

... that the Independent Competition and Regulatory Commission, in its next review of water pricing in the ACT, consider a pricing point for community usage to support community owned facilities such as sporting facilities.

The government's response was:

Noted.

Under the terms of the Industry Panel's substituted price direction for regulated water and sewerage services, the regulator is required to undertake a review of the tariff structures for the regulated water and sewerage services provided by Icon Water before the next regulatory period commences from 1 July 2018.

So that is some years away. It continued:

The tariff review process, which will include a call for submissions from the ACT community, represents the appropriate mechanism for considering issues such as whether a specific water tariff for community-owned facilities should be introduced.

It is the answer that one would expect given the way that the industry panel has set up the period. So it would appear that clubs that are doing it a bit tough, particularly the golf clubs and bowling clubs which take a great deal of water to keep going, will have to wait until at least 2018 before we get an answer to whether or not we will get a pricing point for them in that regard.

MR BARR (Molonglo—Chief Minister, Treasurer, Minister for Economic Development, Minister for Urban Renewal and Minister for Tourism and Events) (12.09): The ICRC is a statutory body established under the ICRC act 1997. Its three main objectives, outlined in section 7, are to promote effective competition in the interests of consumers, to facilitate an appropriate balance between efficiency, environmental and social considerations, and to ensure non-discriminatory access to monopoly and near-monopoly infrastructure.

The commission's functions are outlined in section 8 of the act. These broadly include setting prices for regulated services in the territory, including regulated water and sewerage services and retail electricity prices for small electricity customers; regulating access to infrastructure for regulated services in the territory; licensing utility services; investigating and reporting on competitive neutrality complaints; and a range of other regulatory and administrative matters.

I commend the appropriation to the Assembly.

Proposed expenditure agreed to.

Justice and Community Safety Directorate—schedule 1, part 1.15.

MR HANSON (Molonglo—Leader of the Opposition) (12.10): At the outset let me say that this is an area where I will have some critique of the government but I will also share some praise. There are areas in which I say to the government well done for

steps that they have taken in the area of domestic violence. And this has been a topic that I think has been litigated both here and in the community, and it is clear that this is a scourge on our society, not just in the ACT but across the nation.

Steps are being taken. There are further steps that need to be taken. There is no doubt about that. There is much to be done. And I am not going to agree with the government on all areas of domestic violence. I think that there are additional resources required. I have called for a specific domestic violence court, and I will talk about that a bit later.

But I do believe that this is an area where the government and the opposition have been able, through cooperation—in essence by not competing with each other by the competition of ideas, by putting suggestions forward—to advance collectively the cause of tackling domestic violence in this town. So I thank those members in the Labor Party and also Mr Rattenbury in the Greens for that cooperation, that attitude, and I look forward not necessarily to agreeing on everything but to advancing the cause of tackling domestic violence in this town, which I know is dear to the hearts of many and I am sure all in this chamber.

There was a domestic violence roundtable that was conducted that many of the members here attended and that many of those who are at the forefront of tackling domestic violence in this town attended. We also heard from victims at that meeting. I think many of us learned a lot. Certainly I took much away from that meeting and clearly gained a better understanding of the complexities of the issues.

Some of the key things I took away are the need for greater resources, the need to augment those on the front line who are tackling this issue but also the need for greater prevention, because ultimately you can throw as much resources, perhaps, at an issue as you like but if you do not stop it happening it is going to be an endless battle. I think that the focus that we need is on greater prevention, because that is better for everybody. It takes pressure off the system but more importantly it means that fewer people, in particular women and children, are facing the ill effects of domestic violence. So I commend all those that participated in the roundtable and all those at the front line of tackling domestic violence.

As I said, I have responded to calls from many of those on the front line who have sought a domestic violence court and the improvements that that can make. I have made that call. Certainly I think that is an area which would assist in the preventative space. And this was the subject of a motion in the last sitting period. But it followed on from calls from people in the community and the Women's Legal Centre. Elena Rosenman made some comments calling for the domestic violence court, and John Hinchey made similar calls. Those quotes are available in *Hansard* when I moved the motion in the last sitting period. I think that this is a worthy endeavour. It would help. It is not a silver bullet. There is no panacea. But it would certainly be an important step.

I know that the government are now considering this. The motion was amended for the government to consider this. Although I want to see it implemented sooner rather than later I encourage the government to get on with considering it and they will have support of the opposition should they proceed in that direction.

That said, there are a range of areas where I think the government is letting the community down. I turn first to the issue of outlaw motorcycle gangs. This has a history in this place. Indeed, that history dates back to—and you will remember this, Madam Speaker; you were part of this debate—2009 when the then Premier of New South Wales, Nathan Reece, was confronted by escalating bkie violence in New South Wales and implemented laws aimed at tackling the outlaw motorcycle gangs. His intent, his quote, was:

I'm going to drive these bikies out of New South Wales.

Clearly that meant they are going to go somewhere else, and the concern that I had and the concern that others in the community had, including the Australian Crime Commission—and they made similar comments about the South Australian laws—and the Australian Federal Police Association, was: if you implement laws in one place you are going to create displacement of those outlaw motorcycle gangs to another jurisdiction. At that point I echoed the comments from the Australian Federal Police Association that this would mean that the ACT risked becoming an oasis for those bkie gangs.

At the time the government, led by Mr Corbell, flatly said that is not true. He objected to that. And in fact the quote was on 1 April 2009, April Fool's Day, ironically:

I do not accept the assertion as a given that, because New South Wales legislates in one way, we will be swamped ... by bkie gangs from New South Wales.

It was very clear—and we had debates in this place, there were conversations in the media—that what Mr Corbell was saying time and again was: “What happens in New South Wales does not have any impact here in the ACT. Their introducing laws is not going to have an impact on us.” And he rejected those assertions. In the opposition we said, “No. Clearly there will be a correlation. That's what the experts are saying. Let's make sure that we legislate in a sympathetic manner so we do not see bikies coming from New South Wales.”

Madam Speaker, what then happened, as you may have followed the debate, was that in estimates this year we followed up on this conversation, on 25 and 26 June, and the minister continued to make his point: “No, it's not going to have any impact. It will not have any impact.”

Then what happened was that there was a statement in response to a Q&A released by ACT Policing that very day making the explicit point that the laws in New South Wales were having a displacement effect and what was happening because of the fact that there were tough laws in New South Wales and not in the ACT was that bikies were coming from New South Wales into the ACT. In fact, there was a big meeting of the New South Wales Rebels in the ACT that very weekend.

One of the reasons given by ACT Policing that that big group of bikies came from the New South Wales chapter was our laws. They were driven out of New South Wales, came to the ACT—exactly what the Australian Federal Police Association said,

exactly what the opposition said in 2009 and exactly what Mr Corbell said would not happen. His own police are saying exactly what we said, in direct contradiction to Mr Corbell.

I ask: how many crimes have been committed? How many bikie gang members have turned up in the ACT because of this government's failure to legislate, as they were warned? They still sit idly by on their hands. Even now, even now as the bikies turn up en masse from New South Wales, even now when ACT Policing say, "We need laws similar to New South Wales to stop this," what do we get from this government but silence.

I was expecting this legislation to be tabled. I was expecting the government to act. But maybe it is. After six years of inaction, after six years of denials, maybe this minister is simply too arrogant to respond to the reality that this territory now faces. I again call on this government to legislate in this regard. I reiterate these calls that I have been making for six years that are now backed up by his own beliefs and are backed up by the evidence that bikies are coming into the ACT en masse from New South Wales. *(Second speaking period taken.)*

We have got to back our police up. Our police are out there under pressure and they are under pressure across the board. They are under pressure because they are tackling the scourge of ice that causes all sorts of crimes across this town that we know are happening day in, day out because of, particularly, our youth being affected by this plague of ice.

We also know that they are being called on to be more proactive when it comes to domestic violence. We are saying, "You're on the front line. We want you out there taking active steps in relation to domestic violence." And we know that they are having to go out there to deal with the scourge of outlaw motorcycle gangs from New South Wales coming into the ACT.

What is the response of this government? Cut their funding. In the 2013 budget this minister, Ms Burch, cut \$15 million out of ACT police funding and said, "This isn't going to cause any problems. It's all going to be in the background. This isn't going to have any problems for ACT Policing." And we know it is, because we heard in estimates that they are cutting staff. We know that this year I think it was 13 staff that are getting cut from ACT Policing and no doubt there will be more next year.

What we know is that if you cut the backroom staff it means that front-line police officers have to then do those jobs. So instead of being out there on the beat tackling the ice scourge, tackling domestic violence, preventing the bikies causing trouble, what we see is that they are having to do those backroom jobs. And we know this because we have been told. I meet police officers around this town all the time.

The Australian Federal Police Association CEO, Dennis Gellatly, said:

If the savings of some \$15.3 million can't be achieved from trimming the cost of administrating and equipping ACT Policing then the very real fear is that police numbers may suffer.

What did Simon Corbell say? Mr Corbell said:

The Australian Federal Police Association are being alarmist.

This is a man that says they are being alarmist but what we hear in estimates is starkly in contrast. He was not an alarmist! Again, the Australian Federal Police Association who warned the bikies would come from New South Wales, the Australian Federal Police Association who warned that staff would be cut, and who were dismissed as alarmist by the minister, were proved correct in fact. Mr Gellatly said:

As predicted in 2013, there is now pressure on ACT Policing staffing numbers as we approach the third year of those savings.

He also said:

Compounding government cuts and pressure on staff numbers is that ACT Policing numbers have fallen to the lowest level of all Australian police forces at 221 per one hundred thousand.

The AFPA calls on the ACT Government to drop the savings measures and ensure ACT Policing staff numbers are not cut.

Indeed, we had a motion in this place in May this year saying exactly that: restore the \$15 million. What did the government do? They put \$3 million back in and patted themselves on the back and had big announcements, "Extra resources for police." Only the most Machiavellian of all governments could cut \$15 million, restore \$3 million and then spin that as some big boosted funding for policing. It is absolute nonsense.

It really comes to a point of difference between us on this side and those on that side. We support our front-line police. We have had calls for aggravated offences, where police have been assaulted, rejected by this government. We have said, "Let's give tasers to front-line police." This has been rejected by those opposite. Both of those measures would have significant effect. I speak to the police. You see them out and about all the time. You have a chat. We talk to the Australian Federal Police Association. The reality is that they are understaffed.

We know that a health and safety notice was put in about safety concerns about staff numbers in Civic. I quote from that:

The staffing numbers of the ACT City Beats Teams has been universally acknowledged by the ACT Operations Committee ... as being inadequate to allow effective and safe deployment of personnel to those duties during the hours of darkness ...

And:

By allowing a continuation of a situation where staffing levels are so low that members are constantly and continually being placed in situations where because of a dearth of numbers they are regularly outnumbered by intoxicated and aggressive people placing them at unreasonable risk of serious injury due to violence.

So the police themselves are saying that they do not have enough resources. You talk to front-line staff at AFPA and they say that they need tasers at the front line. And what is the response of this government? Cut, cut, cut so that they can put \$21 million into light rail. They are saying they have got enough money for that. Meanwhile, they are cutting \$15 million, as it is now net \$12 million, from ACT Policing. Shame on you!

As I have mentioned, I have been talking to police around this town. Let me make the observation that when I talk to them, the response I am getting from them is that they are now confronted by the worst minister they have ever had. The response I am getting from people I speak to involved in ACT Policing is that this minister is a joke, that this is a minister who is not supporting them, who is cutting them, and who does not understand the sorts of operations the police have to conduct.

This minister is incapable of running this portfolio and while she continues to cut police, while she continues to disrespect our police and while she continues to allow the sorts of cuts in staffing that mean that front-line police officers continue to be putting themselves in harm's way without the necessary resources, you will continue to see the sorts of concerns coming back about this minister that we hear on a regular basis. She is laughing. She thinks it is funny. She thinks it is a big joke. She thinks it is funny that tonight police will be going out there without the tasers that they have called for, without the staff that they need to back them up because they are being cut, confronting ice addicts, trying to deal with domestic violence issues across this town and responding to a failure in legislation to keep police safe.

What we have is a government that is dragging the chain. The government is not listening to the community and is not listening, through this place, to us. Be it tasers, be it bikie legislation, be it resourcing; we say this is what is needed because we are listening to the community. This government ignore us and then at some later stage they acknowledge we are right and, dragged kicking and screaming, they finally implement issues way too late.

Another example of that, a very clear example, is that issue of the fifth Supreme Court judge. I think it was Mr Seselja as the shadow Attorney-General that said, "We've listened to the Law Society, we've listened to the Bar Association, we've done the work. There is a need for a fifth Supreme Court judge." And what did we get from those opposite? Silence, ignorance, denial and a refusal to appoint the fifth Supreme Court judge. What do we see in the budget this year? Years after we called for it, years after we called for a fifth Supreme Court judge, finally this government comes to the table.

In so many areas, be it the fifth Supreme Court judge, be it tackling the scourge of ice, be it domestic violence, be it issues of tasers, be it motorcycle gang laws, it is the opposition that is leading the way and leading the calls and it is this government that is dragging its heels and not listening to the community.

I will give you another example, for those who still remain unconvinced. That is the issue of random roadside drug testing. It was those opposite that voted against random

roadside drug testing, that refused to have random roadside drug testing in this town, and we had to get the support of the Greens to enact it whilst Mr Corbell and others said no to random roadside drug testing. And what do we see? Now they are out there all the time saying what a success it is because it is saving lives. The number of people who have been tested and proved positive is extraordinarily high and is an effective deterrent.

On almost every measure what we see is the community calling for something, the opposition engaging, consulting, listening, calling for action and this government dragging its heels. And I call on you again to enact a domestic violence court, enact the bikie legislation, provide extra protections for our police and restore their funding. *(Time expired.)*

Debate interrupted in accordance with standing order 74 and the resumption of the debate made an order of the day for a later hour.

Sitting suspended from 12.31 to 2.30 pm.

Questions without notice

Health Directorate—audit report

MR HANSON: My question is to the Minister for Health. Minister, in the *Integrity of data in the Health Directorate* report released by the Auditor-General on 19 June this year, she says certain data integrity is “inadequate”, governance arrangements “need to be strengthened”, the quality of certain data “requires urgent attention” and the “Health Directorate does not have accurate information to plan, manage and report on non-admitted hospital services”. The auditor’s report identified “around \$2 million to \$3 million being underclaimed”. The Health Directorate’s response to the loss of money is that the impact was “relatively minor”. Minister, how do you justify the Health Directorate’s view that losing \$2 million to \$3 million of taxpayers’ money is “relatively minor”?

MR CORBELL: I thank Mr Hanson for his question. The first point to make is that ACT Health’s response is appropriate because the Auditor-General concluded that, when it came to data management for admitted services, she considered all of the data management procedures to be adequate. She did find that in relation to unadmitted matters there were some deficiencies.

What the report also concludes is that in relation to the \$3 million of unclaimed services, of course, ACT Health indicated to the Auditor-General that that money could be claimed at the next reporting period to the relevant commonwealth authorities and that there would be no material loss by ACT Health. So that is why we are able to say very clearly that, first of all, when it comes to admitted services, the data management is adequate, and when it is in relation to unadmitted services, the error has been detected and the money is able to be claimed with no material loss to the territory. I think that is a very reasonable position for the Health Directorate to take.

MADAM SPEAKER: Supplementary question, Mr Hanson.

MR HANSON: Minister, what are you doing now to ensure that ACT Health is keeping records to make sure all money owed is collected?

MR CORBELL: The recommendations of the Auditor-General are all matters that ACT Health has already actioned. Mr Hanson would know that from reading the Auditor-General's report—that the Health Directorate has outlined its response to the matters raised in the auditor's report. Those remedial steps are being undertaken.

It is worth highlighting that ACT Health has taken positive action to address these matters raised by Mr Hanson to ensure that, in relation to non-admitted patient records for the purposes of commonwealth funding, we have raised that from 95 to 99 per cent. That was before the auditor's report was handed down. Further, we are able to make sure that we claim all the money, that shortfall of \$3 million, from the commonwealth authorities without any material loss for ACT Health.

I believe there is every reason to be confident, first of all, that in relation to admitted services the Health Directorate has very good and capable data management and, in relation to unadmitted services, that the Auditor-General's report has assisted us to rectify a small number of matters with no material loss to the territory.

MADAM SPEAKER: Supplementary question, Mrs Jones.

MRS JONES: Minister, can you guarantee all money is being collected?

MR CORBELL: I can be very confident that ACT Health is taking all reasonable and practical steps to recover commonwealth payments for unadmitted services.

MADAM SPEAKER: A supplementary question, Mrs Jones.

MRS JONES: Minister, is \$3 million considered an incidental figure to the government?

MR CORBELL: The government does not consider any amount of money to be incidental or minor when it comes to health or, indeed, any other form of expenditure. The point of course to be made is that in the context of the overall health budget it is a small percentage.

Parking—fees

MRS JONES: My question is to the Chief Minister. The 2015-16 ACT budget includes an extra \$1 million in parking revenue from the introduction of after-hours paid parking in the city. Visitors to the city will now pay for parking until 10.30 pm every day. The increase in paid parking times will also cause, presumably, an increase in the need for parking inspectors. Minister, what is the cost of increasing the working hours of parking inspectors to the territory?

MR BARR: That exact figure will of course be dependent on the number of inspectors that are working in those particular precincts on any given day. It is also

worth pointing out that the changes announced in the budget relate to not all car parking in Civic, as Mrs Jones alluded to in her question.

MADAM SPEAKER: Supplementary question, Mrs Jones.

MRS JONES: Chief Minister, what extra buses will be provided to ensure that people can get home from the city now that parking is no longer free?

MR BARR: I make the observation that there have been charging arrangements in relation to parking in the city for some time, including late nights on Fridays. Not all parking in the city is being charged for outside of hours. There is considerable provision—

Mrs Jones: Point of order, Madam Speaker.

MADAM SPEAKER: A point of order, Mrs Jones. Stop the clock.

Mrs Jones: My question was about extra buses, not what other parking is available.

Dr Bourke: On the point of order—

MADAM SPEAKER: It is all right, Dr Bourke; I think I can manage this one myself. Given that the Chief Minister had 22 seconds—

Mr Barr: Note even that, Madam Speaker.

MADAM SPEAKER: On the basis of the clock, he had spoken for 22 seconds, I think he can get a little further in before I judge whether he is being directly relevant or not. Chief Minister.

MR BARR: Thank you, Madam Speaker. By way of providing some context to the concern, the government, through its provision of public transport services and through our transport reform agenda, is looking to make a variety of additional transport options available to Canberrans. That includes, amongst other things, light rail, but that is opposed by those opposite. The idea that those opposite have any concern about public transport provision or any concern about increased public transport provision is clearly laid bare by their opposition for opposition's sake to any new transport provision.

MADAM SPEAKER: A supplementary question, Mr Coe.

MR COE: Minister, when will after-hours paid parking be introduced in other town centres?

MR BARR: That is a hypothetical question.

MADAM SPEAKER: A supplementary question, Mr Coe.

MR COE: Minister, what is the rationale for having paid parking after hours in the city but not in town centres?

MR BARR: Paid parking after hours has existed in the Canberra CBD on Fridays until 9 pm for quite some time. It has been commonplace in privately operated car parks, including the Canberra Centre. Indeed, the provision—

Opposition members interjecting—

MR BARR: Including provision of private car park—

Mr Hanson interjecting—

MADAM SPEAKER: Order, Mr Hanson!

MR BARR: Including the provision of private car parking, Madam Speaker.

Dr Bourke: A point of order.

MADAM SPEAKER: Do you have a point of order?

Dr Bourke: Yes.

MADAM SPEAKER: Stop the clock, please.

Dr Bourke: The Chief Minister is being persistently interrupted by Mr Hanson during his answer to the question. That is disorderly.

MADAM SPEAKER: I have called Mr Hanson and Mr Coe to order. I think also that the Chief Minister chooses to stop to draw attention to the fact that there is interjection.

MR BARR: And the problem with that is, Madam Speaker?

MADAM SPEAKER: Drawing attention to it? Some people speak through interjection; other people choose not to. I have called Mr Hanson and Mr Coe to order, and I will continue to do so, with a view to possibly warning them.

Dr Bourke: May I seek your guidance, Madam Speaker?

MADAM SPEAKER: You want to seek guidance?

Dr Bourke: Yes.

MADAM SPEAKER: Yes.

Dr Bourke: Thank you, Madam Speaker. I was just wondering where in the standing orders it refers to whether a speaker chooses to be interrupted or not interrupted.

MADAM SPEAKER: I was not referring to the standing orders. I was making an observation about people's habits and behaviours in the chamber. The Chief Minister on—

Mr Hanson: On the point of order, Madam Speaker.

MADAM SPEAKER: I think I have dealt with the point of order.

Mr Hanson: You have, but—

MADAM SPEAKER: Do you have a new point of order?

Mr Hanson: Yes I do, Madam Speaker. I am asking Mr Barr to withdraw some comments that were made, a reflection on your ruling. When you were ruling on the point of order, you noted that Mr Barr would pause to try and highlight the fact that there was some small interjection. Mr Barr, sitting in his chair, then said, “And your problem with that is?” I think that is unparliamentary. I think that he should withdraw. It is a reflection on the chair, Madam Speaker.

MADAM SPEAKER: It is not unparliamentary. It borders on a reflection on the chair. Mr Barr and I have had discussions about that this week. I would remind him of the appropriate way of dealing with these matters. On the supplementary question about the rationale for parking in Civic but not in town centres, Mr Barr.

MR BARR: Thank you, Madam Speaker. The point that I was making before I was so rudely interrupted on so many occasions by those opposite—

Mr Smyth interjecting—

MR BARR: They are off again, Madam Speaker.

Mrs Jones interjecting—

MADAM SPEAKER: Order!

Members interjecting—

MADAM SPEAKER: Order! You do not help either, Mr Rattenbury.

Mr Coe interjecting—

MADAM SPEAKER: Mr Coe, I warn you! Mr Barr.

MR BARR: The point that I was making was that there has been after-hours paid parking in the CBD on Friday nights for quite some time. Privately provided car parking is now a significant proportion of car parking in the CBD, particularly that provided by the Canberra Centre and also provided around the entertainment precinct at New Acton. They are held by the private sector and charge after hours. Not all ACT government car parking within the CBD will attract an after-hours charge. Indeed, a significant number of both structured and on-street car parking will of course be free after hours.

Schools—agreements

MS FITZHARRIS: My question is to the Minister for Education and Training. Minister, last week you announced the signing of a memorandum of understanding between the ACT government, Catholic Education Canberra and Goulburn and the Association of Independent Schools. I understand that this is the first time that such an agreement has been made in the ACT. Can you detail to the Assembly what this MOU will do and why it is important for ensuring the quality of all ACT schools.

MADAM SPEAKER: Could you just repeat the last part of that question? I did not hear it.

MS FITZHARRIS: Can you detail to the Assembly what this MOU will do and why it is important for ensuring the quality of all ACT schools?

MS BURCH: I thank Ms Fitzharris for her question. Indeed, the signing of the MOU is the first time these agreements have been reached in the ACT with government public schools, independent schools and Catholic schools. Indeed, when the three school sectors came together with such an agreement, to use the words out of the independent and Catholic school leaders that were there, it was a momentous occasion.

The agreement represents an important shift in how education is approached in the ACT. The MOUs will provide greater assurance to students, parents and the ACT community about the high standards of our schools. The MOUs align compliance and incident reporting across all three school sectors—public, independent and Catholic systems.

It is regularly said by all sides in this place that the ACT has the best education system in the country. This is supported time and time again by the data that we see. However, there is always a need to make sure we make our system better. There are ways we can provide greater assurances to the students, parents and families that make up our school communities that their school is safe and welcoming and has processes and practices that are supportive. This is what the MOUs and related change to the school registration manual will achieve.

Under the new MOUs, for the first time the ACT non-government schools will report their critical incidents to me as minister for education. This agreement across all sectors also provides a consistent and agreed definition of critical incidents and provides for school principals to confirm each year that they comply with all relevant legislative requirements.

I am not saying, and do not want to suggest, that schools have high levels of incidents; that is simply not the case. However, what these MOUs make clear is that all schools in the ACT have clear processes to ensure the safety and wellbeing of their students and assure me, as the minister responsible for all schools, that our schools are safe learning environments.

The signing of the MOUs across all sectors has come together and recognises that the similarities between schools outweigh many of the differences. I know that we have

worked hard to focus on what is needed to assure the community of the quality of our schools. Our schools—public, Catholic and independent—already work together in many ways to ensure the high standards of education. There is already a high degree of alignment and consistency. The new MOUs are simply the latest area in which this cross-sectoral support is aligned. They are already aligned in the curriculum they deliver and already aligned in the commitment to high student achievement and in the quality of teaching.

I would like to thank the officials from the Education and Training Directorate, but particular thanks to Catholic Education Canberra and Goulburn and to the ACT Association of Independent Schools for their hard work over many months on this very important document. This is a great achievement for school quality in the ACT, a great achievement to improve confidence in our schools. I know that ACT schools will become even better. Again, I want to thank all those involved in making this very significant change.

MADAM SPEAKER: A supplementary question, Ms Fitzharris.

MS FITZHARRIS: Minister, what changes have been made to the non-government school registration manual and how will these changes ensure greater transparency and accountability for all schools in the ACT?

MS BURCH: The changes made to the non-government school registration manual continue to ensure that the ACT non-government school approval and registration processes are rigorous and comply with all legislative requirements. They include improved processes to ensure better transparency, improved communication with the community and clearer information for panel members. The non-government school registration manual complements the better alignment that has occurred between the registration of non-government schools and the public schools improvement process.

Particularly, the manual includes a requirement for an annual statement of assurance attesting to each school's compliance with the relevant legislation including the Education Act, the TQI act, the Board of Senior Secondary Studies Act and other ACT and commonwealth legislation including privacy, discrimination, health and safety, and working with vulnerable people legislation.

Changes made in the new registration manual have removed unnecessary red tape for matters that are not specifically required under the registration process as outline in the Education Act. There are also clearer guidelines to assist applicants to demonstrate community need for new non-government schools. The registration manual has also streamlined the manner in which the community is notified about proposed new schools and the panel process for non-government schools registration has become even more transparent with a more balanced representation from public and non-government school educations sectors. I welcome the changes to that manual and welcome the diversity of our schools sector in the ACT.

MADAM SPEAKER: Supplementary question, Dr Bourke.

DR BOURKE: Minister, how has the ACT government worked cooperatively with the non-government school sectors to bring about these historic reforms?

MS BURCH: I thank Dr Bourke for his interest in this. The importance of these memorandums of understanding with the Association of Independent Schools and the Catholic Education Office to govern the annual reporting requirements cannot be understated. They mark two years of collaboration and discussion to ensure that we are providing consistent registration and compliance guidelines in all ACT schools. These agreements demonstrate the commitment of all education sectors to provide the highest standard of education and care to all ACT students.

A review of the registration process for non-government schools was held in 2013, and key education stakeholders, including the AIS and the Catholic Education Office, made submissions to that review. The three sectors have met regularly over the last two years to explore recommendations made by the review and to come up with a way to strengthen an already rigorous process for registration of non-government schools.

Together the three sectors also teased out how they could better align the public school improvement process with the non-government school registration process. The MOU does this, and it enables the alignment of public and independent and Catholic schools across a quality assurance process.

Public schools, Catholic schools and independent schools all have similar requirements and processes for reporting critical incidences and for ensuring they are compliant with the relevant requirements around safe and quality schooling. Canberra parents can be confident that these MOUs allow me to assure the community that our schools are providing high quality care, and they allow the individual schools to assure their local communities that they are also providing quality education.

MADAM SPEAKER: Supplementary question, Mr Hanson.

MR HANSON: Minister, will you as the minister for all schools condemn those in our community who seek to label independent schools as “blazer schools”?

MS BURCH: Mr Hanson knows full well that I take great pride in being a minister for all our schools. The signing of these MOUs and the understanding across all our sectors demonstrates that I have great faith in the diversity of our education system.

Mr Hanson: On a point of order on relevance, Madam Speaker. The question was very specific as to whether she will condemn those who seek to label the independent schools as “blazer schools”. I ask the minister to respond to that.

MADAM SPEAKER: I was listening to Minister Burch. She had got less than 30 seconds into her answer, but I will ask her to be relevant to the question.

Ms Burch: I have completed my answer.

Transport—light rail

MR COE: My question is to the Minister for Capital Metro. Minister, the transport for Canberra document completed under your watch for 2012 to 2031 encourages the

ACT government to “adopt an operating speed standard of 40 kilometres an hour for the rapid service to guide the infrastructure investment program”. The capital metro business case, as well as the environmental impact statement, both indicate that it will take approximately 25 minutes to complete a journey from Gungahlin to the city. Taking 25 minutes to complete 12 kilometres is equal to 28 kilometres an hour. This is an ambitious speed, with Gold Coast’s light rail travelling at just 22 kilometres an hour and Melbourne’s light rail system going considerably less. Minister, has the ACT government abandoned its aim of adopting a 40 kilometres an hour rapid public transport service for Canberra?

MR CORBELL: I am not responsible for the transport for Canberra policy. That, of course, is my colleague the Minister for Planning, but I am happy to address the issues in relation to the operation of the capital metro project. What I would say is that no, the key issue is about frequency and reliability, as well as travel time. Of course, the point to be made is that—

Mr Coe: Buses are more frequent.

MR CORBELL: Mr Coe says that he believes buses are more frequent, but are they going to be more frequent and more reliable if they are stuck in traffic with the cars all the way up and down Northbourne Avenue—

Mr Coe interjecting—

MADAM SPEAKER: Order, Mr Coe! Remember you are on a warning, Mr Coe.

MR CORBELL: when the journey from Gungahlin to the city along Northbourne Avenue takes over 50 minutes in the year 2030 under business as usual scenarios? How frequent, reliable and rapid will bus services be then? And that is exactly why we are building capital metro light rail, because in the year it starts, 10 years later, 10 years after that and 10 years after that, it will still be delivering services every five minutes at the same travel time whilst congestion continues to be a problem for other forms along that corridor.

MADAM SPEAKER: A supplementary question, Mr Coe.

MR COE: Minister, how many trams will you need to purchase to get a greater frequency than is currently served by ACTION between Gungahlin and the city?

MR CORBELL: I am happy to seek some advice on that for the member but I would also point out to the member that of course building light rail gives you far greater carrying capacity than the bus network is able to deliver. That is particularly the case if the buses are stuck with all the cars, which is of course the Liberal Party’s policy position.

MADAM SPEAKER: Supplementary question, Mr Wall.

MR WALL: Minister, what work has been completed by the Capital Metro Agency which allows you to estimate a 25-minute travel time?

MR CORBELL: Very detailed work.

MADAM SPEAKER: Supplementary question, Mr Wall.

MR WALL: Minister, will you publish the work that has been completed to estimate the 25-minute travel time? How many stops would need to be abolished for light rail to achieve a speed of 40 kilometres per hour average?

MR CORBELL: The second part of Mr Wall's question is hypothetical. In relation to the first part, all of the relevant information is already publicly available.

Budget—community sector levy

MS LAWDER: My question is to the Minister for Community Services. Minister, in estimates hearings community sector representatives voiced their concern about the extension of the community sector reform program levy of 0.34 per cent in the 2015-16 ACT budget. They said that they had not been consulted or informed that it was going to be re-applied for two years. Minister, what is the indexation rate for community sector organisations when adjusted for the community sector reform program levy of 0.34 per cent?

MS BERRY: The indexation of the community sector funding has reduced from 2.9 per cent last financial year to 2.7 per cent in 2015-16 due to the decrease in the wage cost index.

Ms Lawder: On a point of order, Madam Speaker, about relevance. My question was about when it was adjusted for the 0.34 per cent community sector program levy, not adjusted for the wage cost index.

MADAM SPEAKER: Do you have anything to add to the answer, Ms Berry?

MS BERRY: No, Madam Speaker.

MADAM SPEAKER: A supplementary question, Ms Lawder.

MS LAWDER: Minister, when was the indexation rate for community sector organisations last reviewed, and when was it last compared to other jurisdictions?

MS BERRY: I do not think I can give the member information on when the actual rates were reviewed, but for the 2014-15 budget these rates were applied to be eligible for community sector funding. They were calculated on the wage-price index, which will reduce by 0.25 per cent to 0.75 per cent, and on the consumer price index, which will remain the same, at about 2.5 per cent.

Ms Lawder: Point of order, Madam Speaker.

MADAM SPEAKER: A point of order.

Ms Lawder: I was referring specifically to the 2015-16 budget. I think Ms Berry was referring to 2014-15 figures. The question was: when was the indexation rate for community sector organisations last reviewed, and when was it last compared to other jurisdictions?

MADAM SPEAKER: I ask the minister, in accordance with the standing orders, to be directly relevant to the question.

MS BERRY: The index is reviewed annually. As I said at the start of my answer, I will bring some information back to the Assembly on the exact amount that the member is after.

MADAM SPEAKER: Supplementary question, Mrs Jones.

MRS JONES: Minister, did you or your directorate follow the undertakings given by the ACT government set out in the social compact, available online on the government's time to talk website, when considering reapplying the community sector reform program levy?

MS BERRY: There have been a number of conversations with the community sector about the 0.34 per cent levy. Certainly the savings that have been made to the sector since the 0.34 per cent community sector levy was introduced two years ago have meant that there have been red tape reforms achieved through the levy of \$2.4 million. It is expected that—

Ms Lawder: Point of order, Madam Speaker.

MADAM SPEAKER: Point of order. Can you stop the clock, please.

Ms Lawder: The question related to the social compact which the ACT government signed with community sector organisations a few years ago, specifically—not about conversations they have had recently about the community sector compact.

MADAM SPEAKER: Now that Ms Lawder has reminded Minister Berry of the question, could I remind the minister of the provisions of standing order 118(a) and ask her to address the issue in relation to the social compact?

MS BERRY: Sure, Madam Speaker. I was not Minister for Community Services a couple of years ago; so I will have to bring information back on whether there were conversations with the community sector.

MADAM SPEAKER: Supplementary question, Mrs Jones.

MRS JONES: Minister, what community feedback, if any, did your directorate take into account when deciding to extend the community sector reform program levy of 0.34 per cent in the ACT's 2015-16 budget?

MS BERRY: The ACT government and the Community Services Directorate took into account all of the feedback from the community services sector.

Environment—water quality

DR BOURKE: My question is to the Minister for the Environment. Minister, can you outline how the basin priority project will improve the long-term water quality of the ACT's lakes and waterways and the broader Murrumbidgee River catchment?

MR CORBELL: I thank Dr Bourke for his question. I am very pleased to say that the ACT basin priority project is a key initiative of this government. It is a commitment we have with our Greens colleague, Minister Rattenbury, and it is one that is directly aimed at improving water quality in a broad range of catchments in the ACT's urban lakes and waterways. Of course, we are the largest city in the Murray-Darling basin, and our waterways and urban lakes and ponds are an important part of our natural amenity. They are an important part of our urban and rural ecosystems and they are critical to managing water quality from our city into the broader Murray-Darling basin.

It is for these reasons that both the ACT and commonwealth governments have collectively allocated \$93.5 million over five years to reduce the impact of stormwater, sedimentation and other pollutants on the ACT's waterways—our urban lakes, our ponds and urban waterways. The way we will improve long-term water quality is by making sure that we have a comprehensive dataset that understands the pollution loads and where they are occurring, putting in place this \$93.5 million funding commitment investment in terms of infrastructure to improve water quality, and also having ongoing community education and engagement around what we each can do as Canberrans living in the suburbs and living in the city to reduce pollution entering our waterways and contributing to problems like blue-green algae, which we know is a big issue for a number of our urban streams, lakes and other water bodies.

The six priority catchments as part of the basin priority project are the upper Molonglo, the lower Molonglo, Fyshwick, west Belconnen, Yarralumla Creek and the Lake Tuggeranong catchment. This is a very comprehensive suite of urban catchment areas that we believe need to be better managed and where we can significantly improve water quality. To do that we are going to need to work closely with the community. We are going to make sure we get the best possible fit of infrastructure on the ground.

This will be one of the single largest urban waterway projects in Australia when you consider the scope and the range of measures that will be deployed on the ground. The options will see a strong level of community endorsement. They will have detailed technical and economic analysis to back them up. When we start delivering those next year, Canberrans will see that there is a very big program to address problems with water quality in all those catchments I mentioned, and that this government is committed to making sure our urban waterways are healthier and more able to be enjoyed and used every day of the year with fewer occasions of pollution occurring.

MADAM SPEAKER: A supplementary question, Dr Bourke.

DR BOURKE: Minister, can you tell us more about the options that have been developed for improving water quality in the six priority catchments?

MR CORBELL: I thank Dr Bourke for his supplementary. Yes, I can advise the Assembly that in fact there are over 150 possible water quality improvement options that have been identified as part of the basin priority project to date. These include options to slow down water flow and promote sedimentation such as urban wetlands, swales, naturalisation of concrete stormwater channels.

Other options include mechanical infrastructure such as stormwater treatment systems, gross pollutant traps and the co-location of water for use as irrigation as an alternative to potable water supply. For example, in the Lake Tuggeranong catchment, studies have shown on occasion that Lake Tuggeranong suffers from very high nutrient levels in stormwater run-off from its surrounding urban areas and when this occurs the lake is closed for swimming and other uses due to blue-green algal blooms.

Options for the Lake Tuggeranong catchment include constructed wetlands and ponds, stormwater harvesting and reuse for irrigating playing fields and other green open spaces, upgrading and retrofitting the existing gross pollutant traps. There are also a range of in-lake options such as floating wetlands, submerged bubblers, inflow baffles, aeration fountains and in-lake reticulation systems.

I think what you can see there is that this government is embarking on a very comprehensive program to improve water quality in areas like Lake Tuggeranong. I know my colleagues from Brindabella are very keen to see this work progressed.

Equally, the work that is happening in the Yarralumla Creek catchment, in the Woden Valley, is very important for a catchment that has very little sedimentation control and significant levels of pollution flowing directly into that part of the Molonglo. So there are great opportunities to improve water quality and improve our natural environment.

MADAM SPEAKER: A supplementary question, Ms Porter.

MS PORTER: Minister, can you outline how the community has been consulted on the options developed?

MR CORBELL: I thank Ms Porter for her supplementary. Yes, there has been very extensive community consultation to date, and that is ongoing. We are holding two open house consultations in each of the catchment areas that I have mentioned. For example, between 28 July and 6 August there were two open house consultation meetings in each of those catchment areas that I mentioned. These were very well attended. They informed the community about their local catchment and its water quality issues and allowed people to give their views on which options would work for their catchment and community.

In addition, an electronic open house has been running, where people can give their comments online through the Environment and Planning Directorate website. All of the material at the open house sessions is also available online, including the complete list of treatment options for each of the catchments and also background on the water quality issues in each of those catchments. That feedback is able to continue to be received online until early September.

In addition, we have engaged technical advice to help inform our decision making as a government through the project management group. A community advisory group has also been set up to help guide the project. So very clearly we have a strong commitment to public consultation because Canberrans care about their lakes and ponds, they care about their urban waterways and they want to see them improved. We have secured the money to do that. We have identified the options and now we are letting Canberrans have their say as well.

MADAM SPEAKER: Supplementary question, Ms Fitzharris.

MS FITZHARRIS: Minister, can you tell us more about the survey underway to collect feedback from Canberrans and residents of surrounding councils on how they use their lakes and waterways and their views on water quality?

MR CORBELL: I thank Ms Fitzharris for her supplementary. A survey has been undertaken as part of a research project funded through the basin priority project. It is looking at the social expectations of waterways and water use behaviour in the ACT and region. We as a government have engaged the University of Canberra to undertake the research study and survey to help establish what social expectations the community has around the use and amenity of our urban waterways. To manage our waterways effectively, we need to know how residents of the ACT experience their waterways, what they value most about them, how they view issues of water quality and what behaviours they undertake that can affect water quality.

The survey will not only focus on the ACT; it also covers the surrounding upper Murrumbidgee catchment, including local government areas in Queanbeyan, Palerang, Cooma-Monaro and the Yass valley. The target number for responses to the survey is 3,000, and I am pleased to say that we have seen significant progress towards that target.

The findings of the survey will help the government to identify further strategies to improve water quality and environmental health in the ACT and in the surrounding region, a very important part of underpinning this major investment that we are making in improving the health of Canberra's waterways and Canberra's lakes and ponds, and providing opportunities to have a better environment for everybody to enjoy.

Schools—Telopea Park

MR DOSZPOT: My question is to the Chief Minister. Chief Minister, yesterday, 12 August 2015, in the Assembly you moved an amendment to my motion that was ultimately passed and warmly endorsed by Minister Rattenbury. You both modestly later claimed victory for what you described as you delivering what the community wanted. Chief Minister, can you confirm whether the former section of Montgomery oval resumed from Telopea Park School will now return to the school and under what arrangements will that be done?

MR BARR: Yes, I can confirm that, and it will be in accordance with the resolution agreed to by the Assembly yesterday.

MADAM SPEAKER: A supplementary question, Mr Doszpot.

MR DOSZPOT: Minister, what assurances have you provided to the school in respect of access to the tennis courts and their continued exclusive usage of the courts and their change rooms?

MR BARR: I provided that assurance yesterday in the Assembly but what I also indicated was that outside school hours—weekends, school holidays—the courts should be available for public use, and I would have thought that would be warmly endorsed by all in this place.

MADAM SPEAKER: A supplementary question, Mr Smyth.

MR SMYTH: Minister, has, or will, the school's previous lease on the section of Montgomery oval that was resumed now been reinstated? If no, what controls will the school have over future developments on that site?

Mr Barr: Sorry, I missed the first part of your—

MADAM SPEAKER: Yes, so did I. Can you start that off again, please, Mr Smyth?

MR SMYTH: Sure. Minister, has, or will, the school's previous lease on the section of Montgomery oval that was resumed now been reinstated? If not, what controls will the school have over future developments on that site?

MR BARR: The education department would, I presume, be the holder of the lease but I will seek further details on the best way to make that particular transition. The government's intent is firstly that the facility be available for the Telopea school and that that school would have priority use of course during school time.

I would seek an arrangement whereby the facility would be made available to the general public, as is common place with sporting facilities at government schools, outside of school hours. There may be a range of ways that that can be arranged, either by a hiring and booking basis for the facilities or simply by removing the locks, as is the case on most publicly owned public school provided sports facilities.

MADAM SPEAKER: A supplementary question, Mr Smyth.

MR SMYTH: Chief Minister, what feedback have you had from the Telopea Park School community on your comments yesterday?

MR BARR: I have read some feedback in the media. I have not had any direct comments to me at this point, other than what I have read and seen in the media.

Planning—Manuka precinct

MR WALL: My question is to the Minister for Community Services regarding the Manuka occasional childcare association, or Mocca. Minister, what discussions have you had with the Chief Minister about the proposal to move Mocca to Telopea school?

MS BERRY: None.

MADAM SPEAKER: Supplementary question, Mr Wall.

MR WALL: Minister, what discussions did you have with Mr Barr and/or Mr Rattenbury regarding the proposed land swap and the government's position on this issue?

MS BERRY: The only conversations I have had with Mr Barr or Mr Rattenbury are—with Mr Barr, I had one after Mr Barr mentioned on ABC radio that he was looking at a proposal for the Griffith site for Mocca. I had a conversation with Mr Barr about that, whether that was a proposal that the government could look at. I have had a similar conversation with Mr Rattenbury.

MADAM SPEAKER: A supplementary question, Ms Lawder.

MS LAWDER: Minister, why did the government propose to establish a childcare centre on the Telopea Park site, given a proposal to establish a preschool on that site was rejected?

MS BERRY: I am not the minister responsible for that. I think that that would be a question for EDD.

MADAM SPEAKER: A supplementary question, Ms Lawder.

MS LAWDER: Minister, what future involvement will you or your directorate have in finding a suitable site for Mocca?

MS BERRY: The ACT government will continue to work with the stakeholders, as the ACT government will do with all organisations. It will continue to have a conversation with Mocca about the proposals.

Mr Hanson: Why didn't they want you in their photo, then?

MS BERRY: I was in a photo with Mocca.

Mr Hanson interjecting—

MADAM SPEAKER: Order! This is irrelevant, Mr Hanson.

Asbestos—government response

MR SMYTH: My question is to the Chief Minister. Chief Minister, on 19 February this year two out-of-order petitions were tabled in the chamber in relation to Mr Fluffy loose-fill asbestos issues. This included a paper petition with 1,089 signatures and an electronic petition with 1,283 signatures. Chief Minister, while not obliged under the standing orders to respond, will you respond to these petitions?

MR BARR: I will be tabling the government's quarterly update in relation to all matters concerning the asbestos task force after question time today.

MADAM SPEAKER: Supplementary question, Mr Smyth.

MR SMYTH: Chief Minister, given that the public might not necessarily be aware of the form of words required to make a petition in order, will you now reconsider and respond to these petitions?

MR BARR: I believe I have already responded to the issues contained within those petitions. If there are any outstanding issues that the government has not responded to through various mechanisms, in terms of the regular updates to the Assembly, answers to questions through the task force or answers to questions from members in this place—if there is anything that has not been responded to, I will endeavour to respond to that.

MADAM SPEAKER: A supplementary question, Mr Hanson.

MR HANSON: Chief Minister, have you read the petition from the 2,372 petitioners, and do you have a view on any of their specific requests?

MR BARR: I have received representations on a variety of issues from a variety of people that I have responded to or endeavoured to respond to through the asbestos task force if issues have been detailed.

Mr Hanson: Madam Speaker, on a point of order.

MADAM SPEAKER: A point of order.

Mr Hanson: I appreciate that it is early days, but my question was specifically regarding the petition that was provided by 2,372 petitioners—not the generic representations that the minister has received but on the specific issues contained in the petition.

MADAM SPEAKER: The form of words in Mr Hanson's question was: have you read the petition? So I would ask the minister to be directly relevant.

Mr Barr: I have completed my answer.

MADAM SPEAKER: A supplementary question, Mr Hanson.

MR HANSON: Chief Minister, when will you establish the board of inquiry as has been requested by the 2,372 petitioners?

MR BARR: I have already indicated that the government's priority through the task force is to complete the demolition program. It would be appropriate at the completion of the demolition program for such a board of inquiry to be established.

ACT Emergency Services Agency—reform

MS PORTER: My question is to the minister for emergency services. Minister, I understand the Emergency Services Agency is currently implementing a reform agenda to better serve the ESA and the broader community. How is the ESA implementing this reform agenda?

MS BURCH: I thank Ms Porter for her interest in the emergency services of this city. The ESA strategic reform agenda, or the SRA, is the next phase of a reform process of our Emergency Services Agency. I spoke to some of this yesterday and I have no doubt that as we get to justice and community safety areas of the budget this afternoon I will have the opportunity to talk a bit more on it.

The strategic reform agenda will support the ESA to continue operating as a high performing emergency services organisation—indeed amongst the best in Australia—and it will position it to best meet the challenges of the years ahead. It will also enable the ESA to mature as a unified entity with four dedicated operational services.

Contrary to speculation from those opposite, the ESA will not be changing the four service chief officers; rather, the SRA seeks to create three new areas to better support and coordinate the agency's enabling services. These new areas include: risk and planning to help create a safe community; governance, logistics and infrastructure management; and people and culture, which includes training, workforce planning and volunteer management.

The reforms the ESA are undertaking over the next five years will be targeted to: respect the identity of the four operational services whilst ensuring the ESA operates as one coherent whole; retaining operational excellence; embedding risk management, including corporate and investment decision making; investing in developing our senior leadership and people skills; modernising governance arrangements; and promoting an inclusive and supportive culture.

It is clear the ESA proposes to maintain the four chief service officers in addition to creating those three new areas: risk and planning; governance, logistics and infrastructure management; and people and culture.

The ESA has already undertaken extensive planning and consultation as part of this work and will continue to do that across staff, volunteers, unions and associations on any changes to the agency. The SRA will enable our Emergency Services Agency to become an even higher performing organisation, one that continues to improve the quality of service delivery for our community and meet the challenges in the years ahead. It will also enable the ESA to mature as a single entity, and this strategy has the government's full support.

MADAM SPEAKER: Supplementary question, Ms Porter.

MS PORTER: How is the ESA consulting with and involving staff in these reforms?

MS BURCH: The ESA executive team are committed to working with the commissioner to implement the reform agenda in an open, transparent and consultative way. To ensure this and to inform the direction of the reform agenda, an internal communications strategy has been developed and implemented. The key objective of the SRA communications strategy is to ensure that all staff, volunteers and government and non-government stakeholders have access to timely and accurate information about the SRA and are provided with opportunities for feedback and to ask questions.

Since the launch of the SRA in March this year, these consultative processes have taken place: 24 consultative forums and workshops; four cafe-style “bring-your-own-coffee-along” updates and question sessions; 21 visits to front-line services; and union consultative meetings. The ESA commissioner has also discussed these reforms with ESA volunteers on seven occasions, including during a meeting that I attended with volunteer groups in June this year.

I have also personally made many visits to our stations. At these visits I have had an opportunity to talk with members of Fire & Rescue, the Ambulance Service, SES and rural fire to hear from some of our front-line workforce their thoughts on the reform agenda. It has been good to see how engaged they are in the process and their interest in this process. I encourage them to contribute to the reform, because it is significant for them. The commissioner and the chief officers recognise that without the support of their workforce the reform agenda will be slow.

It is a great opportunity for me to be able to say here that there is absolute commitment to support the men and women in our emergency services to work through this reform agenda. I would like to take the opportunity to put on record my thanks and appreciation to all the men and women in our emergency services and acknowledge the work they do.

MADAM SPEAKER: A supplementary question, Ms Fitzharris.

MS FITZHARRIS: Minister, what are some of the key objectives of the reform agenda across the ESA, and how will the ESA be reporting on these reforms?

MS BURCH: I thank Ms Fitzharris for her question. The ESA currently has some of the fastest response times in the country, which is something this community should be proud of. It provides a service that is second to none. We as a Canberra community are well served by our emergency services and this reform agenda paves the way for the ESA to best position itself to meet future challenges as this city grows.

The reform package draws on advice and recommendations that have flowed from a number of workshops, reviews, reports and audits. The strategic reform agenda sets out key priority areas that will see a realigned ESA structure, a new corporate and strategic plan, setting absolutely the highest standards in service delivery, investment in leadership and people management, and rigorous decision making.

The strategic reform agenda aims to achieve the following outcomes: to integrate risk management into planning and decision making; to respect the identity of our four operational services but to operate as one cohesive whole; to continually improve our services to the community; to use performance information to improve what we do and how we do it; to modernise our governance arrangements; to evolve our leadership and people skills; to demonstrate an inclusive and supportive culture; and to reflect the diversity of our community in the ESA workforce.

Overall this strategy will allow the ESA to continue to deliver first-class services to our community on behalf of the government.

MADAM SPEAKER: A supplementary, question, Dr Bourke.

DR BOURKE: Minister, how do these reforms complement the work the ESA is doing to support the diverse workforce and progress the women in emergency services strategy?

MS BURCH: I thank Dr Bourke for his question. As the first female Minister for Police and Emergency Services in the ACT I am proud to oversee and have a portfolio responsibility for the Emergency Services Agency and I have a keen interest in ensuring successful delivery of the women in emergency services strategy. The women in emergency services strategy is a critical element of the overall strategic reform agenda, and improving the representation of women in emergency service activities will be a key focus over the coming years.

To support this focus the ESA is working through the development of a strategy, the pathway to a diverse and inclusive workforce, and the overarching aim of that document is to provide greater visibility and opportunities for collective learning, for contributions from personnel within the ESA and all the while working to achieve the broader intention of a more inclusive and diverse workforce. The pathway will include some longer term goals focusing on key themes of messaging and marketing, policy, recruitment standards and training. These goals incorporate moving the focus to make sure that we have a diverse and inclusive emergency services agency here in the ACT.

The women in emergency services strategy is a good, positive step forward to a diverse workforce and I am looking forward to seeing the difference this strategy makes in the coming years.

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

Supplementary answers to questions without notice

Public housing—waiting lists

MS BERRY: During question time on 11 August 2015, I took a series of questions from Ms Lawder and Mr Smyth in relation to the public housing waiting list. In response to the members' questions, I can inform the Assembly that there is no separate waiting list for management-initiated transfers or out-of-turn transfers; they are included on the transfer list under clause 28(2) of the public housing rental assistance program, which says:

The housing commissioner may require a tenant of the housing commissioner to transfer to another public housing dwelling for the purpose of repair, renovation, disposal or redevelopment of the dwelling occupied by the tenant.

As these tenants have been required to transfer by Housing ACT rather than having applied for a transfer themselves, they are classified as out-of-turn or management-initiated transfer applicants. As such, they are given preference in the allocation of new dwellings. For the purposes of public reporting, these tenants are included in the priority housing category.

It is expected that all tenants who are relocating under the public housing renewal program will be classified as out-of-turn transfers. The government has committed to building and purchasing replacement housing before tenants are moved under the renewal program. This rolling program of generally delivering replacement homes before tenants are moved will mean that the usual program of allocating homes to new housing applicants, the overall housing register, will not be impacted by the housing renewal program. However, there may be some fluctuations in certain locations across Canberra, as is the case now.

As a general rule, the allocation process is always about getting the best match of applicant to the property that is available. Where it is appropriate for a particular individual, a tenant may be given the chance to move earlier. This has already been the case for a small number of tenants from Owen flats on Northbourne Avenue. For reporting purposes, management-initiated transfers and out-of-turn applications are now included in the priority category, which is published on the directorate website.

Budget—community sector levy

MS BERRY: Regarding questions on the community sector reform levy and indexation today, the rate of indexation is reviewed annually, as I said, by the Treasury. The 2015-16 indexation was set at 2.7 per cent in response to a slight change in the wage price index. This is higher than other jurisdictions, which typically set their indexation against the consumer price index. The sector reform levy of 0.34 per cent is levied only on those organisations receiving funding of more than \$150,000 during the financial year.

In relation to the social compact, as I said, the government continues to have conversations with the sector, and regularly consults with the sector, at the organisational level, through peak bodies and through the Joint Community Government Reference Group. The JCRG's terms of reference include the provision of advice to government under the social compact.

Paper

Madam Speaker presented the following paper:

Ethics and Integrity Adviser for Members of the Legislative Assembly for the Australian Capital Territory, pursuant to Continuing Resolution 6A of the Assembly of 10 April 2008, as amended 21 August 2008—Report for the period 1 July 2014 to 30 June 2015, dated 22 July 2015.

Legislative Assembly—accommodation

Statement by Speaker

MADAM SPEAKER: For the information of members, I want to update the Assembly on the accommodation project for the expanding Assembly. Members will be aware that a number of options were considered in the process to find a solution to accommodating 25 members and staff in the Assembly building. In early 2015, the Chief Minister and I agreed that the most sensible and cost-effective option was for some of the support staff of the Office of the Legislative Assembly to relocate to nearby premises. This would free up areas for the necessary refitting to accommodate the increased number of Assembly members.

Cox Architecture was selected to develop the fit-out and interior design, and have worked closely with a project management team. The team comprises relevant OLA staff and suitably experienced project managers from the Chief Minister, Treasury and Economic Development Directorate. I understand that all parties have been given briefings on proposed design processes and the construction program.

The Chief Minister and I also agreed that a project control group chaired by the Clerk of the Assembly was to meet regularly to review key milestones and play a key role in ensuring that the project comes in on time and on budget. This group comprises other senior project management staff involved in the project. My senior adviser and the Chief Minister's chief of staff participate in the project control group as observers.

Earlier this year, after consideration of several options and negotiations with current occupants, it was agreed that OLA would relocate to level 1 of the North Building adjacent to London Circuit. For that to occur, some staff from the Justice and Community Safety Directorate will shortly relocate to premises in Moore Street, and the National Trust has recently moved to new premises in the Griffin Centre.

In May this year, expressions of interest were invited from the construction industry to undertake the fit-out works for both the North Building site and the Assembly building. From that process, a short-list of firms, all of them reputable quality firms, were invited to lodge a formal tender for the works. The tenders have been evaluated, and the territory is currently in the process of conducting pre-contact negotiations with the preferred tenderer. Once the contract is settled and executed, the name of the successful tenderer will be announced.

One of the early priorities will be to develop an agreed site management plan to enable the works to proceed with minimal disruption. I am advised that construction work is expected to start on the North Building in early September, with OLA moving to their new space in January 2016. Work will then start in the Assembly building, with a completion timetable of mid 2016.

I must warn members that while every attempt will be made to minimise the impact of construction work, there will inevitably be some disruption and inconvenience. As undertaken in my response to the recommendations of the estimates committee, I will keep members informed of the progress of this important project on at least a quarterly basis. The project will pave the way for the significant growth in Assembly membership that the Assembly agreed to adopt this time last year.

Paper

Mr Barr presented the following paper:

Mr Fluffy loose-fill asbestos—Update on the Government response to the issue—Quarterly report—31 March to 30 June 2015.

Financial Management Act—consolidated financial report Paper and statement by minister

MR BARR (Molonglo—Chief Minister, Treasurer, Minister for Economic Development, Minister for Urban Renewal and Minister for Tourism and Events): For the information of members, I present the following paper:

Financial Management Act, pursuant to section 26—Consolidated Financial Report—Financial quarter ending 30 June 2015—2014-15 Interim Result.

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

Leave granted.

MR BARR: The June interim outcome headline net operating balance for the general government sector was a deficit of \$483.1 million for the 2014-15 financial year. This deficit was \$114 million lower than the estimated deficit at the time of the 2015-16 budget of \$597.4 million. This reduction in the size of the deficit is mainly attributed to higher than forecast commonwealth grants due to the early payment of financial assistance grants in relation to the 2015-16 fiscal year; lower than forecast supplies and services expenses, mainly reflecting project expenditure delays and the decapitalisation of works for the Constitution Avenue project which were forecast to be expensed; the timing of payments as procurement processes are completed; and lower than forecast grants and purchase services, mainly due to the timing of payments for purchasers of properties under the asbestos eradication scheme.

Net debt for the GGS as at 30 June 2015 increased by \$602.2 million from the 30 June 2014 result of \$312.7 million. The net increase is mainly associated with the need for loan funding from the commonwealth to meet the costs of the asbestos eradication scheme. Net financial liabilities of the GGS as at 30 June 2015 increased by \$1,357.5 million from the June 2014 result. This largely reflects a change in a defined benefit superannuation liability valuation estimate for 30 June 2015 based on a discount rate of 3.66 per cent compared to 4.08 per cent at 30 June 2014.

Taxation waivers in 2014-15 were \$18.15 million lower than forecast. This relates to conveyance duty waivers for residents purchasing a new home as part of the asbestos eradication scheme. Instead of an instrument under the Financial Management Act being provided for each waiver, the asbestos legislation subsequently determined that these waivers would be treated as concessions; therefore, these waivers are now recognised as revenue forgone against the revenue from conveyances.

I commend the June interim report to the Assembly.

Papers

Mr Barr presented the following paper:

Public Accounts—Standing Committee—Report 11—Report on Annual and Financial Reports 2013-14—Recommendation 12—Final costs for the rebranding of ACTEW Corporation Limited to Icon Water Limited.

Mr Corbell presented the following papers:

Coroners Act, pursuant to subsection 57(5)—Report of Coroner—Death of Rachel Sarah Prime—

Report, dated 20 February 2015.

Executive response—ACT Ambulance Service issues.

Suicide Reduction Target—Report on ACT deaths due to suicide and information about available front line suicide prevention and postvention services and support, pursuant to the resolution of the Assembly of 28 March 2012.

Auditor-General's Act—Auditor-General's Report No. 4/2014—Gastroenterology and Hepatology Unit, Canberra Hospital—Government response.

Assembly resolution—government response Paper and statement by minister

MR CORBELL (Molonglo—Deputy Chief Minister, Attorney-General, Minister for Health, Minister for the Environment and Minister for Capital Metro): For the information of members, I present the following paper:

Healthcare in ACT Special Schools, pursuant to the resolution of the Assembly of 6 May 2015

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

Leave granted.

MR CORBELL: The response I am tabling today reinforces the ACT government's commitment to ensuring that children with special needs have the appropriate level of healthcare support to enable them to attend school. For over 30 years Black Mountain, Malkara and Cranleigh specialist schools have each had a dedicated level 1 registered nurse. Six years ago an additional level 1 registered nurse was funded by ACT Health for Black Mountain School to respond to health needs at the school. This is referred to as the specialist school nurse model.

In 2012 ACT Health initiated a pilot project following an increase in requests from parents to enable their children with special needs to have equitable access to education. The pilot project was developed in collaboration with the Education and

Training Directorate. This new model was designed to meet the ongoing complexities of the healthcare needs of children with special needs whilst ensuring appropriate utilisation of our nursing resources across all ACT schools. The model was based on national and international best practice.

During the pilot project an additional registered nurse was placed at Woden School to meet the needs of one student with the understanding that the placement would be renewed pending the outcome of the pilot project. The pilot project resulted in the development of the healthcare access at schools, or HAAS, model. The HAAS model was considered a contemporary and sustainable solution for students with healthcare needs that are greater than can be managed by the Environment and Training Directorate's self-management plans and first-aid policy.

The HAAS model offers individualised care plans tailored to each student's health needs developed by a registered nurse in partnership with parents and in consultation with other health professionals. The HAAS model enables students to also receive healthcare support from learning support assistants who are already involved in classroom care of the student.

The LSAs were to be trained and assessed as competent in undertaking the health procedures by a registered nurse. The HAAS model proposed that nurses with higher level competency, level 2, be employed rather than the level 1 nurses under the existing specialist school nurse model. This was to account for the expanding role of the nurse from a focus only on providing care to a student to also providing healthcare education and training to the LSA and assessment.

Early in 2014 the former Minister Gallagher and Minister Burch agreed to transition from the specialist school nurse model to the HAAS model. This was to be implemented in both specialist and mainstream schools. As a result, over the year children with chronic and complex healthcare needs in mainstream schools were transitioned into the HAAS model.

Black Mountain and Woden schools were identified as the first two specialist schools that would transition to the HAAS model for the 2015 academic year. During the second half of 2014 students' care needs were assessed, care plans developed and LSAs trained in preparation. In reality the one child with chronic and complex healthcare needs at Woden School was transitioned in the last term of last year.

In line with the HAAS model, the level 1 nurses—two at Black Mountain and one at Woden School—were replaced by two level 2 nurses serving Black Mountain, Woden and the mainstream schools. The role and number of LSAs was also expanded. Malkara and Cranleigh specialist schools did not transition to the HAAS model and currently provide health care to students under the specialist school nurse model—that is, they each currently have a dedicated level 1 registered nurse.

Early at the beginning of this school year concerns were raised by specialist school communities, including parents and unions, about the implementation of the HAAS model. Concerns related to the impact of the changes on the school's capacity to respond to first aid or unexpected health incidents in the absence of a site-based nurse,

and a perceived increased workload for education staff particularly for learning support assistance. In response, ACT Health reinstated two registered nurses, a level 1 and one of the existing level 2 nurses back onsite at Black Mountain School. In addition the Assembly passed a resolution in May this year in relation to the matter, and members would be familiar with that resolution.

In implementing the resolution, ACT Health, in collaboration with ETD, undertook the review of the needs of children in specialist schools and the support and care required. To ensure completeness, the scope of the review was expanded to cover all four specialist schools. The review was led by a joint governance committee of ACT Health and ETD, which initiated the formation of an industrial consultative committee, including representatives from the AEU, CPSU and ANMF. A consultation process was devised to ensure all stakeholders, which included parents, teachers and school staff, registered nurses and other ACT Health staff, had the opportunity to participate via face-to-face focus groups, completion of an online survey, structured telephone interviews and/or voluntary telephone or email feedback.

The outcomes were 144 specialist school staff, including teachers, learning support assistants, executive teachers, deputy principals and principals, attended one of four focus groups over a one-week period from 9 to 15 June. Twelve parents attended separate focus groups at the schools on the same dates following the staff consultations. The four specialist school registered nurses also attended a focus group on 29 June. Given parents of children with special needs can experience difficulty attending events, structured telephone interviews were also offered to 58 parents and 14 participated—24 per cent of the parent cohort.

Some 139 stakeholders participated in the online survey over a two-week period. Thirty per cent of these were parents, including the 14 parents who participated by telephone; 25 per cent were LSAs; 24 per cent were teaching staff, including principals, deputy principals and executive teachers; and 21 per cent were nurses, paediatricians, health and education managers. Some 38 per cent of surveyed participants also attended focus groups, and this is possibly an underrepresentation as the survey was open a week before face-to-face consultations began.

The consultation with the specialist school communities found that continuation of an onsite nurse at the specialist schools was a common theme from parents and school staff. Parents indicated they drew comfort from a nursing presence. Parents and teachers saw the role of a nurse at a school to include application of nursing knowledge and experience during first aid and unexpected health incidents and having the ability to interpret symptoms and the knowledge of all the students' medical history and health needs. A strong theme from teachers was a need to maintain an educational focus in the classroom and issues with maintaining duty of care to all students if the teacher was required to attend to the specific health needs of one child.

Some LSAs from Black Mountain School made positive comments on LSAs undertaking health tasks under the HAAS model and commented on the improved access to offsite school excursions for students. Having a dedicated person to provide for the students' first-aid needs had strong support: 24 per cent of survey respondents felt this could be a trained first-aid officer; 65 per cent felt this should be a nurse; and others offered a combined or team idea.

Parents' stories highlighted the unique pressure that having a child with a disability brings to a family. Consultation with health professionals found that registered nurses are required to undertake professional development and to engage with the profession to maintain skills, knowledge and evidence-based practice, and that this was especially important when working in an isolated and autonomous environment such as a specialist school

Under the specialist school nurse model, the registered nurses were unable to leave the school during the day, and this precluded them from further professional development opportunities. Where the specialist school nurse model still operated, the nursing positions were not perceived as a positive career option by nurses, as evidenced by numerous failed attempts to fill vacancies.

Analysis of the feedback provided and the language used by parents and teachers conveyed the perception that all possible health issues could be resolved by an onsite nurse. However, this places unrealistic expectations on the nurse and increases the potential for breaches of scope of practice. Presuming that one nurse has the medical and first-aid knowledge of all of the students at the school poses a number of risks. The nurse cannot be in all places at once and is left juggling the routine procedures and the calls to first aid and non-routine events. This poses risks for the students and subsequently for the nurse.

The introduction of the HAAS pilot had allowed children with a HAAS care plan and a trained school staff member to safely attend offsite activities. A registered nurse is not required to be the first level response to first aid, and in emergency incidents as the designated trained first-aid officer, supported by the ETD first-aid policy, is an adequate and appropriate response. There is a widespread assumption that providing first aid is a normal function of a registered nurse, which is not the case.

In response to the consultation findings, the industrial consultative committee agreed on the following principles to guide the development of the revised HAAS model. The model needs to meet the variety of health needs experience by students attending specialist schools in a way that is not a one-size-fits-all approach. The range of healthcare needs can be catered to by people with varying levels of expertise and needs to include first-aid officers, registered nurses and learning support assistants but not teachers. A transitioning period will be required.

The healthcare tasks have been mapped to the appropriate skill level of workers as part of the review. A revised HAAS model is being developed that will comprehensively address the health needs of the entire specialist community and meet the concerns that have been raised through the consultation process. The revised HAAS model proposes a combination of level 2 registered nurses, first-aid officers and LSAs in a tiered approach to health care.

All specialist schools would have nursing services that include a nursing presence available at all schools for parents to provide advice and support on student health needs, development of care plans in partnership with parents for students with chronic and healthcare needs, consultation with other health professionals to support this care, and training and competency assessment of LSAs caring for students with chronic and complex healthcare needs.

This model provides the flexibility for the registered nurses to attend offsite meetings as necessary, for example, care planning meetings with parents and professional development opportunities in order to meet the requirements of the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency. The nursing allocation for each school in the revised HAAS model will be determined by the healthcare profile of students enrolled at the school while incorporating the broader health needs of the schools' communities.

As the student profile alters based on enrolments, graduations and changing health status a formal assessment will be undertaken each term and the nurse allocation will be altered accordingly. At present there are 24 students on the HAAS pilot enrolled in nine ACT public schools: 14 at Black Mountain; three at Woden specialist school and seven students attending mainstream schools. There are approximately eight children across Malkara and Cranleigh schools with chronic and complex care needs, but these have not yet been transitioned into the HAAS model.

Based on the current student health profile, it is envisaged that the level 2 registered nurse allocation across ACT public schools would be: one based at Black Mountain School, one based at Malkara, one based at Cranleigh and one with responsibility for Woden. The nurses based at the specialist schools will be able to support children in the HAAS program in mainstream schools in the surrounding suburbs. In addition, the revised HAAS model recommends that each specialist school strengthens first-aid capacity from the current two designated first-aid officers to four to respond to first-aid incidents and maintaining LSAs delivering healthcare task to students with complex healthcare needs after being trained and deemed competent by the level 2 registered nurses, all of whom will have a certificate IV in training and assessment.

The revised HAAS model has in-principle agreement from all the parties represented at the industrial consultative committee, subject to resolution of the questions raised by the AEU relating to competency requirements for LSAs. The AEU believes LSAs require training from a recognised training program in order to support the revised HAAS model in schools. An independent review has been offered by EDT to recommend the competency requirements for the LSAs involved in the HAAS model. It is expected this will be concluded by November.

A commitment has been made to the four specialist school communities that ACT Health will provide feedback in term 3 on the findings from the review and the proposed model for health care in the specialist schools. As minister, I am committed to presenting the proposed model to the Assembly when it is finalised. The revised HAAS model is planned to be in place for the 2016 school year.

Papers

Ms Burch presented the following papers:

Subordinate legislation (including explanatory statements unless otherwise stated)

Legislation Act, pursuant to section 64—

Board of Senior Secondary Studies Act—Board of Senior Secondary Studies

Appointment 2015 (No 1)—Disallowable Instrument DI2015-217 (LR, 3 August 2015).

Cemeteries and Crematoria Act—Cemeteries and Crematoria (Perpetual Care Trust Percentage and Perpetual Care Trust Reserve Percentage) Determination 2015—Disallowable Instrument DI2015-220 (LR, 30 July 2015).

Cemeteries and Crematoria Act and Financial Management Act—Cemeteries and Crematoria (ACT Public Cemeteries Authority Governing Board) Appointment 2015 (No 1)—Disallowable Instrument DI2015-221 (LR, 31 July 2015).

Legal Aid Act—

Legal Aid (Commissioner—ACTCOSS Nominee) Appointment 2015—Disallowable Instrument DI2015-218 (LR, 30 July 2015).

Legal Aid (Commissioner—ACT Law Society Nominee) Appointment 2015—Disallowable Instrument DI2015-219 (LR, 10 August 2015).

Tobacco Act—Tobacco (Compliance Testing Procedures) Revocation 2015 (No 1)—Disallowable Instrument DI2015-211 (LR, 23 July 2015).

Planning—variation Nos 327 and 347

MR CORBELL (Molonglo—Deputy Chief Minister, Attorney-General, Minister for Health, Minister for the Environment and Minister for Capital Metro): I seek leave to move a motion concerning variations to the territory plan Nos 327 and 347.

Leave not granted.

Standing orders—suspension

MR CORBELL (Molonglo—Deputy Chief Minister, Attorney-General, Minister for Health, Minister for the Environment and Minister for Capital Metro) (3.56): I move:

That so much of the standing orders be suspended as would prevent Mr Corbell from moving a motion concerning Variations to the Territory Plan Nos. 327 and 347.

Madam Deputy Speaker, I am moving to suspend standing orders today in relation to these two important variations to the territory plan because they relate to delivering certainty to allow for important decisions to be made about investment—investment in and the finalisation of outcomes for the capital metro project, and investment into the University of Canberra to grow the University of Canberra as a key education hub for our city.

We know that the Liberal Party have signalled that they do not support growing the University of Canberra as a place for investment, as a place for collaboration between the private sector and the university itself. They have proposed to disallow the variation to the territory plan in relation to the University of Canberra. We also know that their opposition to the capital metro project is often stated in this place. But they also know that there is a majority in this place that supports seeing the capital metro project proceed.

Mr Coe: Point of order.

MADAM DEPUTY SPEAKER: Would you sit down, Mr Corbell.

Mr Corbell: I ask you to stop the clock, Madam Deputy Speaker.

MADAM DEPUTY SPEAKER: Do you have a point of order, Mr Coe?

Mr Coe: Madam Deputy Speaker, I believe the question is about the suspension of standing orders rather than the substantive nature of the debate. Therefore I wonder whether it is particularly relevant to the question on the suspension of standing orders.

MADAM DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr Coe. You need to just explain why we—

Ms Fitzharris: Can you stop the clock?

MADAM DEPUTY SPEAKER: Yes; turn the clock off. Mr Corbell, you just need to point out why we need to suspend standing orders.

MR CORBELL: Thank you, Madam Deputy Speaker. That is exactly what I am doing—explaining the urgency behind the need to suspend standing orders to bring these motions on.

If we do not bring these motions on today, and the government proposes to negative these motions, there will continue to be uncertainty around whether or not these variations to the territory plan are able to proceed in a timely manner. That is going to hinder investment in the University of Canberra; it is going to delay their plans and their arrangements with private sector investors. At the same time, it is going to cast uncertainty over the time frames for the finalisation of planning for the capital metro project.

Both of these are critical projects for the territory. The government is of the view that we need to address these disallowance motions today. The Liberal Party have already decided that they are going to disallow them, because Mr Coe has put the motion on the notice paper. There is no reason why Mr Coe cannot stand up today and explain to us why he thinks these variations should be disallowed.

This government is not prepared to see significant uncertainty continue to exist around whether or not these variations will technically occur to the territory plan. We want to resolve that uncertainty. That is why I am moving that so much of standing orders be suspended as would prevent me from moving these motions now. The government will propose to negative its motion and therefore remove any uncertainty about these territory plan variations proceeding.

MR COE (Ginninderra) (4.00): It really is an extraordinary circumstance that we have here before us whereby the government are seeking to go around the standing

orders to have a vote on their own law, their own regulation, their own disallowable instrument. This is a disallowable instrument that has effect from the date of signature, and that is exactly what happened a couple of weeks ago, but here we have a situation where Minister Corbell moves that this Assembly reject variation No 327—

MADAM DEPUTY SPEAKER: Mr Coe, take your seat, please. Stop the clock. Mr Coe, thank you. What was that about?

Ms Burch: Point of order, Madam Speaker. I think Mr Coe's gesture to you was very unflattering and did not show you any respect whatsoever.

MR COE: On the point of order, Madam Deputy Speaker, I think there would be many people in this chamber who saw you, Madam Deputy Speaker, do exactly that to me. That was what it was in response to.

MADAM DEPUTY SPEAKER: Yes; I was asking you to sit down and I was asking for the clock to be stopped. You are disorderly. You are on a warning now. You were on a warning before, but I am not sure what time that started so I cannot utilise that and name you now. But you are on a warning. If there is any more disorder, you will be named.

The point I was making is that you are supposed to be speaking on the suspension of standing orders—the very point you made before when you rose to take a point of order regarding Mr Corbell—not on the particular item of debate. Will you address the reasons why you do not believe the standing orders should be suspended.

Mr Hanson: He was.

MADAM DEPUTY SPEAKER: I do not believe so, Mr Hanson. Thank you, Mr Coe.

Mr Hanson interjecting—

MR COE: I will continue to talk about why I think it is interesting—

Ms Burch: Point of order, Madam Deputy Speaker.

MADAM DEPUTY SPEAKER: Sit down, please, Mr Coe.

Ms Burch: Mr Hanson muttered under his breath in terms of your decision that it was “amateur hour”. I think that shows a lack of respect for you, and I ask that he withdraw that.

MADAM DEPUTY SPEAKER: Sorry, who said that?

Mr Hanson: Madam Deputy Speaker, my interjection was directed at those opposite. I said “amateur hour” given the acts in this chamber at the moment. It was an interjection of “amateur hour” at those opposite; I do not believe that that is unparliamentary.

MADAM DEPUTY SPEAKER: Stop the clock, please. You are supposed to refer to members opposite by their official titles, not call them amateurs or anything else. I think it is a reflection on the government to call them amateurs; I really do. So will you withdraw that, please.

Mr Hanson: Madam Deputy Speaker, can you allude to under which standing order reflecting on the government is unparliamentary?

Mr Barr: You have been asked to withdraw it.

Mr Hanson: Under what standing order, Madam Speaker? You are asking me to withdraw; I just seek your guidance. Under what standing order is reflecting on the government—

Mr Barr: You have been asked to withdraw. Are you refusing to withdraw? You have been asked to withdraw.

MADAM DEPUTY SPEAKER: Just withdraw, Mr Hanson, please.

Mr Hanson: I withdraw.

MADAM DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you very much.

Mr Smyth: Sorry, Madam Deputy Speaker—

MADAM DEPUTY SPEAKER: Yes, Mr Smyth.

Mr Smyth: Under standing order 73, could I have a ruling from you on whether imputations can be made against the government—or can they only be made against individuals, which is the practice of this place and most other parliaments?

Mr Barr: It was made against the Speaker.

Mr Smyth: I am asking for a ruling. I am entitled to do it under the standing orders.

MADAM DEPUTY SPEAKER: I am of the opinion that the reflection was on the whole of the government. They are individuals, and each of them is a member of this government, and I believe the reflection was on them.

Mr Smyth: You are the Deputy Speaker, Madam Deputy Speaker; I respect that. So you are making that as a new ruling under standing order 73?

Mr Corbell: It is not a debate.

Mr Smyth: I am allowed to ask for advice. You should be quiet and stop being so rude.

Mr Corbell: Oh, really.

MADAM DEPUTY SPEAKER: Mr Smyth, will you resume your seat. I have made a ruling and I am not going to debate it.

Mr Smyth: Thank you, Madam Deputy Speaker.

MADAM DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you.

Mr Hanson interjecting—

MADAM DEPUTY SPEAKER: Mr Coe.

MR COE: Thank you, Madam Deputy Speaker. I will continue to talk about how there is this newfound urgency for the government to reject their own territory plan, or to move a motion to that effect, with regard to variations Nos 327 and 347.

It is important to note that Minister Corbell said that I put a notice on the notice paper. If one looks at notice paper 110 of this Assembly, I do not see it on the notice paper, minister. I do not see it anywhere. I wonder where it is; it is not there. Instead we have a situation whereby the minister thinks that he should disallow his colleague's variations as a matter of urgency and, in doing so, go around the standing orders.

The standing orders do not allow this. The standing orders do not permit the minister to do what he is doing. That is why he has to move for the suspension of standing orders. It is a very tricky thing this government are doing. They are a tricky government. That is exactly the problem that so many people have in Canberra with regard to the issues on which the substantial debate may well be about, should the suspension of standing orders get up.

Therefore I encourage all in this place to uphold the standing orders and to vote against such a suspension.

MR GENTLEMAN (Brindabella—Minister for Planning, Minister for Roads and Parking, Minister for Workplace Safety and Industrial Relations, Minister for Children and Young People and Minister for Ageing) (4.05): I am pleased to rise to talk on the motion to suspend standing orders. It is an important procedural position that we are moving today—to allow these motions to be put in relation to disallowing the two DVs. In Minister Corbell's speaking to the motion, he advised that we will not be supporting them, so the idea is that the motions will be put and they will not be able to go forward.

This occurs because earlier today Mr Coe lodged two motions with the Clerk. It was notified on the lodgement book. We obtained two copies of those motions to disallow the two draft variations. The implication of that is that they would stay then on the Clerk's books and the notice paper for a disallowance discussion at the next sitting, which will be in September.

In conversation, once those were first notified to me, I went and spoke with Mr Coe during the lunch break. He advised that that did occur. I asked if he wanted to bring

those forward, because we would like to debate the merits of the disallowable motions today in order to provide some clarity and some certainty for the proponents around those two draft variations.

Since then, I have been advised that Mr Coe has withdrawn those two motions. My instinct says that once the situation occurs where there are some pairs in place, they will be re-lodged and that will occur again. So it is important to allow the standing orders to be set aside so we can move the motions and have that debate. Mr Coe thinks it is an important debate—he has lodged motions on it—so it is important we have the debate and go through that process.

MR SMYTH (Brindabella) (4.07): It is sad that we get to this state with a very sneaky government. We on this side of the house are committed to a healthy democracy. We believe that requires frank, transparent and accountable practices in all aspects of government. One of those transparent practices is to give people who have an interest in matters that arise in this house time to prepare. The *House of Representatives Practice*, which we defer to, says:

A notice is a declaration of intent—

it is a declaration of intent—

to the House by a Member to either move a motion or present a bill on a specified day. A notice must contain the terms of the motion or the long title of the bill. The standing orders are applied ...

It then goes on to say, under “Motions requiring notice”:

It can generally be said that substantive motions require notice, whereas subsidiary motions do not.

And what is happening here is not a subsidiary motion. It continues:

However, whether a motion requires notice or not depends to a large extent upon practical ...

And our practice is that motions of this kind have notice. It goes on to say:

It is normal meeting procedure for notice to be given of motions proposed to be moved. This action alerts interested persons and avoids the possibility of business being conducted without the knowledge or due consideration of interested parties. The standing orders provide that a Member must not move a motion unless he or she has given a notice of motion and the notice has appeared on the Notice Paper ...

Madam Deputy Speaker, from any perusal of the notice paper you will not find what Mr Corbell purports to be moving disallowance on. It is just not there. So you have a sneaky government that does not know its standing orders and does not know the form of the house. Again I will quote what I think we all espouse to:

... a healthy democracy requires frank, transparent and accountable practices in all aspects of government.

I am sure Mr Rattenbury will appreciate that that comes from his own principles. So let us see whether Mr Rattenbury is in favour of transparent and accountable practices, because what is happening here now is neither transparent nor accountable. Members put notices forward with the expectation that they will go on the notice paper, and for interested parties to see them. And there are plenty of interested parties out there. An interesting thing is that the government says this is to give certainty. Since I have been in this place—

Members interjecting—

MADAM DEPUTY SPEAKER: Mr Smyth, could you sit down for a minute? Could you stop the clock please. We are not having a conversation across the chamber, Mr Barr, Mr Coe and Mr Hanson. Mr Smyth is on his feet. He will be heard in silence.

MR SMYTH: The minister says people deserve certainty. Yes, they do; and all people in the territory deserve equal certainty. I cannot understand why the government have to have special certainty just for the government, because it is a government pet project. If the government want certainty they should have taken account of their own practice because the bulk of the territory plan is now the practices that Mr Corbell put in place. The builders in this city and the developers in this city constantly ask for certainty—certainty that the government will not give them.

The time allotted for the debate having expired—

Question put:

That the motion be agreed to.

The Assembly voted—

Ayes 9

Noes 8

Mr Barr
Ms Berry
Dr Bourke
Ms Burch
Mr Corbell

Ms Fitzharris
Mr Gentleman
Ms Porter
Mr Rattenbury

Mr Coe
Mr Doszpot
Mrs Dunne
Mr Hanson
Mrs Jones

Ms Lawder
Mr Smyth
Mr Wall

Question so resolved in the affirmative, with the concurrence of an absolute majority.

Planning—variations Nos 327 and 347

MR CORBELL (Molonglo—Deputy Chief Minister, Attorney-General, Minister for Health, Minister for the Environment and Minister for Capital Metro) (4.14): I move:

That, in accordance with subsection 80(2) of the *Planning and Development Act 2007*, this Assembly rejects:

- (1) Variation No 327 to the Territory Plan—Capital Metro—Light Rail Stage 1—Gungahlin to Civic; and

(2) Variation No 347 to the Territory Plan—University of Canberra—Block 1
Section 3 Bruce.

There is clear precedent in this place for governments, indeed governments of both persuasions, to move resolutions in the negative—disallowance proposals of their own territory plan variations. It has occurred under Liberal governments and it has occurred under Labor governments in the past in this place. Those opposite should be aware of that.

I note too the protestations of the Liberal Party that there is no proposal to disallow. Mr Coe signed documents dated this day to disallow the capital metro variation, variation 327. He also signed a document dated this day to disallow variation 347 in relation to the University of Canberra. Both of those notices of motion were received by the Clerk in this place at 10.55 this morning.

It is quite clear what the Liberal Party are attempting to do. They are not the party of any ideas or plans for the future. They are not the party that are interested in securing investment and growth in key institutions like the University of Canberra. They are not the party that are prepared to give any certainty around future planning for key infrastructure investments that are going to tackle congestion, grow jobs, create a more sustainable pattern of urban development in our city and provide better transport choices for people in one of the fastest growing parts of our city. They are just the blockers. They are the people who want to create uncertainty. They are the people who want to push away investment.

Let us remember what the federal assistant minister for infrastructure called them. He called them economic lunatics. That was their own federal colleague's critique of their position when it came to capital metro. What is very clear is that we could wait another month and then come back and have this debate; and we know what the decision would be, because there is strong support amongst the majority of members in this place for these important projects and these important changes to the territory plan to proceed.

Let us look closely also at the level of community comment that was received in relation to each of these variations. In relation to the capital metro variation first of all, this variation has been before the Standing Committee on Planning, Environment and Territory and Municipal Services. It was referred to that committee by the minister in November last year. That is over six months ago. The committee reported in June this year. So the committee had seven months to consider the draft variation, to call for evidence and to make recommendations in this place, but it was unable to provide any recommendations.

It is worth highlighting also that when this variation was a draft variation and it was placed for public consultation for a full further six-week period, only 10 submissions were received. The majority were concerned with the proposal to develop light rail in principle rather than any of the technical land use zoning changes that this territory plan document deals with.

It is very clear that, firstly, there has been a very low level of interest in relation to the public consultation phase of this draft variation, because it is a largely technical land use planning change document. Secondly, during the seven months that the planning committee in this place had to consider the variation, they were unable to come up with any recommendation in relation to it. There has been plenty of time and plenty of process to consider these variations.

Then, of course, at the last minute, the Liberal Party come in here and say they want to disallow the variations. And when the government says, “Well, if you want to do that, let’s get on with it, let’s have the debate,” they chicken out. They pull the plug on the motions. That is not good enough. There is clear precedent in this place for a motion to be moved and then negated by the government to provide for certainty, to make it clear that these variations to the territory plan stand and decisions can be made accordingly.

My colleague Minister Gentleman will talk about the University of Canberra variation in more detail, but this variation is equally important for the future of our city. The University of Canberra is a critical tertiary research and education institution in Canberra. It is rapidly growing and it has adopted a very aggressive, far-sighted and visionary approach to growing its role as a tertiary education institution. This government supports our universities doing that. We want to see our universities grow. We want to see them attract more students. We want to see them attract more research, and we want to see them attract more investment, creating jobs and growth in what is one of our economic strengths—the education sector.

That is what this variation achieves. It is supported by the vice-chancellor, it is supported by the council of the university and it is supported strongly across the tertiary education sector, because it is about growing the strength of our second largest university right here in Canberra—and, indeed, the only university that is directly accountable to the territory government.

It is critically important that we lend it our support. It is critically important that we send the signal that there will be no uncertainty and no delay in relation to the variation for the University of Canberra. If the Liberals think they have got an argument to oppose the variation then let us hear it. They have had over a year to think about it. Mr Coe has had seven months on the planning committee to cogitate on it. I think by now he would have his arguments, so let us hear them. Let us debate them, and let us resolve this matter once and for all.

That is the purpose of this motion today. I think it is time that we backed growth, investment, jobs and economic activity in our city. That is exactly what this motion today will help us to achieve.

MR COE (Ginninderra) (4.22): The opposition were quite surprised to see this motion. As of this morning when we lodged disallowance to variations 327 and 347, we thought that, according to the provisions of the Planning and Development Act with five days to give notice of disallowance and then five days to bring it on, the government would respect this place, respect the mover of that disallowance and give the opposition their opportunity to raise this in the September sittings. Indeed, that is what the stakeholders we have been chatting to also thought was going to happen.

Many people have concerns about the University of Canberra proposal and also the capital metro proposal. This government have highlighted in this place the very concerns people have with regard to these variations and giving the government even more power. They are a tricky government and a dishonest government. They are a government that people cannot trust. Their actions in this place after lunchtime today demonstrate that. Their actions to bring about a disallowance to their own variation shows just how desperate this government are. It shows just how unwilling they are to comply with the Planning and Development Act, or the spirit thereof, and also with the wishes of the community.

What concerns does this government have with regard to debating this motion in September? There are six sitting days in September, and there can be a five-day process for moving the disallowance. We have given notice and we have five days. This government will not even allow that process to be carried out, so how can people trust a government with regard to capital metro or the University of Canberra when they cannot be trusted to comply with the spirit of their own legislation in the Planning and Development Act 2007?

We have real concerns with the capital metro proposal and the University of Canberra proposal. With regard to territory plan variations 347 and 327, Mr Gentleman came into my office at 1.30 today and said, “Just letting you know that we’ll be moving to bring on the debate for the variation disallowances.” And I said, “Okay, you can do that, but we won’t be supporting it.” That is exactly what we have done—we are not supporting that process. I also said, “You run the risk of being perceived to be tricky.” And I believe that is playing out right now. The perception—I believe the accurate perception—is that this government is a tricky government.

They are a tricky government that are far more interested in their own grandiose plans than they are in the best interests of Canberrans. That was certainly top of mind in November of 2012 when they did the agreement with the single Greens member in this place, an agreement that had collateral both on that side and in the broader community. But they did not consider that; it was all about them. And that is what today’s demonstration shows us—it is all about a tricky government that are trying to get around the rules to promote their own pet projects.

Our main problem with the University of Canberra proposal is that it will undermine the town centre. It is a proposal that will undermine people who have just bought apartments in Belconnen or people who are investing in Belconnen. The Belconnen master plan specifically stopped at the University of Canberra; it did not go beyond Aikman Drive because that was separate and it was not going to affect the Belconnen town centre. Now we hear there will be up to 2,500, 3,000, 3,500, 4,000—who knows how many—dwellings that will end up on the University of Canberra site.

One thing is for sure: if you bought an apartment in the Belconnen town centre you should be very, very worried because this government are bringing out tremendous risk to property in the ACT when they can develop land on a whim without lease variation charge, without the multi-unit development code and without many other restrictions that every other builder has to comply with. This government seem to think it is okay because it is their pet project.

Territory plan variation 347 for the University of Canberra also allows for significant commercial and retail operations on site. Madam Deputy Speaker, when you and I were on the Lawson plan inquiry a few years ago, the committee heard that one of the benefits of the Lawson supermarket would be it would get the University of Canberra people as well, because there will not be a supermarket there. We also heard that the retail space in Lawson will have to be set back from Ginninderra Drive because it should not compete or have an unfair advantage compared to other local centres.

It just so happens that this territory plan variation will allow a supermarket smack bang on Ginninderra Drive. If I was an independent grocer at Florey or Kaleen or even Charnwood, I would be very concerned about this. The idea of having a supermarket on a main arterial road such as Ginninderra Drive goes against the very principles of our retail planning policies. We heard it ourselves, Madam Deputy Speaker, with regard to the Lawson inquiry several years ago.

That is why I am not at all surprised that concerns have been raised by retailers not only in the Belconnen town centre but also in other suburbs of Belconnen as well. Robyn Coghlan from the Belconnen Community Council said that when the Whitlam Labor government introduced the concept that all students should be able to attend university, it was unlikely this was expected to distort town planning principles. In this case, land that was reserved for educational purposes will be allowed to be used for non-educational purposes, with accommodation for both residents and businesses purely to provide income to support the university and to meet the ACT government's policies.

There is no planning rationale for variation 347; it is simply another cash grab by this government. This government does not have a revenue problem; it has an expenditure problem. This government is committed to a \$783 million light rail project in addition to agency expenses of perhaps \$100 million, so we are getting close to a billion dollars. How does this government cry poor when it has got a billion dollars up its sleeve for light rail? How does this government claim it needs to extract more money out of parking, out of fees, out of charges, out of taxes, when it has a billion dollars up its sleeve for light rail? How does this government go to the commonwealth and say, "We need money for Mr Fluffy," meanwhile it has a billion dollars for light rail? It simply does not make sense.

We oppose variation 327 regarding capital metro. It is a variation that will allow an electrical substation pretty much in anyone's front yard. It will allow the government to put a large electrical substation in the front yard of someone's house in Franklin, Harrison, Watson, Dickson, Braddon—who knows? Last year we saw the government's project facilitation bill, Minister Corbell's "build it anywhere, any time, and I'll approve it" bill. That was knocked on the head. I do not see what the difference is with regard to the principles of the project facilitation bill and this University of Canberra variation. It allows pretty much anything to be built anywhere without the constraints the rest of Canberra must comply with. There are two sets of rules: one for the government and their mates and one for everybody else. The government and their mates get streamlined while every other person in town has to do it tough, and this government seems to revel in it.

Territory plan variation 327 includes a number of interesting changes to the territory plan. Some of it is rezoning urban open space. Who was the great champion in opposition against rezoning urban open space? None other than Mr Corbell. Mr Hanson may well touch on that in his remarks about Mr Corbell's campaigns and the petitions in 1998, 1999, 2000 and 2001 with regard to urban open space. He fought rezoning and said a Labor government would not do it. How many times has Minister Corbell rezoned urban open space for one of his pet projects? This is not a man of principle; this is a man who gives priority to his own pet projects ahead of the wishes of the community.

The Canberra Liberals firmly believe what we have seen today is the very demonstration of why we need to disallow variations 327 and 347. The trickiness and the fact that this government try to pull swifties over anyone at any time are the very concerns so many people in the community have with regard to giving them more power and more money. This government is addicted to taxation and spending but it does not seem to have an eye for principle or for policy. This government is more interested in its own pet projects than the wishes and will of the community.

I urge those opposite to vote alongside Minister Corbell on his own motion. I presume he is doing that; one would think that when you move a rejection you mean it. I therefore commend Mr Corbell's motion to the Assembly, and I encourage all to do the same.

MR GENTLEMAN (Brindabella—Minister for Planning, Minister for Roads and Parking, Minister for Workplace Safety and Industrial Relations, Minister for Children and Young People and Minister for Ageing) (4.35): I am pleased to speak to the motion today. I will go to some of the detail of draft variation 347; Mr Corbell talked earlier about 327. We are trying to provide some certainty here. I remind the Legislative Assembly of the outstanding merits of the territory plan variation 347, University of Canberra. Variation 347 is intended primarily to implement the master plan for the University of Canberra in accordance with the University of Canberra Act. This will provide certainty for the future growth and development of the university, with streamlined approvals processes and minimal red tape. The opposition always calls on minimising red tape, so it is important to understand those calls here, too.

DV 347, among other things, clarifies the uses permitted under the territory plan at the university. It is important to note that many of those at present are already permitted uses on the site. Variation 347 seeks to remove any doubt about what uses may or may not be developed at the university. It goes further by introducing additional development controls in relation to future building heights and floor areas across the site. This will ultimately define the scale and extent of future development at the university.

The variation will assist the University of Canberra to improve its competitiveness and economic viability. It does that by allowing additional development and commercialisation of the university's assets consistent with the University of Canberra Act. This will mean the university will be more autonomous and rely less on government resources in the future. Further development of the campus will also increase UC's local, national and international competitiveness.

The development that is being promoted in variation 347 is similar in many cases to the facilities which elite universities within Australia and around the world are currently providing. With increased economic viability, the UC can begin to improve its facilities. The benefits of this are twofold: firstly, the improved facilities will provide new revenue streams for the university and contribute to the viability of UC as a whole; secondly, it will attract new students, staff and investment to the campus.

With the broadening of permitted uses at UC, DV 347 allows for a greater range of facilities to be located at the UC. These selected businesses will allow for the nexus between university research and practicality of industry to be realised. The relationship between industry and the university will allow for greater diversity in the courses that the university can provide. It will also enhance links between students and potential employers and knowledge-sharing arrangements which will benefit all parties. It means jobs for the territory.

The expansion of the University of Canberra will improve the vibrancy of the Belconnen town centre. It will also enhance the connections at the interface between the town centre and the university. The variation includes a number of controls to manage the growth of the university in this location while minimising potential impacts on the surrounding areas, particularly the Belconnen town centre.

The variation includes conservative limits for commercial and retail development on the site when considering the scale and potential staff, student and residential population expected on the site in the future. The finalisation of variation 347 will inform the current Belconnen town centre master planning process and ensure the interface between the two is improved and enhanced for the benefit of all. I am confident this will ensure the viability of the Belconnen town centre and other surrounding centres for the long term. It is a very important variation.

I will go to some of the comments Mr Coe made during his address on this motion. He said he was surprised that this came forward. That is astounding, because we spoke about it at lunchtime. He lodged two motions with the Clerk to do exactly the same thing, so I cannot see why he would be surprised when we had a conversation at lunchtime about it.

Let us talk about the conversation. Mr Coe gave one side of the conversation—that was that I advised him that we would suspend standing orders to bring the motion forward. What he did not tell us is that they were my closing remarks. The offer I made to him was to bring his motions forward and we would deal with them. But he did not want to. He said, “You have a choice. We’re not going to bring them forward. You have your choice.” I said, “Well, if that’s the case, if you won’t support leave for the minister to move the motions, we’ll have to suspend standing orders to bring them forward.”

Mr Coe talked about being tricky earlier on. Let us talk about tricky. He said we do not comply with our own Planning and Development Act. Of course, the P&D act calls for a disallowance motion to be lodged five days from the tabling. I lodged these DVs on Tuesday the 4th, I think it was. There has been quite a bit of time to lodge any

disallowance motion on those draft variations. But Mr Coe left it to just prior to lunchtime today on the last day of sitting. There was plenty of time to be able to do that, but he left it until the last moment, and that was to ensure that he could prolong as much as he could any discussion on these variations.

It was only through me checking the register of lodgements on the motions with the Clerk that I noticed Mr Coe had lodged those today, otherwise we would not have known until the next sitting, or until he did a media release saying he had lodged those motions. I think it is a bit wry to say that the government is tricky and Mr Coe and the opposition are not. This is an important debate. It is important that this motion does not go forward so we can allow certainty for the two variations to the territory plan.

MR WALL (Brindabella) (4.42): This is an unusual situation we find ourselves in. As Mr Corbell has articulated, it is not the first time this issue has arisen in the Assembly but certainly it is one that is most unusual. In instances where something unusual or something obscure happens in this place, the general practice is that we refer to the standing orders and refer to the *Companion to the Standing Orders of the Legislative Assembly*. Chapter 11.252 of the *Companion to the Standing Orders* addresses the exact situation we have here today. For the benefit of all members, I read out that section:

Though standing order 112 provides that a notice of motion becomes effective only when it appears on the Notice Paper, the Assembly has on occasions suspended standing and temporary orders to permit a Member to move a motion to disallow a variation to the territory plan ...

That is the situation we find ourselves in now. It then points to an example in the Third Assembly where a similar thing occurred in relation to subordinate laws. The *Companion* goes on to say:

The procedure—

to debate a motion on the day it is presented—

must be regarded as highly questionable unless extraordinary circumstances prevail.

The situation we find ourselves in where the government have brought on a motion to disallow their own draft variation to the territory plan on the day that the motion was presented remains highly questionable. Their motives are highly questionable and the reasons why they are doing it are highly questionable—both the reasons they are moving this disallowance today—

Mr Corbell: On a point of order, suggesting that a member's motives are highly questionable is an improper imputation. It is an imputation on the motivation of the member—in this case me, being the mover. It is disorderly. All imputations are disorderly, and Mr Wall has made that imputation. It is disorderly and he should be asked to withdraw.

MR WALL: I seek your guidance on that, Madam Assistant Speaker. I am referring to the statement made in the *Companion to the Standing Orders*:

The procedure must be regarded as highly questionable ...

This is the situation we find ourselves in today.

MADAM ASSISTANT SPEAKER (Ms Lawder): Thank you, Mr Wall. I think you did refer to the mover's motives in such a manner. Just one moment, and I will refresh my memory. As I thought I recalled, I would ask you to withdraw your imputation as to the motives.

MR WALL: I withdraw, Madam Assistant Speaker.

MADAM ASSISTANT SPEAKER: Thank you. Mr Wall.

MR WALL: I was referring to the *Companion to the Standing Orders* where it states that the procedure to bring on a motion of disallowance for a variation to the territory plan on the day it is presented remains a highly questionable action unless extraordinary circumstances prevail. And there has been an absolute lack of explanation why this motion must be dealt with today with such urgency other than it suits their own agenda. Without that explanation, serious questions must be raised as to why they are forcing this through the Assembly today. The final paragraph on that point in the *Companion* says:

The giving of notice is generally required for substantive motions. It allows time for full consideration by Members. Publication on the Notice Paper also allows for consideration and comment by the community and it reduces the chances of poor decisions being made.

What we have here is a case where the government are shutting the door on debate, shutting the door on the opportunity for all members of this place to properly consider the substance of the motion before us, shutting the door on all consultation, as we see them do time and again. And what do we get for that? Poor decisions being made.

MR RATTENBURY (Molonglo) (4.46): I guess there are several elements to this discussion. One is the timing and then one is the actual content of the variations. I intend to particularly focus on the second because whilst we have heard a lot of bluster today about process and timing I think it is worth reflecting on the content of the actual variations.

Certainly variation 327 has a fairly unremarkable history. It was launched in August last year but I think the more recent history is the relevant part. There have been a series of public consultation points on the draft variation, and it is worth noting that in terms of the Assembly inquiry that was held there were no submissions received to that inquiry—apparently not one. That goes to, I guess, the content, in the sense that nobody felt the need to write any objections.

There were actually no recommendations arising from the committee inquiry other than the well-rehearsed opposition to light rail, in the broad sense of the opposition to the project from members of the Liberal Party. That is fair enough. That is their opinion. They expressed it in the committee report. But there were no actual points

raised about the draft variation in a content sense. I think it is fair to say that we have come in here today—and we know that the Liberal Party oppose light rail and have made that abundantly clear in this place, and therefore they oppose this variation *per se* because it is attached to that project—and we have not heard a single reason really that there are particular problems with this, outside that broad opposition.

In that sense I think we can proceed with variation 327, and I am certainly supportive of the variation because what it does is provide a series of clarifying definitions for light rail and associated key infrastructure in the territory plan, as Mr Gentleman said when he introduced this. It removes uncertainties about the permissibility of light rail and it goes to some of those technical matters. It does not permit light rail. It does not sign the project off. That is a separate process. But what this does is put a range of the technical considerations in place, and I think that is an appropriate thing to do, given the various planning steps that have been put in place to proceed with light rail.

When it comes to variation 347, related to the University of Canberra, again I have made my comments on that issue in this place before. I think the proposals put forward by the University of Canberra offer an exciting vision for the university, and I think that this Assembly giving the university the opportunity to undertake some of those initiatives gives the university the best possible opportunity to grow, to compete, to be a centre of excellence and to be an important part of the university sector here in the ACT.

On the actual territory plan variation, again if we look at the content of that one, I understand that the territory plan variation received seven submissions during its consultation phase and that the variation that has come to the Assembly has responded to a range of those issues that were raised during that submission process. For example, there has been a recognition that there needs to be a limit for non-university-related offices of 30,000 square metres for the site. This, combined with the criterion that requires demonstration of material impact of these types of developments on the Belconnen town centre, will mean that we will not see an unfair or an unbalanced competition to the Belconnen town centre.

It is quite clear that the university has a different vision of what one might expect to take place in the town centre. And of course I am interested that the Liberal Party are taking this position. They have never raised their voices once in being critical of the airport, which has far more office space than this and is a complete distortion of the planning of this city in terms of all the things that have been allowed to be built out there. But we have never heard a word about that, despite the vast amount of development that has gone in that area.

In fact I do remember the one time I had a conversation with Terry Snow about these things—and I was out there after they had opened a new office building and they had offered members an opportunity to come by and have a look at the environmental developments—Terry Snow said to me, “What do you think?” I said to him, “I actually think the buildings are really fantastic, and if you had built them in Gungahlin I would be your biggest fan in Canberra.”

Mr Hanson was standing there at the time and I proceeded to then have a robust conversation with Mr Snow. Mr Hanson might recall this. Mr Hanson just sort of slithered off. He did not even participate in the conversation. He looked very uncomfortable at the time. I am surprised he did not stay around and join in the conversation.

Mr Hanson: When was this? This is like seven years ago, is it not?

MR RATTENBURY: I was not here seven years ago, Mr Hanson, so it cannot have been seven years ago, but it was—

Members interjecting—

MADAM ASSISTANT SPEAKER: Order, members! Mr Rattenbury has the floor.

MR RATTENBURY: It was a clear indication of the way one conducts oneself.

Anyway, turning back to the motion, as much as I am enjoying reminiscing, I go back to the actual content of the territory plan variation. I had some reservations about what should be allowed on the University of Canberra site but I think that both the vision presented by the University of Canberra, the plan that they have laid out for what they intend to do, and the requirements that have been put into this variation are very much about delivering a package of outcomes that will ensure that the University of Canberra can evolve but in a way that is not about unfairly or unequally competing with the Belconnen town centre or distorting the planning fabric of Canberra.

The Greens and I will continue to watch the progress of the University of Canberra. I note that there is a requirement that a review of the whole of the University of Canberra legislation package be brought to the Assembly in five years, and I think that will be a very important moment for this Assembly to scrutinise that what the University of Canberra has proposed and promised is actually being executed.

But we should keep an eye on it in the meantime as well. There are always opportunities in this place that if the University of Canberra in some way are breaching the spirit or the rules of what they have put forward for that campus then this Assembly can come back to that and rein in the university. I think that is something certainly I will be vigilant on, and I have made clear to the university that I think their vision as described is a good one but we expect them to stick to that.

So I think the Assembly can continue to monitor that series of developments very closely to make sure that it does meet our expectations. That is my view on these two variations. That is why I will be supporting the variations going forward today, because I think both projects have a great deal of merit for the future of this city.

This is about facilitating the future of Canberra, be it the university being a competitive centre of excellence or about providing good transport options. They are the sorts of things this city needs and I am happy to support development of them.

MR HANSON (Molonglo—Leader of the Opposition) (4.55): Madam Assistant Speaker, what an extraordinary speech! Mr Rattenbury has made a justification for opposing the government's motion, which is a very odd situation. It seems that once many years ago, when he was talking to Mr Snow, I did not continue to listen to him while he was haranguing Mr Snow. I find that a fairly extraordinary justification that Mr Rattenbury has for his position here today. I am reasonably confident—I do not remember the conversation: I do remember the event; I do not remember the particular conversation—that Mr Snow would be very capable of dealing with Mr Rattenbury in such a conversation. He probably did not need me there to support him in the haranguing he was getting from Mr Rattenbury. So it is very odd, very strange. I will try and reflect.

Mr Coe interjecting—

MR HANSON: We went out. Yes, he was invited out to the airport to be harangued by Mr Rattenbury. I do not know if he has received any further invitations.

Mr Barr: Show us your slither, Jeremy.

MR HANSON: It is odd, isn't it? Apparently I slither here and there, but Mr Rattenbury would know more about those sorts of activities than I do.

Going to the substance of the issue, this is very poor process, Madam Assistant Speaker. It has been highlighted eloquently by Mr Coe and also by Mr Wall. It is dodgy. It is just not the way that this parliament is meant to behave.

Mr Corbell: Point of order.

MR HANSON: Could you stop the clock, please?

MADAM ASSISTANT SPEAKER (Ms Lawder): Point of order, Mr Corbell.

Mr Corbell: Again, the opposition cannot mount a substantive argument so they make imputations against members. We heard Mr Hanson use the term "dodgy".

MADAM ASSISTANT SPEAKER: What is your point of order, Mr Corbell?

Mr Corbell: It is an imputation. All imputations are disorderly and should be withdrawn.

Mr Coe: Point of order.

MADAM ASSISTANT SPEAKER: Do you have a point of order, Mr Coe?

Mr Coe: Yes. With regard to what Mr Corbell has said, we are actually allowed to make judgements and to make comments on things—just not on other members. To that end, I think claiming the process is dodgy is entirely—

MADAM ASSISTANT SPEAKER: Thank you; you may sit. My understanding of the discussion Mr Hanson was having is that he was reflecting on the government as a whole, not an individual, which—

MR HANSON: The process, Madam Assistant Speaker.

MADAM ASSISTANT SPEAKER: The process. So I do not find that point of order proven in this instance. Mr Hanson.

MR HANSON: Thank you, Madam Assistant Speaker. I do not believe there is any corruption at play here; I am saying that the process is dodgy. I am not suggesting that there are any underhand issues going on. If there are, Mr Corbell may wish to enlighten us. He seems a bit sensitive. But the process clearly—

Mr Corbell: Point of order.

MADAM ASSISTANT SPEAKER: Point of order, Mr Corbell.

Mr Corbell: That is an imputation.

MADAM ASSISTANT SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr Corbell. Mr Hanson, could you withdraw, please.

MR HANSON: I withdraw, Madam Assistant Speaker.

MADAM ASSISTANT SPEAKER: Thank you.

MR HANSON: Getting back to the issue, when Mr Corbell spoke, he talked about the proponents. His focus was on the proponents, giving them surety. That was his focus. It does seem in this regard that the focus of this government is slavishly on the proponent rather than the community, be it the Belconnen Community Council or others connected with these two variations.

The question is: why can't this wait till September? We are talking about planning proposals that will stretch over decades, but this government are hell-bent on changing the processes, circumventing the standing orders, so that they can ram this through. Why? This is sneaky and underhanded, as Mr Coe said. It flies in the face of all the principles we have heard from this government over years. Over years we have been hearing from these people opposite about the way planning should be conducted, and they are doing the very opposite.

I hark back to Simon Corbell MLA making a difference on his website. Back then he was making a difference, in 2001: "ACT Labor's agenda is to promote a new emphasis on open, democratic and responsive government." There was investment in government and all these processes that were all about openness, not circumventing the powers of the Assembly and all this sort of stuff. Then he talks about open space—that there would be an open space network and we would never infringe on anybody's open space, that a Labor government would direct a newly established planning authority to comprehensively identify and classify Canberra's open space network in consultation with the community.

Remember those days: “Once the open space network has been fully identified and debated by the Legislative Assembly, a Labor government will move to have these land policies entrenched by referendum in the territory plan. This will mean that that open space will only be allowed to be used and developed if it is explicitly approved by a two-thirds majority vote of the Legislative Assembly. It also means that we can have certainty in maintaining access.”

Blah, blah, blah—2001: “I am the defender of the open space.” Here he is in the Assembly to ram it through, to circumvent standing orders so that we cannot have an extra month for proposals that are going to stretch out decades and involve millions, if not tens or hundreds of millions, of dollars of development. It is bizarre, to say the least.

Of course, he is not immune in these regards. Mr Rattenbury, wherever he has gone—he has slithered away, I would imagine, and we know that is not unparliamentary, don’t we?—went to the North Canberra Community Council. He was going to be appearing there. This is from the North Canberra Community Council website: “North Canberra Community Council: The ACT minister for Territory and Municipal services and Greens environment spokesman Mr Rattenbury will discuss controversial changes that have been proposed for the Planning and Land Development Act at the North Canberra Community Council meeting on 16 April.” I would love to have been there. The author of this talks about a couple of articles that were put in the paper. Mr Rattenbury then was defending the government’s fast-track legislation. He was defending it. He said, “It’s okay. This legislation’s okay.”

Why did he say it is okay? Mr Rattenbury said the legislation was better than the existing situation where a minister could use call-in powers to approve a project to speed up that process and put an end to objections. Why? Why is that? Why does Mr Rattenbury think it is better? He accepts the government’s argument that the new planning laws are more democratic and more transparent because they require a project to be put before the Assembly for disallowance.

Mr Rattenbury’s whole argument back then—not that long ago—when he was before the North Canberra Community Council was: “Don’t worry; this is all right because we’ve got this disallowance process.” Once we see this disallowance process in action, what we are seeing is a government and a Greens minister hell-bent on circumventing it and actually changing the rules so they can ram this through.

If you look back further in history—I do love reflecting on the Greens and the Latimer House principles. How they used to love that back then when Mr Rattenbury was the Speaker and Meredith Hunter was in this place. It was great fun. The Greens wrote to Mr Rattenbury. They said back then when they believed in the Latimer House principles, when they believed in not just ramming through legislation, regulations and disallowable instruments at the midnight hour—what did they believe in? Let us see. They said:

The ACT Greens ... believe a healthy democracy requires frank, transparent and accountable practices in executive government ...

Accountable practices. So you stick to the rules; you stick to the laws. You do not just change them on the fly. They said:

The ... Parliamentary Agreement ... commits to pursue measures which will ensure ...

(c) Higher standards of accountability, transparency and responsibility in the conduct of all public business;

(d) Effective and responsible use of the forum of the Legislative Assembly ...

I bet you that when Meredith Hunter wrote that to Shane Rattenbury she did not envisage that a number of years later this dodgy process would be in place here so that all of this green space could be turned over to development at the University of Canberra. I bet that was not in her mind.

Mr Smyth: Where Meredith is.

MR HANSON: Maybe she was involved in the process; I do not know. But I cannot imagine that was the holier than thou intent that we heard from Mr Rattenbury back in his day, from Meredith Hunter back in her day, and certainly from Simon Corbell when Simon Corbell was the champion of referendums to entrench this sort of stuff.

This is a man who in 2001 was so concerned that he wanted changes like this to be subject to a referendum—a two-thirds vote in the Assembly, entrenched. That is what he wanted back then. Now what does he want? He wants to bend the rules, change the rules, use the powers of the numbers in the Assembly so that he can ride roughshod over the community and treat a disallowable instrument with such disregard.

This is very poor process. There are significant concerns about the variations. We have articulated those and Mr Coe has articulated these in the Assembly before. But it seems that the very structures that are going to be created at the University of Canberra with retail, residential and commercial are exactly what Mr Rattenbury was railing against with Mr Snow out at the airport.

It seems that if it is all involving the Labor Party and the Greens—Mr Lamont might have been involved in this one; I do not know—we can stitch this together. It is great stuff that it is at the University of Canberra. But as Mr Rattenbury said in his speech, he was haranguing Mr Snow for doing it there. I would like to know the difference, except that probably Mr Snow had to go through planning processes that were not quite as dodgy as we are seeing here in the Legislative Assembly today.

I say it is hypocrisy. This is hypocrisy from those opposite, who say one thing, who get on their moral high horse about planning and other things, and when it comes to the reality are only too eager to circumvent the rules, to bend the rules, to change the rules, for their own purposes and to the detriment of our community.

MR CORBELL (Molonglo—Deputy Chief Minister, Attorney-General, Minister for Health, Minister for the Environment and Minister for Capital Metro) (5.06), in

reply: To close the debate, I thank members for their comments, but, of course, there are no surprises from those opposite when it comes to this proposal—no surprises in their blind opposition to any proposal that is going to grow and develop our university sector or any proposal that is going to grow and develop our city, create jobs and improve transport infrastructure for a city that is going to be over 600,000 people in the next couple of decades. There is no vision from them at all—just blind opposition.

Of course, we still have not had an explanation from those opposite as to why they wanted to move these motions and then apparently, at some stage this afternoon, withdrew them. We still have not had an explanation about that one. We have not heard Mr Coe's explanation on that one. All we can assume is that he wanted to chicken out on the debate, and the only reason he could not chicken out on the debate is that we have brought this debate on, as we said we would. We invited Mr Coe to do it first.

We have heard from those opposite about what they assert is a highly questionable process. The fact is that there is clear precedent for this type of approach to be adopted where there is a need to provide certainty and where there are exceptional circumstances.

And there are exceptional circumstances. We are talking about two of the largest investment opportunities which are occurring in this city at a time when colleagues opposite in the federal parliament have cut the guts out of our city, destroyed commercial confidence, cut tens of thousands of jobs, stalled the housing market and seen the ACT go through a period of economic stagnation that we have not seen for over a decade. Those are the exceptional circumstances.

We need to get on and see these projects delivered. We know there is opposition to these things. This opposition has no clue, no vision for the future of our city. They are blocking changes, legitimate planning changes, that will help facilitate these outcomes for our city.

That is why we are moving this motion today. That is why the government will vote against this motion. We want it negated because we want certainty, because we want to know that these territory plan variations will stand and because we want to know that the University of Canberra, the council of the University of Canberra, the vice-chancellor and the management of the University of Canberra, can execute their plans to grow this critically important tertiary education institution and that we can proceed with confidence in planning for the development assessment phase of the capital metro project so that we can implement one of the most significant infrastructure investments this city has ever seen, one that will change the shape and future growth of our city for decades to come, for the better, and at the same time create thousands of jobs during its construction stage. That is why we are moving this motion today. That is what the exceptional circumstances are.

I do not know whether those opposite have noticed, but the University of Canberra has a grant of land for university purposes. That is what it has. We heard this silly

rant—this ridiculous, childish rant from the Leader of the Opposition—asserting about open space. It is a paddock, Madam Assistant Speaker. It is a paddock that has been vacant ever since the CCAE was first established in the early 1960s. The university wants to build a university on it; we want to help them do that. And they want to see private sector investment in the university, not just public sector investment. At a time when those colleagues opposite in the federal parliament are cutting hundreds of millions of dollars out of the territory education sector, it is incumbent on us to support our territory education sector here in the ACT, and that is exactly what this variation does as well.

There are good and exceptional reasons to proceed this way today. Let us give the University of Canberra confidence. Let us give light rail for Canberra confidence. Let us get on with these important projects that will grow and develop our city for the better. That is why the government is moving the motion, and we will be voting accordingly in relation to this motion this afternoon.

Question put:

That the motion be agreed to.

The Assembly voted—

Ayes 8

Noes 9

Mr Coe
Mr Doszpot
Mrs Dunne
Mr Hanson
Mrs Jones

Ms Lawder
Mr Smyth
Mr Wall

Mr Barr
Ms Berry
Dr Bourke
Ms Burch
Mr Corbell

Ms Fitzharris
Mr Gentleman
Ms Porter
Mr Rattenbury

Question so resolved in the negative.

Appropriation Bill 2015-2016

[Cognate bill:

Appropriation (Office of the Legislative Assembly) Bill 2015-2016

Cognate papers:

Estimates 2015-2016—Select Committee report

Estimates 2015-2016—Select Committee—government response]

Debate resumed.

Detail stage

Justice and Community Safety Directorate—schedule 1, part 1.15.

MR WALL (Brindabella) (5.16): I will direct my remarks to the part of this output class that relates to corrections, particularly the Alexander Maconochie Centre in Symonston, and refer to what a debacle this prison has been since its opening. This is a jail that a minister opened prematurely prior to an election, so that it would seem as though the government had a capital works project done on time, although it was a bit

over budget and certainly under scope. As a matter of fact it took several months after that official ribbon cutting before the first detainee moved in there and the prison actually commenced operation. So really, in truth, it was under scope, over budget and late. The problems that plagued that prison from before its official opening continue to this day, be they capacity issues or security issues. They continue to be the problems that plague this government regarding the operation of the city's prison.

Just today Mr Rattenbury, the minister responsible for justice and the corrections portfolio, tabled a bill that seeks to broaden the net on drug testing in the AMC. This is a long overdue change to the corrections portfolio and one that I personally have been calling for in the time that I have held the shadow corrections portfolio. What was the purpose of continuing to hold drug testing in a prison when it was purely done on an anonymous basis, when all the while we have a drug problem that is running rife? This is just a very small step in the right direction of what needs to be done to combat the ever present drug problem within the AMC.

One question I still have on this issue is why corrections officers have been exempted. I do not think the minister has yet explained in depth why, if it is an appropriate policy to be considered in our youth corrections facility, at Bimberi, for staff and detainees to be facing identifiable drug testing, in the adult facility we are exempting our custodial officers. It is a reasonable standard for our police officers to be drug tested; I think it is a reasonable standard that our corrections officers be drug tested, just like they are planning to implement at Bimberi.

All of this goes on, about trying to tighten the net on drug use in the jail, and finally there are to be some stricter checks on who is using inside our correctional facility. This is complemented—probably “confused” would be a better word—by the mixed messages that those opposite continue to send, particularly Mr Rattenbury. It is evident that this is something that is supported by all those opposite, as it is an item in the Labor-Greens parliamentary agreement—that is, to implement a needle and syringe program. So on one hand we are going to increase drug testing to help those that have a problem with addiction and who need further rehabilitation services, but on the other hand we are going to give them needles so that they can continue to use whilst they are in jail. We will help to facilitate that problem and egg it along until maybe some resources come to light. The mixed messages continue to be absolutely deafening.

You are then adding to that the additional mixed message of whether a smoking ban is or is not coming in, in the ACT. As of this week the ACT, along with Western Australia, are the only two jurisdictions in the country that have not prohibited smoking inside a correctional setting. The reason I say that this further confuses things is that you have additional drug testing to help people get off drugs, but it is a matter of saying, “We’re going to give them needles because that’s going to help their health outcomes; we haven’t yet committed to banning smoking but we all know the health implications of smoking.”

I have received a number of pieces of correspondence from both current and former detainees in the AMC who have raised serious concerns around the issues of overcrowding and then being forced to double-bunk in a facility that was always

designed to have single individuals in a cell. One constituent wrote to me and said he has been a non-smoker his entire life. He has finally been forced to share a cell with a smoker who perpetually smokes inside the cell. That goes against the current prison operating practices. Smoking is allowed on prison grounds but not in cell blocks and cottage accommodation. However, I know from my experience of being out there that that is a policy that is very seldom enforced.

On top of this, we have contraband. We have knives going into the jail, we have mobile phones going into the jail, we have drugs going into the jail—weapons of all types. Not only is the contraband getting out, but somehow whilst detainees are in prison, prisoners that are in there have the hide and the audacity to flout the rules, probably because they know the punishment will not come on the other hand. They post social media commentary on their daily lives inside the AMC, they post videos of fights that they have been conducting in the prison, and it all goes to highlight the systemic issues that are evident in this facility. They have no-one to blame other than those opposite. They brought forward the policy to build the jail, they opened the jail and they have operated the jail to this very day. The legacy of failings that are there lies solely at the feet of members opposite.

I would like to touch on a couple of other small issues, including a couple of elements that have recently appeared in the ACT Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander justice partnership agreement 2015-18. It makes mention of a term that has been used in this place quite regularly—that is, the term “justice reinvestment”. That sounds like a very promising policy idea and a very promising term. The justice agreement talks about “justice reinvestment and justice reform”. It says:

Justice reinvestment as a concept has been gaining momentum in Australia as a mechanism for addressing reoffending and making the justice system more effective and efficient.

I think they are moves that need to be applauded. It goes on to say:

Broadly speaking justice reinvestment seeks to reduce prison funds by providing support to recidivist offenders and reinvesting the savings into local communities to which these recidivist offenders return.

What they are seeking to do is cut funding to the jail at a time they are increasing the capacity, and put that money back into the community. That rings some significant alarm bells, particularly when you read one of the objectives of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander justice agreement. I understand that it is in line with some nationally established frameworks—that is, to “reduce the daily average population of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders in the AMC, as a percentage of the total prison population, to 10 per cent” of the entire prison.

That is a very admirable policy outcome to be aiming for. What has not been explained is how we are going to go about achieving that. It could very easily be achieved today simply by taking out any numbers of detainees in the AMC over 10 per cent. “Job done—tick; we have achieved a target.” But that is not going to be acceptable. That is not going to fly for the judiciary and that is not going to fly for the community. So how are they going to target issues such as the overrepresentation of Indigenous people in our prison system, when all the while they are cutting funding to

the prison? I do not think that has yet been explained very clearly or very articulately by the minister or any members opposite, including the minister for Indigenous affairs. It is something that probably deserves to be addressed in this debate today, whilst we are being asked to sign off on quite a substantial amount of money to go back into this portfolio area.

I will also touch briefly on through-care. While it is still in its early days, I will give some credit where credit is due. Thus far, the signals seem to be positive. It seems as though we have finally got a formula in part that is working to address some recidivist behaviour. I say that cautiously, given that this policy has only been implemented for about 18 months. But the truth in that pudding will be over the long-term statistics. Nearly 50 per cent of detainees in the AMC are revisiting within two years either for breaches of parole or for committing further offences. The truth in through-care will be how that statistic performs over the long term.

With that, we watch with bated breath and hope that for the sake of those individuals that are going through the jail finally there is some help to alleviate the turnstile-type approach there has been to the prison and corrections system in this territory for far too long.

DR BOURKE (Ginninderra) (5.25): Police, fire, ambulance and emergency services play a vital role in providing a safety net for the ACT community. This budget again shows the priority this government places on ensuring that ACT police, fire and ambulance services have modern infrastructure to meet the challenges of the future.

Over the last four budgets this government has invested in completely new police, fire and ambulance stations across Belconnen. Construction of the new Aranda ambulance and fire station is due to finish mid next year. It is an important stage of the ESA station upgrade and relocation strategy which aims to improve response times as Canberra continues to grow.

The new Aranda station will replace the old Belconnen fire station, a victim of the rapid urban intensification of Belconnen town centre. It has become less appropriate to have fire trucks based there and dashing off to call-outs. The Charnwood fire and ambulance station was completed in 2013. The \$12 million station services the booming population of west Belconnen, as west Macgregor continues to expand, we have infill elsewhere and we look to the Riverview development further westwards.

The new station has given firefighters and paramedics access to the state-of-the-art facilities that we all expect our stations to have. The investments in new stations are keeping up with Belconnen's continuing growth and are replacing older infrastructure built in the 70s.

As part of the ACT government's improvement of our response services in Belconnen, we should not forget the investment in police infrastructure. The new Belconnen police station that opened just three years ago, in 2012, was a vast improvement on the former station. It includes five holding cells, a breath analysis section and specialised incident rooms. The station also boasts the territory's greenest credentials, with solar hot water, chilled beam air conditioners and rainwater harvesting, using less energy as a result.

The new Belconnen police station was also located next to ACT Policing's headquarters, the Winchester Police Centre, allowing for some sharing of services and amenities. The state-of-the-art police station in Belconnen puts the force in a better position to service Belconnen's growing population and expanding suburbs. The investment in justice and emergency services that the ACT government has committed to in this budget will guarantee that Canberrans continue to receive the assistance they need.

This budget also provides over \$150 million in annual funding for the justice system. The 2015-16 ACT budget recognises the importance of access to justice, investing more than \$3.1 million in additional new funding. Some measures, such as the \$867,000 in funding for the Legal Aid Commission over a two-year term, are designed to offset Abbott government cuts to the legal sector. \$2.1 million over four years will allow adults to participate in the restorative justice process, both as an alternative to and in conjunction with imprisonment. Having recently attended the seminar on restorative justice here in the Assembly, I can see how enthusiastic stakeholders are to extend this strategic initiative.

MRS DUNNE (Ginninderra) (5.28): I will speak briefly and pick up on the theme that Mr Hanson raised towards the conclusion of his remarks in relation to the fifth justice for the Supreme Court, which is, as all of us in this place know, long overdue. I want to indicate just how long overdue this matter is by reflecting on the current blitz we are having in the Supreme Court and the impact that is having across the territory.

The current blitz in the Supreme Court and the ongoing case management process are designed over the next year or so to give priority to criminal matters over all other matters. This has been commented on adversely by very many members of the legal fraternity and many people in business who have civil matters which are being held up for an inordinately long time because the Supreme Court has decided, under direction from the government, that there should be an undue emphasis on clearing up the backlog of criminal cases.

Madam Assistant Speaker, that will create an increasing backlog of civil cases and, more importantly—this was a matter that you touched on the other day in your comments in relation to community services—I am starting to hear reports that adoptions will not be processed in the court. I have been told by someone who has been approved for adoption for the children in her care that she will not be able to proceed with this matter for 2½ years because adoptions are currently not the priority of the Supreme Court as they have been asked to concentrate on criminal matters. A person who has had children in her care for over three years now and has had final orders for a long period of time, has been approved and has had all the paperwork done to have an adoption finalised, is not able to finalise that adoption, as she has been advised, for 2½ years, mainly because of delays in the Supreme Court.

I draw this to the Attorney-General's attention and ask him to address this issue: if the blitz is going to continue to concentrate principally on criminal matters, what is happening to the other lists that are important in the Supreme Court? What about the effect that has on business, adoptions and other orders in association with the care and protection system? This is a very serious matter, and it needs to be addressed by this government.

MR SMYTH (Brindabella) (5.31): For those who were not at the estimates hearings, one of the highlights was when we found out that Snowy Hydro SouthCare has a new helicopter; it is getting an Agusta 139. Toll will be the operator as from about 2017. It is a \$10 million aircraft. It is a big aircraft; it can carry more equipment and has greater capacity. The only thing wrong is that the helicopter does not fit in the hangar at the base at Hume. That is right. We have bought a helicopter that does not fit. In the adverse conditions that Canberra sometimes has—we all saw the snow yesterday, and occasionally the hail—plus the high quality precision that goes into making helicopters these days, they need to be inside when they get serviced.

It was funny; we asked the chief officer if this was true and he said, “Well, look, on the specs there is a 25-millimetre gap so they could wheel it in. All things being perfect, you could get it in and get it out.” But we all know it is like bumping the box trailer up the garage or whatever; these things are not the same. As the chief officer goes, “If you get a heavy pilot in the front and the tail rotor dips upwards”—think about that, it dips upwards because it does come in on the undercarriage—“we would prefer not to have the occasion of the tail rotor striking the top of the hangar. I am sure the pilot would prefer not to have the tail rotor strike the top of the hangar too.” We asked, “So what will you do?” They said modifications were on foot. “How much would they cost?” They did not know.

We have gone out and signed a contract for a new helicopter that does not fit. Obviously what we have not taken into account when we were doing the costing on the helicopter is what the cost of the modifications to the hangar would be. You have to wonder how we get into these positions. It will be hilarious to see what has to be changed. It would be funny if it did not come on top of the Jerrabomberra shed where you could not open the doors to let the volunteers out if the trucks were inside. That, of course, was almost as bad as the Rivers shed, where it was very hard to use the cubicles and there were gaps in the walls where rodents and other creatures got in.

The tradition of poor management of these works continues, and you have to question why. The answer is lack of leadership. In this case it is the lack of leadership from this minister in regard to the emergency services. The minister had a chance to stand up for women in emergency services. I think she might be the minister for women’s issues as well. Let us face it: over the years the record has not been the best. Until quite recently they have been closed shops for women to participate in. But we recently had a vacancy in the role of Chief Officer of the State Emergency Services of the ACT. My understanding is that the deputy chief officer is a very capable female.

I do not particularly care whether you are male or female in regard to this, but we have a very qualified, very good and much respected member of the service who, on the retirement of her boss, was probably sitting there thinking, “I’ll have a shot at this.” We talk about equality and gender equity. “When that’s advertised, I reckon I’ll have a go.” Imagine how that officer and the female officers below her and the female volunteers in that service felt. I can tell you, members. I had many emails from the male members of the SES saying they were outraged by the fact that this officer never got a go.

The minister took a question on notice and my understanding is that there have been no lateral transfers of this nature within the SES. They have dollyed up the answer by saying, “But there were five in JACS over a period of time.” Well, fantastic, that is good for JACS. But is not good for the SES. This was the opportunity. Here was a chance. The ACT may have ended up with a female head of service, which would have been a great outcome because she may have got it on merit, which would be even better. But she never got the chance.

This is the government that always talks about equity and equality and people getting a fair go, but it never delivers. When it comes to the crunch, it does not deliver, and that is a shame. The minister at one stage was talking about an all-female college for the fire service. We need to look at whether females can get on in the fire service of the ACT. One of the prerequisites as you travel up the chain of command in ACT Fire & Rescue is that officers spend some time at the brigade technical and operational support section at Fyshwick. That is where you learn the technical aspects of the trade.

It is important that senior officers know this material so they can bring to bear all that knowledge when they are fighting a fire or conducting a rescue. But apparently they do not have toilet facilities, bathroom facilities, at that shed for female officers. What year is this? 2015, and we do not have the ability for female officers to be stationed long term, I am told, at the brigade technical and operational support section at Fyshwick. What a joke.

Is it any wonder this minister is not interested in giving officers a fair go inside the SES? They are not getting a fair go inside Fire & Rescue either. It is a shame, because we have got excellent officers; they do a good job irrespective of their gender. But we do not have a minister who is committed to making these things work. The Labor Party are always talking about quotas in parliament for females, but they fail in the ACT on the basic ground of everybody having equal access to having a go. That is a shame.

This is all going on while we have the strategic reform agenda underway. And hasn’t that been incredibly successful? The minister got a dixer about it during question time today, and I urge members to read what the minister said about the strategic reform agenda. The reality is that all she was able to say was, “Well, there are three new positions.” There is more bureaucracy to clag up the system instead of having a streamlined system that allows the chief officers to get on with their jobs.

Let me look at the document that has been circulated called the strategic reform agenda—cohesive operations, a collaborative management team and a unified executive. You would almost question why you would have those statements. “Cohesive operations”. Do we not already have cohesive operations, or are we failing on that score too? “Collaborative management team”. Do the management team not work together? “A united executive”. Why would you have a united executive as one of the strategic reforms on your agenda? Surely it should be about the people. Surely it is about the output and the outcome. Surely it is about better response times. Surely it is about keeping fires small, limiting damage, and ensuring that people who are sick

or injured get treatment quickly to minimise the effect on their health of having had, for instance, a heart attack, an accident in the snow, a car accident or whatever. But no; it is about cohesive operations, a collaborative management team and a unified executive.

That speaks volumes about the minister's strategic reform agenda. It clearly highlights that we do not have cohesive operations, we do not have a collaborative management team, and we do not have a unified executive. You can say or do whatever you want, but when you read this document you do not get a sense that it is about what is going on and how are we going to improve things for the people of the ACT. It is a four-page document—well, three-and-a-bit pages. One of the pages is just about the announcements of who is going where. About half the page is, "Mark Brown is doing this," and "Conrad Barr is doing that," and "Peter Le-Lievre has commenced this," and on it goes. If you take out the back page, which just has the signature block on it, you take out the second page, which basically just has movement of staff, and you then go to the third page, which has an org chart on it, there is not much of a reform agenda. There is not much of a reform agenda here, and that is the problem with this minister.

We know the minister is not a good leader, because when the union wrote her a letter asking to her show leadership and being critical of some of the things that were being done, she handed over the letter to the individual responsible for the things that were being criticised and let him respond. The last paragraph says:

The United Firefighters Union implores ACT Police & Emergency Services Minister Joy Burch to provide leadership and halt the return to the dangerous structures and practices currently being hotly pursued by the Justice and Community Safety Directorate and the Emergency Services Agency.

"I don't want any part of that. I'll just hand it to those who are hotly pursuing the things that the union does not like and let them respond." Instead of asking the critical questions, "How do we get a better outcome for the people of the ACT and provide a better workplace for the officers in all four services and the volunteers who assist them," you hand it over to the guy that is being criticised, the management that is being criticised. That shows that the minister is failing in her responsibilities and failing in her duty to provide leadership within this portfolio. (*Second speaking period taken.*)

This is life and death stuff. When you call for the fire brigade, you call for the ambulance, you hope the RFS is going to turn up or you are relying on the SES to save a loved one, you want to make sure we have a system that works. I have to say that I am not sure we do.

Part of the opening statement from the police and emergency services minister was that she was very pleased to be the first female minister in the ACT for emergency services and police. She said she would have a focus on promoting women across our service. She said she would launch a pathway to an inclusive workforce, the first step being the women in emergency services strategy. According to the minister the pathway is a key document and outlines a series of targeted actions that will take the

ESA on a journey to improving the attraction, development and retention of women across our service. Except you cannot apply for the top job in your chosen field because she, the minister, does not think you should be allowed to. That is a real shame. We get the talk but we do not get the action. The shame for the ESA is that I suspect under this minister it will continue.

We hear a lot about integration in the strategic reform agenda. I have heard the minister say, "Oh, no, there'll always be four services." We have heard variations. "There'll always be four service chiefs," or "There'll always be four services," or "We'll always provide the functions of the four services." But I have to say that the great fear in a number of the services is that integration means one fire service, so we will have an ambulance service and we will have a fire and rescue service. Let us be quite blunt about it.

The minister can stand up and say that will never happen. It will be interesting to see if she will explicitly say there will always be an RFS with an RFS chief officer, there will always be an SES with an SES chief officer, there will always be an ambulance with an ambulance chief officer, and there will always be a fire and rescue service with a fire and rescue service chief officer, each operating independently in their chosen field but working together to make sure we have got a combined response to any emergency that occurs in the ACT.

A number of people have read the strategic reform agenda; a number of people have seen the documents the minister still refuses to make available, documents that make the suggestion that some fire stations should close at night and that we should perhaps have operational volunteers in the fire service and the ambulance service. The emergency services levy just goes up, up, up; it will triple in about six years. Rates are tripling; the emergency services levy is tripling. I do not think people see paying triple for their emergency services over a six-year period to be in line with the government considering operational volunteers in the ambulance service and the fire service. Perhaps the minister would like to explicitly rule that out as well.

It is sad that we are having these discussions. In 2003 there was a lot of goodwill from all involved about getting the process right. I believe at the heart of this is that the minister seems to think the ESA is part of the bureaucracy and it should be in the directorate, whereas I think just about everyone involved has come to the view that it should be a stat authority. The McLeod report, the Doogan inquiry and everything said to have a stat authority. It provides that the ESA is of the government but it is not tucked inside the government caught up in the bureaucracy. It is that sort of independence that will make it work better.

That is a strategic reform agenda, not cohesive operations, a collaborative management team and a united executive. That little slogan talks all about those in charge, not about the people they should be serving and assisting, those that serve the residents of the ACT.

The UFU have come out and said they would like to see a stat authority. Indeed, the UFU have explicitly said that they do not want the model being put forward. Why do they not want the model being put forward? They say:

The recent Treasury Review also did not propose any improvements to support areas that clearly duplicated what occurred elsewhere and/or were able to be outsourced thereby providing efficiencies and improved services. The creation of three Executive positions to oversee support services cannot be supported in relation to improved efficiencies and effectiveness; and will not improve emergency services to the people of the ACT.

There is the official position of the professionals: this minister's strategic reform agenda will not improve emergency services to the people of the ACT. You have to ask: what is the purpose of the reform agenda? Mr Corbell must have been laughing all the way to the AAs when the new Chief Minister announced the changes and he did not have police and emergency services anymore, because there are a number of views that have come home.

Give Ms Burch as minister the benefit of the doubt. She was not there for most of the problems and she had an opportunity to make real change; not just window dressing—not just a nice, glossy letterhead with “Strategic reform agenda”, but actually say, “Okay, what's at the heart of these problems? How do we fix these problems?” Surely the review was to improve emergency services to the people of the ACT. Clearly, on behalf of the fire service, most of their members do not see that that is occurring. I know, talking to volunteers in the RFS and the SES, that they do not see that it is happening.

I have spoken to a lot of people in the ambulance service. You have a system where senior ambulance officers, some with 20 years experience, are suspended and left on suspension pending disciplinary hearings for, in one case, 75 weeks. What sort of system are you running where somebody is left hanging for 75 weeks to find out their fate? Justice delayed is justice denied. We have a system run by the management that lets good officers who may or may not have made a mistake—I do not seek to judge what they were disciplined for—be sidelined for 75 weeks. No-one deserves that.

We all know why it happens that way—because that is how you deal with it. You just make life so intolerable for people that they quit, they take some second-rate offer, they move aside or they go and find another job. But there have been a number of cases in the ACT Ambulance Service where very senior, very skilful officers, very well regarded officers, have been left languishing pending disciplinary action. How do you leave somebody out in the cold for a year or 75 weeks? That is poor management, and that has happened. Some of that has happened on this minister's watch, and there is nothing in the strategic reform agenda that says they will fix those sorts of problems. That is what is wrong with this agenda.

The agenda is a joke. The ESA is not an overly large organisation, but to set up three further executive positions and then say, “We're going to staff those executive positions by taking the deputy officers away from their operational and support functions inside their services and put them into executive people and culture, executive risk and planning and executive logistics and governance to support the commissioner,” is a joke. It is simply a joke. It should stop, and the minister should intervene.

If the minister will not intervene, the Chief Minister should intervene and make this work better for everyone in the ACT. When you call, when you want assistance, you want people to come who are focused on the job and who are happy and dedicated to the job. You do not want them being unhappy because of what is going on behind the scenes back in the organisation. There is a lot of unhappiness in many of these organisations because of the nature of the reforms and the lack of genuine vision or strategic agenda.

If your strategy is three more bureaucratic positions, goodness gracious me. If you have problems with your people and culture, you are not going to fix them by establishing another bureaucratic position which will divide the duties of that officer and the loyalty of that officer. Is the officer first and foremost the executive responsible to the commissioner for people and culture or is that officer the Deputy Chief Officer of Fire & Rescue? Which one does he serve? You cannot serve two masters. Indeed, if you were going to have a better bureaucracy, this is not the structure to have.

There are many problems here. They are serious problems. The UFU says, "Let's not go back to the sort of situation that occurred in 2003." As we found out in 2003, the structure was inadequate. (*Time expired.*)

MR RATTENBURY (Molonglo—Minister for Territory and Municipal Services, Minister for Justice, Minister for Sport and Recreation and Minister assisting the Chief Minister on Transport Reform) (5.51): I rise to speak particularly on corrections. I will come to some road safety related matters after the dinner break but I will specifically cover the corrections part of the portfolio at this time.

I am pleased to support this appropriation bill as it seeks to achieve an effective balance in the administration of justice in our city. The bill contains funding which will allow the government to respond to the very real pressures being experienced in our justice system. In my own portfolio where I have responsibility for Corrective Services we have been feeling that pressure intensely, as is evidenced by the funding we provided in last year's budget to expand accommodation at the AMC. This appropriation bill will provide funding to enhance the service delivery of corrections in other ways so that our capacity to manage our clients is improved.

The 2015-16 budget also seeks to invest in services which will ensure that people have greater access to legal representation, that court outcomes can be delivered more promptly, that there is a chance for people to divert from a criminal path and, very importantly, that victims of crime are better supported. It is this balance that is most attractive about the budget as far as I am concerned.

Let me focus initially on the features of the 2015-16 budget related to Corrective Services. The budget will invest an additional \$8.16 million over four years in new initiatives for ACT Corrective Services. The goal of the funding proposed is to strengthen the capability of our corrections agency. Of this \$8.16 million, \$3.228 million will be provided over three years to enhance the capacity of the community corrections arm of Corrective Services, that is, our probation and parole service, our community work service, our offender management service and our sentence administration service.

This part of the agency will increasingly become the focus of corrections in the coming years as we implement the anticipated outcomes of the government's justice reform strategy. Community corrections will have a massive role to play in implementing the justice reform strategy, and after a number of years where the focus of the government, and, I might say, the broader political, media and community focus, has been on the AMC itself, it is timely and appropriate for us to invest in our community corrections service.

There will also be \$4.932 million over four years to implement a new information management system for ACT Corrective Services. Corrections' existing information management system, which also supports both detainee and community offender case management, is ageing and has limited capacity to meet the needs of a modern corrections function. In last year's budget the government funded corrections to build a road map for its extensive information management needs and responsibilities.

During 2014-15 corrections reviewed and documented its business processes, conducted research into product solutions, surveyed other jurisdictions and identified what it would need to properly manage its information and offender management into the future. The funding provided by this bill will allow corrections to procure a software solution fit for purpose and roll it out in the coming years. Importantly, detainee management and reporting will be improved.

The 2015-16 budget will also support ACT Corrective Services through additional funding for increases in its workers compensation premium. This funding of \$1.048 million is provided for 2015-16 only, pending the development of the revised workers compensation arrangements for the ACT public service.

As Minister for Justice, I have a keen interest in the other justice features of this bill that provide balance to the very necessary compliance elements that are such a part of the work of corrections. I welcome and support the funding to legal aid over two years and the funding to street law to provide people with greater access to legal representation. I welcome and support the more than \$3 million for additional judicial resources so that court outcomes can be delivered more promptly.

I welcome and support the more than \$2 million over four years for restorative justice processes for adult offenders, which will provide an alternative to imprisonment. This program can be used in conjunction with other sentencing action, and I note that this is phase 2 of the government's restorative justice program.

I welcome the more than \$1.5 million to form an administratively based victims of crime financial assistance scheme so that those most affected by crime in our community can be better supported. We constantly need to look at our justice system in its entirety and ensure that we are doing everything to achieve just outcomes. I believe that the budget delivers this in a balanced way and will go a long way to supporting good overall justice outcomes. Whilst I do have that primary responsibility for the corrections end of the spectrum, I think it is very important that we are working in other areas.

Of course, part of my purpose in standing tonight is also to address questions raised during the debate. Mr Wall in his remarks particularly has raised a number of questions. We have heard the commentary about the mixed messages when it comes to things like the needle and syringe program. I have said it before and I say it again: this government is committed to a three-pronged approach to dealing with issues like drugs in our jail.

The first of those three prongs is reducing supply by various interdiction measures—the seizing of contraband, physical searches, intelligence-led work to reduce the amount of contraband coming into the jail. Clearly, drugs are a key element of that.

The second element is to reduce demand so that people are not seeking drugs, are not undertaking drug-seeking behaviour. Members will be aware of the range of programs at the AMC designed to assist detainees to break their drug-taking habits, to deal with some of their, I guess, life issues that led them to pursuing drugs. There are a range of programs there. If members are interested in the detail—I cannot do it in the time available to me—I am more than happy to arrange for a Corrective Services official to run members through that.

The third element is harm minimisation, acknowledging that, unfortunately, some people will undertake behaviour that the rest of us do not support, consider inappropriate and would prefer not to happen. That is where something like the needle and syringe program comes in so that we tackle the transmission of blood-borne viruses in the jail.

Those three strategies together will achieve the sorts of outcomes we would all agree with—minimising the transmission of blood-borne viruses and reducing the amount of drug taking going on in the jail.

I should at this point be very clear that the ACT government is committed to having a smoking ban in adult correctional facilities. We have been very clear about that. I have reiterated that this week, and I can assure members that work is underway within Corrective Services to bring that into effect. One of the good things is that a number of other jurisdictions have already moved and we have been able to observe very closely what they have done that has worked well and areas, frankly, where, in light of their experiences, we might do things a little differently. But I can assure members that the government remains committed to a smoking ban, and I will be able to make an announcement on the time frame for that once some of that further policy work has been done by Corrective Services.

Finally, let me address the issue Mr Wall has raised, the discussion about whether corrections officers should be drug tested. I would like to understand what the purpose of that is. One might speculate a range of reasons. Mr Wall did not articulate those reasons earlier in the discussion. I am unclear what the agenda is there.

At 6 pm, in accordance with standing order 34, the debate was interrupted. The motion for the adjournment of the Assembly having been put and negatived, the debate was resumed.

MR RATTENBURY: On the issue of corrections officers being tested, my primary focus has been dealing with the change to the drug-testing regime in the jail. I think there is a broader policy discussion about why we would want to test corrections officers and what the purpose of that is. I would be happy to, again, have further discussions with members to articulate the policy drivers behind that idea.

I welcome the positive comments on through-care. It is very encouraging that the early signs of it are very good. The statistics look very promising and the feedback is particularly good. I think the most important piece of feedback is that detainees are choosing to go into through-care. Even the ones that are not on orders are actually choosing to go into the program and remain connected to Corrective Services. I think that speaks volumes for through-care, and I hope that program continues to be successful. Evaluation of that will be important to make sure we keep improving it and getting the best possible outcomes.

Sitting suspended from 6.01 to 7.30 pm.

MS BURCH (Brindabella—Minister for Education and Training, Minister for Police and Emergency Services, Minister for Disability, Minister for Racing and Gaming and Minister for the Arts) (7.30): As Minister for Police and Emergency Services, I am pleased to support this budget—a budget that is for Canberra and a budget that reflects the government’s continued commitment to community safety and security. This is demonstrated by total funding of over \$268 million for police and emergency services in 2015-16.

Mr Hanson interjecting—

MS BURCH: It is quite extraordinary that Mr Hanson is laughing about an investment of \$268 million for police and emergency services.

For the ACT Emergency Services Agency—the ESA—the 2015-16 budget contains a number of new ESA initiatives to ensure that our front-line personnel are well equipped to continue protecting life, property and the environment of the territory. This year’s budget includes an additional \$37.9 million for the ESA over the budget cycle.

We are committed to boosting the frontline. An additional \$32.6 million will be provided to support front-line services, including over \$15 million in extra funding for the ESA to maintain the quality and effectiveness of its services. There is over \$14 million over three years for the upgrade of the territory radio network. This funding will enable necessary upgrades of the infrastructure, radio and terminal equipment. This essential network is used by the ESA and other government agencies to communicate, particularly during emergencies.

There is over \$900,000 in this budget to replace the ESA’s direct turnout system, which notifies emergency crews of requests for assistance to ensure that emergency services continue to respond to events in a timely manner. \$1.2 million in this budget is provided for an ambulance station upgrade at Greenway, in my electorate of

Brindabella in Tuggeranong. That will be a most welcome addition to the town centre and will provide ACT Ambulance Service paramedics with a modern, upgraded facility in a strategically located station for the Tuggeranong region. This capital works project is a further step in our ESA station upgrade and relocation strategy.

This government has continued to demonstrate its commitment to the SURP—the station upgrade and relocation program, which it launched in November 2011 under the leadership of the former minister, Minister Corbell. In October 2013 construction of a new co-located ambulance and Fire & Rescue station in west Belconnen was completed ahead of time and under budget. The new west Belconnen station was a key first step in the government's commitment to improving emergency response coverage across the territory.

In March this year I was pleased to officially open the new Fire & Rescue station in south Tuggeranong and I also turned the first sod on the construction site of a new co-located ambulance and Fire & Rescue station in Aranda. The new Aranda station, which was announced in the 2014-15 budget with a capital investment of over \$18 million, is scheduled to be completed in the middle of 2016 and will complete phase 1 of the overarching SURP.

The adaptive reuse of the former fire station at Greenway to become a modern, fit-for-purpose ambulance station is the first element of phase 2 of the ESA station upgrade and relocation strategy. It further underscores the government's continued commitment to enhance the delivery of emergency services by strategically locating stations to better meet the needs of a growing population.

This budget will invest over \$200,000 to attract and retain women in emergency services, and includes money for design work to upgrade facilities at ESA stations that support personal dignity and privacy and to address workplace issues. It provides additional funding for an ACT Fire & Rescue recruit college to maintain operational capabilities and to encourage female participation.

Mr Smyth spoke about some of our Fire & Rescue stations and emergency stations. I have been very active over the last six months and have visited stations across the city. I agree that there is work to do. That is why I am very pleased that in this budget there is an absolute commitment to do that design work so that we do upgrade the facilities across our emergency services stations. I do have a commitment to encourage and to bring more women into the Emergency Services Agency and to make sure that we have a diverse workforce that reflects our community.

This budget also formally recognises the strategic reform agenda as a priority for this government. It recognises the significance of this government's commitment to the reform agenda and acknowledges the ESA's future direction and commitment to ensure it is best placed to deliver safe and resilient outcomes for this community.

Under the strategic reform agenda, the supporting women in emergency services initiatives are anticipated to proactively attract and retain women who meet the high standards of entry into the ESA workforce. This is indeed in line with the women in emergency services strategy. Under the SRA the ESA is continuing the good work of the ACTAS blueprint for change. I am very pleased to see that ACTAS is progressing

a series of measures to genuinely move forward towards enhancing professionalism across its workforce.

The ESA has already conducted a number of workshops for front-line ACTAS staff to engage in the blueprint process. The workshops have been used to provide a neutral forum where staff have the opportunity to discuss and contribute ideas towards progressing the blueprint for change recommendations. The budget also provides new funding to help mitigate the risk of bushfires through the TAMS directorate. In addition the government will also meet an increase in workers compensation premiums in this budget.

A feasibility study will be conducted by the ESA into potential new sites to replace the existing backup communications centre at Curtin. The government will raise an additional \$6.2 million in fire and emergency services levy over the next four years, and this will be distributed over residential and rural properties. The estimated increase as a result of this initiative in future years will be around \$40, as I understand it, per household.

The government is transitioning the ESA to a more sustainable funding model so that by 2018-19 the fire and emergency services levy and other emergency services charges will account for approximately 75 to 80 per cent of the total cost of delivering emergency services to the Canberra community, which is the standard used by other jurisdictions across Australia. The increase in this levy is to help meet the increasing demand in the territory for fire and ambulance services.

It is absolutely necessary yet again to place on the public record that the commonwealth government, the Tony Abbott Liberal government, now is refusing to pay the true cost of delivering fire services to its assets in the territory and the Canberra Liberals have remained surprisingly silent on this issue. They do not like the rise but they are remaining surprisingly silent on this issue.

Mr Smyth: That is not true.

MS BURCH: If this is not true, Mr Smyth, I am more than happy to bring into this place a motion that asks this entire Assembly to write to the federal Liberal Party and ask them to pay their fair share. I will be interested to see how those opposite will respond. One of the main reasons for increasing the fire and emergency services levy is to meet the shortfall in the commonwealth's fire payments.

As I mentioned earlier, the ACT government is committed to ensuring a safer community. This includes providing ACT Policing with the resources they need. The ACT government has a longstanding commitment to increasing the operational capacity of ACT Policing. This is demonstrated by funding for an additional 136 full-time equivalents provided over the period from 2006 to 2016.

The funding provided has directly contributed to this community's safety and we are seeing a downward trend in reported and committed crimes. We live in one of the safest communities in this country, and that is due to the investment this government has put into ACT Policing. The continued strong performance of ACT Policing to reduce crime in the community—(*Second speaking period taken.*)

The 2015-16 budget has continued to support the operational capability of ACT Policing. We have committed \$3.4 million over four years to supplement funding required for enabling services provided to ACT Policing from the Federal Police. These enabling services directly support the operational capacity of ACT Policing and include finance, human resources, ICT, operational support, high tech crime and forensic services.

These important enabling functions support things such as crime scene examinations, computer analysis, scientific examinations, ballistics and cyber support capabilities. In addition other corporate functions such as finance, human resources and ICT services also directly contribute to ACT Policing's ability to provide quality police services to the ACT. This budget provides over \$200,000 in capital upgrade funding for ACT Policing facilities.

Both the ESA and ACT Policing provide integral services to our community and do so in a way that is second to none across the country, and this budget reflects that.

In closing—I will not use my full second 10 minutes; I am sure the attorney wants to talk on this item as well—in response to some of the comments that have come from those opposite in the debate, I find it deeply saddening that Brendan Smyth is so dismissive—

MADAM SPEAKER: Mr Smyth.

MS BURCH: Sorry, Mr Smyth—is so dismissive of and disrespectful to the Commissioner of our Emergency Services Agency. The way he described the strategic reform agenda was appalling. This is a strategic reform agenda that the commissioner has put significant time and effort into, and the chief officers across the four disciplines have put significant time and effort in as well. Mr Smyth comes into this place and is completely disrespectful. The language and his attitude to it are really quite appalling. I think it tells the true attitude of the Canberra Liberals and of Mr Smyth to emergency services.

He stands up under the guise of reading a letter from the UFU and makes dismissive comments such as, “This won’t work,” and, “We don’t need this.” This is a service that delivers the best emergency response times across the country. This is a service whereby, each and every day, the men and women, paid and volunteer alike, put on a uniform to help this community. All the Canberra Liberals can do is muster up derision and disrespect for the commissioner and for those men and women in the service. They will pretend to do it to support them but it is not the reality, because the way they speak about the leadership of the ESA is simply appalling.

I have not stood in this place and said anything bad about the services. Mr Smyth, yesterday and today, continues to talk down the service. Mr Smyth may reflect and say he has had correspondence from this and that. Let me assure members of this place that the correspondence to my office shows that the men and women across the emergency services are heartily sick of Mr Smyth and his talking down of the service. We saw it again yesterday. The men and women in uniform and their families had to see Mr Smyth again on last night’s news talking down the service. They are heartily sick of it.

There are matters that need to be addressed. There are matters that can be improved. In any human service that is so. But I will not stand by and let the Canberra Liberals and Mr Smyth continually and absolutely show complete contempt and disrespect for the commissioner, the chief officers and the men and women of the emergency services.

This is a service that provides complete support to our community. On the strategic reform agenda, Mr Smyth says, “We need an independent statutory agency.” Yesterday, even though the commissioner was in the room, and he paid some level of regard to his capabilities, he said, “How can a commissioner, as skilled as you may be in one discipline, have the skills and expertise across the services?” His response, when I challenged him about it, was, “We should have an administrator.” It makes me think that Mr Smyth wants fire, rescue, ambulance, SES and Rural Fire Service to be managed by an administrator. We have somebody with emergency management experience in the commissioner. We have chief officers that will be maintained and strengthened in the strategic reform agenda. And all Mr Smyth can say, on behalf of the Canberra Liberals—so I am assuming it is your view, Madam Speaker, Mr Hanson’s view, Ms Lawder’s view and Mr Wall’s view—is that the ESA is riddled with problems. That is not the case.

This is a service that provides the best first responders that this country has seen. We have had significant investment under the leadership of Minister Corbell. I will continue that investment. We have seen service responses improve for our community. If all that those opposite can do is disrespect that service, laugh and snigger over there and take a cheap political shot at me, it is telling of them; it is not telling of the men and women in uniform. I support the ESA and I will stand by them every day of the week.

MR RATTENBURY (Molonglo—Minister for Territory and Municipal Services, Minister for Justice, Minister for Sport and Recreation and Minister assisting the Chief Minister on Transport Reform) (7.47): I rise tonight to speak about the road safety part of the Justice and Community Safety portfolio. One of the important items in the budget is an increase in the funding available for the deployment of mobile speed cameras. This funding increase complements the newly released road safety camera strategy which I made available earlier this year.

On this topic I was disappointed to hear Mr Coe’s comments about speed cameras on Tuesday. He misrepresented the government’s approach to road safety cameras and to road safety and deliberately fanned the attitude in the community that cameras are used for revenue raising instead of safety. Revenue raising is not the rationale or a guiding principle in the government’s approach to road safety cameras. Achieving the best safety outcomes is the key guiding principle.

I believe MLAs in particular have a responsibility to the community on issues like this and should be particularly careful how they talk about them. Undermining the purpose or efficacy of road safety cameras, which are clearly shown to have a positive road safety outcome, helps to erode compliance. Evidence shows that when road users do not support a law they are less likely to comply with it. Undermining road safety cameras and spreading rumours about revenue raising is likely to result in worse road safety outcomes.

To recap some of Mr Coe's more irresponsible comments, he said things like the government took time to release a new road safety strategy so that they could justify putting more speed cameras in and leaving dysfunctional ones in and around the territory. He said speed cameras are not about road safety but in actual fact are simply about revenue raising. He said the government speed camera system is a mess and there are no substantial plans to do anything different. These statements are not only irresponsible but they actually defy the facts.

Let us work through some of those facts. Members should know that the government released, and is in the process of implementing, a comprehensive road safety camera strategy and mobile camera deployment strategy. These are in response to the Auditor-General's report on safety cameras, an evaluation of the ACT road safety camera program by the University of New South Wales and considerable work by the Justice and Community Safety Directorate.

That strategy says, and I have emphasised very clearly, that these strategies are designed to reduce speed, to save lives and to stop injuries. They are in line with the vision zero road safety strategy which aims for the goal of zero fatalities on our roads. The strategy describes how the government will improve, measure and monitor their effectiveness to ensure safety cameras are used in the best possible way to improve road safety.

The strategy will use a new methodology for identifying locations that are high risk or have a high frequency and severity of crashes for possible future deployment of fixed-speed cameras. The new strategy will use new siting criteria for point-to-point cameras to ensure they are achieving the best contribution to road safety outcomes. The new strategy improves the use of mobile speed cameras in the ACT. This is an effective technology for reducing speeds and improving safety across the whole network.

We have increased funding for mobile speed cameras by over \$1.2 million over the next four years. This will fund an additional four mobile camera operators and increase mobile camera operations on ACT roads by over 120 hours per week. We are changing the law and our deployment policies to support a genuine anytime, anywhere approach to speed enforcement.

Mobile speed cameras will be able to be used on any roads instead of a limited few. The locations will be chosen based on an assessment of the location's history of crashes and speeding, the ability to complement and support police enforcement, and a third of the deployments will be on random roads to support the anywhere, anytime approach. These are changes that are important to saving people's lives and that I will be continuing with despite the misrepresentations and irresponsible politicking on the issue of road safety by Mr Coe and others.

I underline the fact that this approach that I have announced and am in the process of implementing is absolutely driven by the evidence and by the research, in particular the emphasis on the use of mobile speed cameras where the data clearly shows—and I have tabled this information in the chamber so that any member can have a look at it—that mobile speed cameras are the most effective way of getting people to reduce their speed, particularly if we reinforce that with an anytime, anywhere approach.

I make no bones about it: this strategy is about reducing speeds across our city. We know that Canberra drivers do drive over the speed limit consistently and we know that speed is a direct causal factor in a significant number of motor vehicle accidents. I make no bones about it: if people get a fine it is because they sped, it is because they broke the law and it is because in doing those things they are putting themselves and others at risk. That is what I am interested in tackling. And that is why we put this strategy in place, because we believe this is the most effective set of tools available to us to improve road safety in the territory.

I am very pleased to commend this part of the budget to the Assembly because I think the investment in this area by the government will assist in improving road safety outcomes in the territory.

MR CORBELL (Molonglo—Deputy Chief Minister, Attorney-General, Minister for Health, Minister for the Environment and Minister for Capital Metro) (7.53): I am very pleased to speak tonight on the Justice and Community Safety portfolio budget and in particular those areas which are my responsibility as Attorney-General: protecting the most vulnerable in our community, victims of crime and supporting our courts and improving access to justice. This budget, for me, is part of a continuum. As attorney I have worked consistently with our courts and key justice stakeholders to improve the administration of justice.

The initiatives in this budget support that continuing work with an additional \$34.4 million over the next four years specifically to improve the administration of Canberra's justice system. This includes significant investment in the ACT courts including almost \$3.1 million in new funding over three years for a fifth resident judge of the Supreme Court. Whilst I stand by the comments I made previously and the assessments the government issued about the need or otherwise for a fifth judge it is now clear from the modelling undertaken between the government and the courts that by 1 July 2016 a fifth judge will be required, and that is when this budget makes provision for one.

It is taxpayers' money of course that we are investing and it is important to have an evidence base for that investment. This has been provided by way of a model on workload developed jointly by the government and the courts when it comes to judicial resourcing in the Supreme Court.

It has also been important to see if other action could be taken to reduce waiting times in the Supreme Court rather than always, and in the first instance, reaching for the public purse. I am pleased the government has been able to support the courts to reduce wait times significantly over the past four years. The results are a credit to the management of the courts and I thank all who have been involved from the Chief Justice down. \$241,000 is also provided in 2015-16 for temporary judicial resourcing to ensure wait times continue to be reduced before the fifth judge is appointed.

This budget supports the courts by funding \$14.197 million for the ACT courts facilities early works package. Because times have changed there are very few purely government or civic buildings. Court buildings are possibly the last civic buildings,

perhaps with the exception of parliaments. When funding the upgrade of the ACT court facilities we are building for the future, for the long term. The upgrade can be expected to outlive many of us present today and it is a privilege for me to be involved in this significant project.

The new ACT court facilities will be the first project in the territory to be delivered by way of a public-private partnership. The key benefits of the PPP approach include the government harnessing private sector efficiencies and innovation that can be created during construction, whole-of-life efficiencies, outcome-focused service delivery and an effective risk transfer to the private sector. The early works package, as provided for in this budget, is expected to commence in the final quarter of 2015 following an announcement of the preferred bidder for the ACT courts project. The appropriation will fund a temporary accommodation strategy to allow the courts to continue to operate during the two-year construction period as well as deliver critical audio visual, ICT and security early works.

Part of my mandate as attorney is, of course, to protect the most vulnerable in our community and this budget continues to deliver on that mandate by investing for vulnerable people in our community, including victims of crime. The government is providing \$1.566 million over four years to establish an administratively based victims of crime financial assistance scheme. The scheme has been developed working closely with the Victims of Crime Commissioner and other key stakeholders to provide a system that will compensate a broader group of people and be more appropriate to the needs of victims than the current court-based system.

The funding for the high density housing program works to reduce crime and facilitate access to justice, health, education and employment for residents living in high density public housing. The program is about unlocking the individual's potential, unblocking systemic barriers to reduce their contact with the criminal justice system, increase community safety in their neighbourhoods and build community connectedness and social capital. Recognising the important role of the program as a practical example of justice reinvestment in action the government has provided \$366,000 over two years to continue this program.

Another service to receive funding is the street law early intervention outreach service run by Canberra Community Law. The budget provides \$358,000 over two years to continue this service which provides legal assistance services to people who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless. Street law is important and significant as it has moved away from traditional modes of delivering legal assistance services and instead provides outreach services in places where its client group is found. Homelessness can be the result of legal problems and other complex intertwining issues such as family violence, and people who are homeless are more likely to encounter other legal problems. Street law is there to address these needs.

The budget also expands the current restorative justice scheme, as I have spoken about in question time this week. RJ has thrived for 10 years in the ACT and additional funding of \$2.058 million over the next four years will allow the scheme to expand to include more serious offences for young people and to all offences for adults. For both young people and adults, participation in restorative justice will be

offered at all points of the criminal justice system, involving diversionary, pre-sentence and post-sentence opportunities. This recognises that the chief value of restorative justice comes from offenders understanding the real consequences of what they have done and actively engaging in reparative work and the resolution that this provides for their victims in this victim-centric scheme.

The extension of the scheme to more serious offences will be progressed in stages with the final stages being a move to deal with family and domestic violence and sexual assault matters. In many cases, because of the power imbalance and emotional manipulation that can occur, it will not be appropriate for an offender in a family and domestic violence case or a sexual assault case to go through RJ. But if a victim wishes to go through a restorative justice process and if the particular case is determined to be safe and otherwise appropriate the case will be able to be conferenced through restorative justice. The extension of the RJ scheme keeps the victim's safety and interests paramount.

This budget also recognises the current fiscal situation and the challenges the ACT faces going forward in a system where the commonwealth is continually cutting its support for critical services such as legal assistance. The ACT government cannot simply fill the position that the commonwealth is abdicating. What we can do though is work with stakeholders to assist them to best survive the coming cuts in funding. The Justice and Community Safety Directorate is engaging with the legal assistance sector to assist with this service planning. Service planning is not the answer to everything. It will not replace a loss of funding but it will go some way to ensuring that the most vulnerable in our community are provided with the best assistance available and to help the legal assistance sector to weather the coming storm.

Apart from the funding for street law the budget invests over \$860,000 over two years for the Legal Aid Commission to provide essential legal services to the community. The importance of the role played by legal aid cannot be overstated. Legal problems can be complex and can lead to reductions in socioeconomic status. They can work to keep the most vulnerable citizens in our community at a disadvantage compared to others whose lives have been less troubled. Legal assistance is sometimes seen to be a nice-to-have but it is not. The services provided by legal aid can make a significant difference to the lives of individuals and I am very pleased the government has been able to provide this additional funding this year.

The budget provides \$3.159 million over four years for additional resourcing to the ACT Government Solicitor's Office and this funding will provide for four additional staff to assist in meeting the government's increasing demand for legal services as the scale and complexity of the issues the government must address increase.

As I said at the outset, as attorney I am proud of this budget we are debating today and the important initiatives it supports. The government has demonstrated its strong commitment to protect the vulnerable in our community, including victims of crime, and to work continuously to improve access to justice for ACT citizens. The funding that I have described is well considered as part of a broader continuum of work that I will continue to undertake. I commend the budget to the Assembly.

Proposed expenditure agreed to.

Legal Aid Commission (ACT)—schedule 1, part 1.16.

MR HANSON (Molonglo—Leader of the Opposition) (8.03): I will speak briefly to this line item. Obviously this is an important area of government service and I understand that it has been under funding pressure. This is an area where I think we, on both sides of the chamber, want to see sufficient resources to make sure that those who are most disadvantaged in our community can get access to the legal advice and support that they need.

I do note that Mr Stanhope was appointed president of the Legal Aid Commission during this year or at the end of last year. I think his is an appropriate appointment. I recognise that Mr Stanhope has a very strong legal background. He clearly has an understanding of government and there is no doubt that he has, throughout his career, made a point of standing up for the rights of the vulnerable. There is much I disagree with Mr Stanhope on but these sometimes can be controversial appointments given that he was a former Chief Minister and an adversary of mine. Sometimes these are the appropriate appointments and I support Mr Stanhope's continuing role as president of the Legal Aid Commission.

Proposed expenditure agreed to.

Public Trustee for the ACT—schedule 1, part 1.17.

MR HANSON (Molonglo—Leader of the Opposition) (8.05): Again I will be brief. The Public Trustee does important work. They have had some issues over the last few years but from following these issues up in estimates it certainly appears that the government are behind the Public Trustee. I hope that that is the case. We will be monitoring their progress with interest.

Proposed expenditure agreed to.

Superannuation Provision Account—schedule 1, part 1.18.

MR SMYTH (Brindabella) (8.06): The superannuation provision account is very important to the ACT budget notwithstanding that it provides the funds for the superannuation of public servants. It is certainly a big vehicle for investment of the funds that are held therein.

We had an interesting discussion on 15 June. We looked at the responsible investment framework. There was some discussion about fossil fuel investment in light of the conversation we had on the first day of hearings with the Conservation Council of the ACT. We discussed whether we would meet the 2030 target for the superannuation provision and we found out that we not only had triennial reviews but we had annual reviews annually, which was a funny thing to say. There was a bit of banter, if people have not heard it or read the transcript, where Mr McAuliffe, an excellent public servant, revealed that yes we had a triennial review but we had annual reviews every other year. We had just finished that triennial review and they ran us through some of that detail.

We asked whether or not we were online for the target of superannuation provision. I am sure everybody is aware that returns from investments have fluctuated somewhat since the global financial crisis but we were guaranteed that we were on target to meet the needs that we have and the obligations that we have to meet.

In this area the committee only made one recommendation. That followed a discussion about investment in fossil fuels. We were told that the government is gradually phasing out investment in certain areas such as those subject to possible stranded assets to reduce risk. Certainly coal is now considered a fossil fuel; so it is considered to be potentially in that category of stranded assets. Recommendation 61 states:

The Committee recommends that the ACT Government consider sensible and well-timed divestment of its holdings in fossil fuels.

The government's response was that they agreed to it. That was very wise on behalf of the Treasurer. I will read out the government's response:

The Government has an ongoing commitment to increase renewable energy sources, reduce the reliance on fossil fuels and reduce carbon emissions over time. In line with this, direct investment exposures will also be reduced over time. The Government will continue to periodically consider the responsible investment policy framework as part of examining all investment exposures.

Members would remember that, of course, public accounts did an inquiry into responsible investment. The recommendation continues:

The framework will be adjusted as appropriate, with changes to exposures made progressively and prudently over time. This will be an ongoing program.

With that, we will be supporting this one.

MR BARR (Molonglo—Chief Minister, Treasurer, Minister for Economic Development, Minister for Urban Renewal and Minister for Tourism and Events) (8.09): The superannuation provision account was established to recognise and account for the territory's employer-defined CSS and PSS superannuation liabilities and the financial investment assets for funding these liabilities. The account also recognises the defined benefit superannuation liabilities for eligible members of the Legislative Assembly. The government maintains the objective of fully funding the territory's defined benefit superannuation liabilities by 2030.

The annual amount of budget appropriation of funding in the account is used to fund the annual benefit payments to the Commonwealth Superannuation Corporation, formerly ComSuper. The superannuation provision account is meeting its long-term target investment objective of CPI plus five per cent per annum net of fees, having achieved an annualised return of CPI plus 5.2 per cent net of fees since 1996-97. On current settings the objective of fully funding the defined benefit superannuation liabilities by 2030 remains on target. I commend the appropriation to the Assembly.

Proposed expenditure agreed to.

Territory and Municipal Services Directorate—schedule 1, part 1.19.

MR COE (Ginninderra) (8.10): The TAMS Directorate is of course a very large one, with expenditure of over half a billion dollars. The provision of urban services should be core business for a local government, and for half a billion dollars I firmly believe that Canberrans should expect more than what we are currently getting.

The ACT government are responsible for the provision of basic urban services like mowing, providing footpaths, managing trees and streetlights and street sweeping. These basic services are required to ensure that public spaces in the ACT are maintained well and look their best. Of course, many Canberrans take great pride in the appearance of their properties and they also expect the government to take great pride in their assets. However, so often it seems that the government are distracted by their own grandiose projects such as light rail that they often neglect the appearance, look and feel of our suburbs.

Constituents continue to raise concerns about overgrown grass, broken footpaths and streetlights that are not working. Every year in the spring the government fails to keep up with grass growth as if it is a major shock when it starts to grow come September. We understand that there is going to be an extra mow this year but I think there are many Canberrans that will believe it when they see it. We will of course see whether this does in fact solve the problems, and it will be very good to see whether there is a correlation between mowing complaints last year and this year. Perhaps that can be a statistical exercise for the directorate and see whether they actually do seem to be ticking the boxes by way of that. That could be a recommendation for next year's estimates report, Mr Smyth, should you be chairing it.

Mr Smyth: I will start writing now. Get ahead of the game.

MR COE: Please. If not, perhaps there is scope for an annex. Canberra's footpath network is of course getting old and showing its age, and in older suburbs the footpaths are cracked, dangerous or perhaps even non-existent. Broken and missing footpaths are not only inconvenient but are also quite dangerous, and if the government is genuinely working towards active travel, active transport, then the maintenance of footpaths is of course something which does need to be a top priority.

I think the government knows that Canberrans are getting tired of the government's neglect of the suburbs, and that is why this budget shows an extra \$8 million for urban services over the next four years. However, the government have deliberately allocated most of the money for the next two years. This means that they are going to stop spending money after the election. This is not a government that is concerned about looking after Canberra's suburbs, it is a government that seems to be more concerned with hiding some neglect in the lead-up to the election.

The government is also failing when it comes to waste management. Last year, the Mugga Lane tip was suddenly closed because it had unexpectedly reached capacity long before the government thought it had. Rubbish had to be transported to the west Belconnen tip at a fairly significant cost. However, even more concerning was the fact

that the government was caught out by the tip filling up. How can the government not know how much rubbish is being taken to the tip and exactly what capacity there is at the site?

I will happily now turn to ACTION buses. Last year ACTION recorded a subsidy of about \$120 million. Again they failed to meet their targets for the cost per network kilometres and cost per passenger boardings. Passenger boardings were also overestimated and trips per person had once again decreased. Last September ACTION modified their timetable with the introduction of network 14, which was subsequently modified in May this year.

One notable change made to the timetable this year was the increase of bus services running from Gungahlin suburbs to the city, with a subsequent decrease in the number of routes running exclusively from the Gungahlin town centre to the city. I found it quite strange that the government would go down this path rather than increase the number of shuttle services to the city and increase the number of 200s or 202s, which would have been in effect the forerunner to light rail. The fact that they are doing integrated 200s such as the 251, 252, 255 et cetera shows that there is a demand for people going from their home suburb right through to the destination rather than transferring onto another service.

Unfortunately network 14 saw the removal of direct services from elsewhere. Crace is one of the few suburbs to not have a direct service to the city, at least during peak hours, and I will continue to advocate that such a service be introduced.

This year ACTION is set to record another \$120 million subsidy. This subsidy does not include a further \$17.2 million which was required for a range of reasons such as workers compensation claims. Also this year the ACT government will complete a review of ACTION. At some point soon we hope to get a thorough report from the minister as to exactly what has taken place and what the proposed reforms are. I look forward to seeing what these reforms are and I hope to see this as a catalyst to build an even better ACTION in the future.

With regard to roads, unfortunately Labor is only good at building half a road. This budget only provides for part-duplication for Gundaroo Drive and part-duplication for Ashley Drive. Whilst I support these duplications, because I believe they have a good return on investment, I am surprised that the government is not doing the job properly. With Gundaroo Drive, it is just a case of triple your rates but triple your wait. It is just a third of Gundaroo Drive being duplicated in this year's budget. The duplication of Ashley Drive is more substantial, however still falling short of Johnson Drive. It is quite peculiar that it seems to stop just a few hundred metres from Johnson Drive, and there is not really a rationale as to why that is so. Unfortunately, with money being tied up with light rail, the government is only able to build part of the road. That is very typical of ACT Labor, especially when it comes to Gungahlin.

The budget also provided the chance for the government to commit to a flyover of the Barton Highway roundabout. As many people are aware, issues surrounding the tender processes prevented the government's Barton Highway signalisation plan beginning earlier this year. The budget therefore provided the government with a very good opportunity, a good chance, to recalibrate this policy and to go for a flyover,

which is a genuine long-term option. Sadly, this government continues to support the short-term solutions rather than the long term. That is why the opposition has committed to construction of a flyover at this roundabout, because it is what the northern Canberra community needs.

Horse Park Drive is also a duplication I support, and I am glad it gets some attention in this year's budget. However, I have some concerns with how the government has got to this point. Two years ago TAMS commissioned preliminary sketch plans for the duplication of Horse Park Drive between Mulligans Flat Road and Francis Forde Boulevard. These plans seem to have disappeared. Indeed, when I asked the Minister for Roads and Parking last week what happened to these plans, he was unaware they even existed. This is despite TAMS advertising that the plans were being done.

The minister also does not seem to be aware what stretch of Horse Park Drive was being duplicated. When asked last week quite directly by Mrs Jones "which parts of the road will be duplicated", the minister responded:

... I do not have the designs with me here, but I will come back to the Assembly and provide the answer.

Two months after the budget, and the minister does not even know what road he is building! It is quite extraordinary really.

From what I understand and from the minister's somewhat embarrassing update this week, it looks as though the government will duplicate the section of Horse Park Drive between Anthony Rolfe Avenue and Well Station Drive. Let me stress that I think this duplication is good, and I hope it goes ahead. However, it is quite disappointing that again it is just part of the road. It is a different stretch of road from where the preliminary duplication drawings should have been completed to, too.

It appears that the ACT government has no genuine plans for Horse Park Drive. The approach taken by the government over the last couple of years is inconsistent and confusing, to say the least. In effect, they said they would be doing the western side of Gundaroo Drive but now they are saying they are going to do the eastern side of Gundaroo Drive but they are not doing it up to the highway.

The fact that the minister was unaware of what section of the road was being duplicated shows that it is simply not a priority for the government. I hope the government completes a full feasibility study on duplicating Horse Park Drive—and with that, a full engineering study. Hopefully, the duplication will begin shortly. I hope that the government produces a plan to which they can be held to account and I hope it is a plan that will actually be delivered. Ultimately, however, the record of ACT Labor is that they can only build half a road—unless an election is coming, and then they may well promise the rest. (*Second speaking period taken.*)

Sadly, I feel that once again we will get a promise just before the election about the completion of Gundaroo Drive and the completion of Horse Park Drive. As the escalating costs of light rail begin to bite, I would not be at all surprised to see the duplication from Mulligans Flat Road to the Majura Parkway fall flat due to the funds all going towards the light rail project.

And of course there is this contradiction with the government saying that light rail is going to solve all the problems in Gungahlin, yet frantically spending money on roads in Gungahlin. You would think that if light rail is going to be this silver bullet for Gungahlin they would not need to fund upgrades of roads going in and out of Gungahlin as a town centre. It is, of course, a realisation or an acceptance from the government that light rail is not going to be the silver bullet that they claim. That is backed up by their own numbers, their own patronage numbers. Even their 2021 numbers show 15,000 people a day. Their 2031 numbers show just 20,000 people a day—20,000 people a day in 2031. And somehow that is transformational! Some 20,000 people today would not have been transformational, let alone in 2031, with such a small portion of Canberra's population.

The government wants to position itself as the champion of road development in Gungahlin whilst also saying they are the champions of light rail. The reality is that we could be doing so much more and we could be doing it more efficiently. We could be duplicating Gundaroo Drive to the Barton Highway and then building a flyover at the roundabout. We should already have works on the ground duplicating Horse Park Drive. We should also be completing the duplication of Ashley Drive right through to Johnson Drive. And there are numerous other road projects around the territory that would have a real impact on the quality of life for Canberrans, whether they be in private motor vehicles, in taxis or in buses.

I would like to also comment on the government's recent road resurfacing work. The resurfacing has been below par. My office has handled many complaints that have been put to us about roads in places such as Nicholls, Bruce, Aranda, Fadden, Kambah and many other suburbs across Canberra. I think there is increasing scepticism about the use of chip seal—of compacted loose gravel, in effect. Whilst it is, of course, inexpensive and it does do the job in some instances, the selection of roads on which it is used, I think, is questionable.

The surface is dependent upon fairly high traffic for it to be compacted, and when it is on roads such as in places or cul-de-sacs, you end up getting a situation where the gravel does not get compacted but seems to just gather in drains, get flicked up and get carried onto other streets. I think there needs to be a rethink as to where chip seal is used in the territory.

That was something that was discussed during the estimates committee hearings. I appreciate the information that the minister and his officials gave; however, I do not see a change of policy on the horizon. I hope that is something that TAMS can look towards doing more on in the future, looking towards other services.

I would also be keen to hear from the government how the slurry seal trial has gone. I do not think we have heard a huge amount about that to date. That is potentially a very interesting surface that would alleviate many of the concerns that some people have. However, we do not know a great deal about it at this stage, so it is something that I would very much welcome the government's opinion on.

There is much that can be said in the TAMS space. There is so much scope in that agency, and it is an agency which really does have a tremendous impact on the quality of life of Canberrans. People use TAMS services on a daily basis, and there are many committed staff in that agency that serve Canberrans loyally. In conclusion, I would like to put on the record my thanks and congratulations to the TAMS staff who undertake work on behalf of the government and on behalf of the Canberra community. They do so in a very good way. However, it is incumbent upon the cabinet and the relevant ministers to reprioritise some areas, as I have already highlighted, and to look at some other areas of attention that truly warrant some investment from the TAMS budget.

DR BOURKE (Ginninderra) (8.26): We all take pride in our beautiful city, and this budget reflects that pride, with a focus on the suburbs. I am proud to be part of a government that values our environment, both natural and built, and that is willing to dedicate the resources needed to keep it in good shape. Reiterating urban renewal as one of the core priorities of the ACT Labor government, this budget will see more maintenance for the suburbs of Canberra, particularly those in my electorate of Belconnen.

My constituents have often raised the issue of graffiti vandalism with me. I am pleased to say that this budget responds to those concerns, with funding for more graffiti removal and prevention. Notably, a graffiti coordinator will be employed within TAMS, and one of the coordinator's roles will be to work closely with the street art community on the use and management of legal graffiti sites.

The budget includes \$8 million over four years to fund more frequent mowing, weed control, maintenance of trees and shrubs and maintenance of Lake Ginninderra and other waterways, as well as the graffiti response. The budget also dedicates \$200,000 towards footpaths and cycleways in Belconnen, comprising \$100,000 for a study into improved connections with the town centre and \$100,000 for a study of connections between west Belconnen, Belconnen town centre and other town centres. Belconnen will also benefit from a share in \$200,000 allocated for minor safety upgrades to Canberra's playgrounds.

The better our facilities and the better the maintenance, the more residents will be able to get out and about and enjoy our city environment. The government is keen to promote active transport and active lifestyles, and is putting money where its mouth is.

These initiatives demonstrate the ACT Labor government's commitment to quality services and supporting Canberra's quality of life. This is absolutely consistent with prudent government.

MR RATTENBURY (Molonglo—Minister for Territory and Municipal Services, Minister for Justice, Minister for Sport and Recreation and Minister assisting the Chief Minister on Transport Reform) (8.28): I am very pleased to speak about the TAMS portfolio tonight. I know that the many staff across TAMS take a real pride in our city, and they deliver the services that the Canberra community relies on every day.

The budget provides funding that allows TAMS to improve these services, to continue some existing services and to meet the expectations of our citizens. The funding will also allow TAMS to continue to provide the services that make our city so great, like the maintenance of over 700,000 trees in our urban areas, which is certainly an important component of Canberra's identity. This year we will see \$130,000 allocated to develop a long-term strategy for ongoing funding and maintenance of urban trees. We are reaching a phase in this city's history where many of our trees are at the end or will reach the end of their lives over the coming decades, and it is time to very carefully plan a strategy to make sure that we continue to maintain our superb urban forest.

Another item that I am particularly pleased about this year is the support for park care—something addressed in the parliamentary agreement. \$691,000 has been allocated over four years for ongoing park care ranger funding to support new and existing volunteer groups and foster partnerships with school groups and correctional services. This not only provides significant environmental benefits but also helps to unleash community energy, promoting engagement and social cohesion and tapping into the desire of our community to make Canberra an even better city. It helps people to get out and be active in our natural environment, and certainly in an indirect way contributes to fitness and health.

Also supporting outdoor activity, and building on another parliamentary agreement item, is the \$100,000 for new drinking fountains in high use areas. I have certainly had great feedback on the ones that have been installed over the last year or so, and I am very pleased that we are continuing to install more over the coming period. \$120,000 has also been allocated for fitness equipment installation at Yerrabi district park and Eddison park. There is \$185,000 for the Isaacs Ridge mountain bike trail network upgrades, which is currently out for public comment, and \$230,000 over two years for Oaks Estate river corridor heritage walk improvements.

We know Canberrans take a lot of pride in the amenity of their city. Mr Coe touched on this point, and I agree with him on that. The budget invests in increased services that matter most to our community, to ensure Canberra will remain the world's most livable city. We have allocated \$8 million to allow TAMS to provide additional mowing, weed removal, tree maintenance, lake cleaning and graffiti prevention services in our suburbs. The extra mowing will include a surge mowing capacity so that high visibility and high use areas like major parks and arterial roads get an extra mow when they need it. It also includes an extra mow for the whole city. Currently we mow every suburb five times a year. Under this budget initiative we will mow them all six times.

A rolling cleaning program of the almost 440 hectares of urban lakes and ponds, such as Lake Tuggeranong and Lake Ginninderra, will be introduced. Funding will allow the additional removal of debris from within lakes and ponds as well as increased litter picking around their edges. Two more jobs will be created to clean up our lakes and ponds, which means they will be cleaned every three months rather than every six months.

This extra funding will also allow for increased maintenance of trees around road signs, bus stops and in high visibility areas. This will help to alleviate line-of-sight issues as well as allow additional formative pruning works on young, developing trees. It will also allow for more weed removal on road verges, median strips and cycle paths.

The provision of municipal services in new suburbs has also been included in this budget. As the city grows there are new suburbs that we need to start servicing. This budget allocates another \$8 million over four years, which will provide services such as waste collection, street lighting and the maintenance of public places and assets in these new suburbs.

In maintaining the upkeep of our city, waste management services play, of course, a vital role. An investment of \$2.8 million over two years will include a feasibility study to investigate long-term options for the management and treatment of waste in the territory. This will include the development of a full business case for the infrastructure required to reduce waste and increase resource recovery consistent with the waste management strategy. Further to that, \$20.9 million will be allocated to expand Mugga Lane Resource Management Centre by constructing further landfill capacity to meet the territory's needs over the coming years.

One million dollars will allow NOWaste to continue to deliver waste management services, while \$206,000 over four years will allow for public place recycling bins in the city area to be maintained and serviced. Eligible concession cardholders will continue to receive bulky waste collection services, thanks to \$400,000 in the budget, whereby large items such as couches are collected and disposed of for free.

Of course, close to many people's hearts is animal welfare. In this budget funding has been provided through TAMS to ensure Canberra's animals are looked after. The government will provide additional support for animal welfare and domestic animal services, with \$740,000 over four years, including inspectorate services and management of domestic animals in the ACT.

The RSPCA, which do a great service for the Canberra community, will receive \$256,000 through the budget in addition to their underlying grant, to continue to provide their crucial services. \$242,000 in funding will improve domestic animal related services through the development of a new database. Whilst this may not sound like the most exciting budget initiative, the database will improve the systems that Domestic Animal Services uses to deliver a range of services including reuniting lost dogs with their owners, record keeping, and the handling of animal nuisance situations, which I know is of concern to quite a few members of our community.

Investment in suburban group centres will see improvements across Canberra. Brierly Street and Trenerry Square in Weston group centre—Cooleman Court, as many people know it, or even Coolo—will receive \$860,000 over two years to improve the landscape, pedestrian connections and safety in the centre. Gartside Street, near the Erindale shopping centre, will receive a makeover, with \$860,000 over two years for a new design and improvements consisting of additional car parking, pedestrian paths

and associated infrastructure. At the Tuggeranong town centre \$430,000 has been allocated for improvements in landscaping, street trees and lighting to improve safety and amenity at Anketell Street north. There is also \$50,000 for public domain improvements at the Kambah group centre.

As a continuation of the age-friendly suburbs program, which started with Ainslie and Weston last year, a feasibility study, design and construction will be undertaken for a number of improvements in Kaleen and in the Tuggeranong valley to provide age-friendly facilities. Funding of \$500,000 over two years will allow for new footpaths, widening of footpaths, community paths that cater for walking, bicycles, wheelchairs and scooters, traffic islands, refuge spots and wheelchair ramps. It is the sort of things that make it a bit easier for older members of our community to be out and about, to move about their suburb comfortably and to increase their social engagement.

The budget provides for the continuation of public transport services, including the funding for ACTION, and I will come back to ACTION specifically in a moment. It includes \$264,000 over two years for the continuation of the annual Nightrider bus service. The service runs over five weeks during the Christmas and new year period and provides a safe and sustainable way for people to travel home from popular nightspots in Canberra city.

There is also nearly half a million dollars for the continuation of the flexible bus service. This is a free service for the aged, people with mobility restrictions and other transport disadvantaged residents. It has proved to be incredibly popular since it first started. It provides a service for people who might find it hard to even walk to the bus stop. They can have a direct service come to their homes and drop them at key local shopping centres and health services. The feedback we have had on that service has been really heartening. People say it has made such a difference to their lives, they love the drivers and the provision of that service really does improve their quality of life.

In terms of ACTION more broadly, I note the various comments that Mr Coe made. Certainly there is a need for ongoing improvement in ACTION. It is a significant investment of public moneys and we do need to get better value out of the money that we spend on ACTION. With network 14 there was a significant increase in services, with nearly 300 extra services a day on a weekday, an 18 per cent increase in services on Saturday and a 30 per cent increase in services on Sunday. One thing that members may have noticed is that with increased technology and an improved effort by ACTION's timetabling team in particular, we are now moving into a phase where the timetable will be updated every six months, roughly. This is designed to enable the tweaks that staff identify, be it drivers or the timetabling team, as well as the feedback we get from customers.

With the recent adjustment of the timetable in May this year, we saw a significant spike in ACTION's on-time running. It is now hovering at around 80 per cent, up from 70 per cent or thereabouts just a year or so ago. It is a great credit to the team in ACTION and it is something that our customers are certainly noticing. This is about making sure that we continue to refine the timetable so that it reflects what is happening on the ground and so that customers can have more accurate information

and a more reliable sense of when their bus is going to show up. Coupled with improvements like the NXTBUS service, we really are improving the passenger experience for those that use ACTION.

It is fair to say that the patronage does not reflect the aspirations of ACTION. Again we are seeing signs of that improving. One of the key challenges for ACTION is that there are plenty of people who are willing to criticise the service. What I find is that those people who use the service generally are very complimentary about it. Other people who never use the service are highly critical of it. It is a bit of a generalisation but it is one that I find fairly consistently is true. I would encourage people who perhaps have not tried the service for many years to give it a go. For some people it is incredibly convenient. Obviously, for people who have a lot of driving around to do, and if they have to go to numerous different places in a day, catching a bus is not going to be practical. Certainly, for a range of people, I think they would be pleasantly surprised by what a great service it is.

Moving on from ACTION, an important budget element that will provide for the safety of Canberrans during our bushfire season is \$9.2 million to aid the ACT government in meeting standards and strategies specified in version 3 of the strategic bushfire management plan. The new plan requires an increase in active fire management and is consistent with reducing the ACT's vulnerability to bushfire.

The budget also addresses the need to manage the catchment area of the enlarged Cotter Dam and ensure the quality of our drinking water. As I informed the Assembly on Tuesday, \$2.7 million in funding will implement a wide variety of programs to protect the expanded catchment area over the next four years. This will include managing pest plants and animals such as pine wildlings, blackberry, rabbits and foxes, in order to reduce environmental pressure on native plant species which minimise soil erosion and river sedimentation. Two new positions will be created to undertake land management works in the catchment.

I was particularly pleased to announce a contribution of \$900,000 towards the extension of the predator-proof fence which will allow for the expansion of the Mulligans Flat woodland sanctuary. This is one of a range of offset programs and will support the recovery of reintroduced species such as the eastern bettong. It is through these initiatives that the government will protect the environment, provide the community with the services that are most important to them and ensure that our infrastructure remains amongst the best in Australia.

What members can see from that is that the remit of TAMS is incredibly broad. There is a lot to do. As I said at the start, I know TAMS staff take a great deal of pride in their role in looking after this city and making it a great place in which to live. There are always pressures, and our expectations in this city are very high, as they should be. I travel around a bit, and I always get letters from people saying, "Such and such a place is different," and blah, blah. I go to plenty of places that are well below the standard of Canberra. I think those people would feel very lucky to have the standards we have in this city. So whilst there will be places that at times could do with a bit more effort, I can assure members that TAMS seeks to be very responsive.

When the community reports problems, I get a lot of positive feedback from people who say they either contacted Canberra Connect or they have written to me directly or to other members of the Assembly. It is fair to say that people would characterise TAMS as being very responsive to their concerns. I can assure members that TAMS will continue to do so over the coming financial year through the moneys allocated in this appropriation.

MS LAWDER (Brindabella) (8.42): I want to make a few points about the Territory and Municipal Services portfolio which we discussed in the estimates hearing. The first one I want to talk about tonight, which we discussed in estimates, was the issue of some works that were done at the Mugga Lane tip over the Christmas and new year break. I had quite a large number of complaints from constituents about the tip, so I requested a briefing from the minister's office, which they were most happy to provide. Following that briefing, in early January, I got an email confirming the points we discussed at the briefing. To their credit, the email seemed to have been sent on a Saturday morning at 6.30 am, which was pretty impressive. It said:

- ... agreed from the meeting with Nicole Lawder ...
- TAMS announced on 12 December 2014 that it was undertaking one-off modification works at Mugga Lane landfill between 27 November and 24 December 2014 to maximise the amount of useable space in the current operational cell.
- The work is preparatory to the opening of new landfill cells in 2015 and is designed to allow the final fill profile to be achieved to maximise useable space, and ensure value for money for the level of public investment in the landfill.
- This work exposed and relocated covered, decomposing waste, resulting in a strong, intermittent odour being noticed by residents in nearby suburbs in Tuggeranong.
- The work ceased on 24 December but without achieving its objective due to various factors, including rain delays and the high level of waste compaction.
- The work recommenced, after the Christmas-New Year period, and will cease on Friday 6 February 2015, although the odour may be experienced for a few days while remaining exposed waste is covered with soil.
- It is not expected that this type of work will be required again and the first of two new landfill cells is expected to be ready to receive waste in February 2015.
- The use of odour suppressant spray has mitigated the exposure but a small number of residents in nearby suburbs may experience smells until early February.

It was good to get the confirmation of the points. There are a few things I would like to point out.

TAMS announced on 12 December that the works would take place between 27 November and 24 December. So they were already halfway through the period before they announced they were doing it. This brings us back to consultation and communication, a theme I have talked about throughout these estimates hearings. They announced it well after they had already started it.

The second thing I would like to point is that I was told in this briefing:

... it will cease on ... 6 February ... although the odour may be experienced for a few days while remaining exposed waste is covered with soil.

So apparently work ceased on 6 February. The smell was still being experienced a number of weeks afterwards; I have emails from people in Fadden and Macarthur complaining about it right through February. Justin said, "This summer the tip smells have been disgusting. It is a health issue. What compensation will be available to residents?" Dorothy said, "The suburb of Fadden has been inundated with the most disgusting putrid smell from the tip again over the past week." Sheila said, "They have no idea. They are blaming it on the work that supposedly finished in early February but the smell has been coming from the tip for over a year now. I still believe it is because they do not cover the refuge after it is dumped each week."

I could go on and on here. We have got Alan: "I contacted TAMS in November 2014 to discuss the odour and was told earthmoving works at the tip will be completed by the end of 2014. Since then we have had continuous odour here in Fadden, especially after periods of rain." Lena said, "I regularly jog around Fadden. I have been distracted by the hideous smell coming from the tip." Angela said, "It stinks on Wednesdays in Fadden." Natalie referred to a sweet rotting smell which occurs several days a week. Julie referred to the unpleasant odour coming from Mugga Lane tip. Et cetera, et cetera. I will not go on and on.

So it went well past 6 February, and a few days was actually a few more weeks. You would have thought—I would have thought; maybe you would not have thought—that after expressing that interest in the smell coming from the tip, I might have got an update if the work had not been completed in time. However, that was not the case. I did not receive an update. I had to contact the minister's office again and ask why there was still the smell coming from the tip, at which point I was given another explanation about why there was continuing to be a smell from the tip. That was a little unfortunate, I thought.

As late as April this year I wrote to Mr Rattenbury about my constituents' concerns regarding the intermittent smell from the Mugga Lane Resource Management Centre. Mr Rattenbury assured me about the odour suppressant et cetera that is done at the tip. It seems to be a bit of an ongoing issue, which is very unfortunate for people in nearby suburbs.

I come back to that continuing theme of consultation and communication. I do not think it would have been very difficult for Mr Rattenbury's office to come back to me rather than waiting for me to complain once again on behalf of my constituents. I was

quite disappointed, because in general terms I must say that when I write to Mr Rattenbury I get, at the very least, a very polite response. And on many occasions he has been very helpful—he and his department. I have written and thanked them for much of the work that they have done on behalf of my constituents.

Another example where I do not think we have had the best possible result is an inner street in Fadden that has no footpaths on either side of the street. Many residents who had gardens right down to the edge of the street got a letter from TAMS saying that they had to remove the garden beds so that people would have somewhere to walk, so they did not have to walk on the road. Many residents took the time and went to a lot of trouble to dig up gardens, remove trees et cetera so that there was room on the side of the road so pedestrians did not have to walk on the road. I think there are only three remaining areas on the street where the vegetation goes right up to the road. Those three areas are the public walkways that TAMS themselves are responsible for maintaining. They have contacted everyone in the street who has a garden to the roadside, asking them to remove their vegetation and gardens, but they have not done the same thing themselves. I find that rather incredible.

I would like to very quickly recap the fix my street issue. Again I took Mr Rattenbury at his word when he wrote to me many times saying I should lodge many of these constituent concerns on fix my street. As I mentioned the other day, and I am not sure if Mr Rattenbury was in the chamber, over the past 18 months or so I have lodged 64 different items on fix my street. I looked at those items early last week, I think. From what you can see online on fix my street—I thought the whole point of fix my street was that you would be able to follow it online—of the 64 items I lodged, nine were marked as resolved as at “last week”, 54 were marked as escalated and three were marked as referred to an SME. Some of those 52 marked as escalated may well have been fixed, but I would have thought that it would be recorded on fix my street so that when I looked it up I would be able to see whether it had been completed or not without actually having to go out to the location in Tuggeranong to check for myself.

These are some of those communication issues—again I will stress it—that would make everyone’s life much easier if they were dealt with.

I know it is not easy to look after all of those roads, all of those footpaths, all of those trees, all of that rubbish, and in many instances I have seen the good work that they have done and thanked Mr Rattenbury and his directorate. But I would encourage them to continue to communicate and consult—not during a process but before a process—and ensure that residents, not just in my electorate of Brindabella but throughout Canberra, can be reassured about and are able to see exactly what is happening in their own suburb.

MRS DUNNE (Ginninderra) (8.52): It seems almost ironic that the TAMS budget should be the second-last part of the appropriation bill, because it often seems that TAMS is just as low on the government’s priority list. However, when I meet with residents of Ginninderra, suburb maintenance is high on their priority list—issues like cracked footpaths and cycle paths, the lack of mowing leading to grass getting out of control in the spring and summer time, the lack of street sweeping in the suburbs, potholes in roads and streets, dangerous trees and debris on footpaths, run-down local shops and graffiti.

The government says that the budget contains money for more TAMS services in Ginninderra and across Canberra. These increases in services are welcome. But, Mr Assistant Speaker, I hope you will pardon my cynicism when I suggest that this budget increase seems to coincide with an election year when the Labor-Greens coalition government would wish the city to be looking at least a little better than it has in the last few years. Is it perhaps that the government is feeling guilty that, yet again, it has put rates up well above CPI, or even WPI, and so it feels that at least some of that money should go towards the aspirations of suburban maintenance and looking after the needs of the people who pay the rates?

Rates revenue will increase across Canberra by \$356 million between 2010-11 and 2018-19. That is a 2.8-fold increase in rates revenue in under a decade. Could I just say something about tripling your rates—at least, tripling your rates revenue in under 10 years? In Aranda and Weetangera, rates have gone up by an average of 62 per cent in four years. Even in Charnwood, which gets a mention in the *Dropping off the edge* report that we spoke about yesterday, rates have gone up, on average, by over 37 per cent. Services in our suburbs have not increased, and will not increase, at nearly the same rate.

Is it any wonder that the people of Ginninderra are mourning the neglected state of their suburban footpaths, playgrounds, shopping centres and open spaces? Is it any wonder that the people of Ginninderra are very suspicious that their rates increases are serving little more than to fund the Labor-Greens coalition government's pet project, the big kids' train set which is called light rail? Is it any wonder that the people of Ginninderra are wondering why they have to pay for light rail when they will never see it? Is it any wonder that the people of Ginninderra wonder why they pay a motza in rates when any prospect of light rail extending to west Belconnen is not even on the horizon? It is not even on the never-never.

For the residents of Ginninderra, any real commitment from this government to suburban maintenance seems just as far away. Why is it that some residents are telling me that the bus stops are being removed from Burkitt Street in Page? Mr Assistant Speaker, you know that there are more than 300 aged people who live in three separate retirement villages along Burkitt Street in Page and rely on access to public transport. Why are we removing their bus stops? Why is it that residents are telling me that when they put requests on the government's fix my street service, often several times, nothing happens, not even an acknowledgement? Ms Lawder and I have both spoken at length about this over the last little while.

I will recount that my senior adviser put in an online request, perhaps as long ago as two years, for on-road school zone speed limit signs to be repainted on Langdon Avenue past Wanniasa Hills Primary School. He did this because the signs were almost illegible. Today they remain unpainted, are totally illegible and create a significant risk for local school children.

Why is it that a footpath can be fixed, a pothole filled or overgrown grass mowed only when a minister is approached personally? Why is it that every letter I get back from the minister wants to encourage me to go to fix my street—in other words, “Don't bother me. I'm the minister. I'm too important for such things.” You get a circular argument here and it becomes a fob-off strategy from the government.

Is it any wonder that the people of Ginninderra are becoming more and more frustrated with this government's habit of ignoring them in the times that matter to them and focusing their efforts on the things that do not matter so much? Sometimes we all, including residents, joke about the term "roads, rates and rubbish" but the overwhelming message I get from the people of Ginninderra is that these matters are important to them. The only one of those three matters that is important to the government is rates—putting them up so they can pay for their train set. I do not think that this is good enough, and I do not believe that the people of Ginninderra think that it is good enough either.

MR GENTLEMAN (Brindabella—Minister for Planning, Minister for Roads and Parking, Minister for Workplace Safety and Industrial Relations, Minister for Children and Young People and Minister for Ageing) (8.57): As Minister for Roads and Parking I am very proud of the funding that the ACT government has committed to the ongoing development of our city in this budget. The budget delivers more than \$90 million in spending for new roads and road infrastructure in addition to the ongoing road maintenance programs. The budget invests in our road network, providing funds to ease congestion, delays and queuing at intersections.

The budget provides \$24.6 million over three years for the duplication of Ashley Drive from Erindale Drive to Ellerston Avenue. This follows on from stage 1 works which were completed last year and progresses the commitment given by the ACT government to improve safety, access and capacity for users in Canberra. Since Ashley Drive was first built there has been extensive development in the Lanyon valley and south Tuggeranong and the results of the growth are now being experienced on parts of Ashley Drive in the form of heavy congestion in the morning and afternoon peak periods.

The duplication of this section of Ashley Drive will double capacity on the busy stretch of road and will support new transport-related developments planned for the Erindale group centre such as the soon to be upgraded bus station and future park-and-ride facilities. The upgrade of Ashley Drive will cater to all modes of transport and will include a new pedestrian bridge over Monks Creek linking Isabella Plains to the north, traffic signals at key intersections to support safe access to the adjacent suburbs and on-road cycle lanes. These pedestrian and cycle facilities will help to increase the number of people using active travel day to day.

\$31.1 million has been provided over two years to deliver stage 1 of the Gundaroo Drive upgrade project which will duplicate the road between Gungahlin Drive and the intersection of Mirrabai Drive and Anthony Rolfe Avenue. The upgrade will include the provision of bus priority lanes at the intersection with Gundaroo Drive and Gungahlin Drive. This will provide improved reliability for public transport patrons travelling between Gungahlin and Belconnen.

The duplication of this section of road will improve safety and relieve congestion in the growing Gungahlin region and has been prioritised due to accident trends and levels of congestion on this section of the road network. As with the Ashley Drive upgrade, this project will cater for active travel, and will deliver on-road cycle lanes and safe diversions at the two major roundabouts on this section of road.

As part of this project the relocation of a section of high pressure gas main is to be completed. This will allow stage 2 works to be completed in the future without significant delays associated with this service relocation work. The design of stage 2 of the upgrades has been completed and is planned to be delivered following the completion of a range of transport projects in the region. This includes the upgrade of the intersection of the Barton Highway and Gundaroo Drive, the upgrade of Horse Park Drive near the new residential estate of Throsby and the widening of Gungahlin Drive near Mitchell.

The works on Gundaroo Drive will complement the signalisation and upgrade of the Barton Highway-Gundaroo Drive roundabout. In total these projects will cost about \$41 million and provide a real solution to problems with traffic in Gungahlin. Egress from Crace will be made easier, wait times will be reduced for entry onto the Barton Highway and it will all be done without needing an extravagant \$50 million flyover. The timing of the delivery of each of these projects has taken into consideration the delivery of the capital metro project and the potential impacts of these works.

As I mentioned earlier, this budget not only provides funding for works on Gundaroo Drive but also for Horse Park Drive. Roads ACT has received \$1 million in funding over two years for a feasibility and design project which includes the sections of Horse Park Drive between Well Station Drive and the Federal Highway. When completed the \$1 million feasibility study will make recommendations for the timing of the delivery of the remaining sections of Horse Park Drive between Mulligans Flat Road and the Federal Highway interchange. This will form a program of works that will be considered by government in future budget years.

Design work completed previously in 2013 included the duplication of Horse Park Drive between Mulligans Flat Road and Gundaroo Drive. These designs also included the upgrade of the intersections at Katherine Avenue and Francis Forde Boulevard to traffic signal control. The timing of the delivery of this section will be included in the overall delivery strategy. This is in addition to the duplication of Horse Park Drive, for which the Economic Development Directorate has provided \$17.1 million and which will upgrade the road in the vicinity of Throsby and assist in the development of this residential area. The project includes the upgrades to three major intersections along the route at Anthony Rolfe Avenue, Mapleton Avenue and Well Station Drive.

Fourteen million dollars has been provided through this budget to improve roads in the Gungahlin town centre, including extensions to The Valley Avenue and Manning Clark Crescent. This work will support commercial developments in the town centre and will also be important to manage traffic arrangements with the construction of the capital metro light rail project and changes that will take place on Hibberson Street.

The ACT government, in partnership with the Australian government, continues to fund improvement to bridges on key commercial routes to ensure that access is available to the current fleet of larger and more productive commercial vehicles. This results in more productive commercial freight movements and lower operating costs. Of course, it is part of our integrated transport network. This budget also provides \$700,000 to undertake strengthening works on bridges along the Monaro Highway from Pialligo Avenue to Isabella Drive to ensure a safe and reliable freight route from the Majura Parkway.

The government recognises the importance of the timely planning and development of road infrastructure projects to meet the future needs of our city. The budget provides \$2.5 million over two years for this purpose, covering feasibility and/or design studies for six intersections and main access routes across Canberra.

The budget provides \$900,000 in 2016-17 to assess the need for road upgrades in the vicinity of the airport, including Pialligo Avenue. This road provides an important link to Queanbeyan and regional New South Wales. We will work closely with Queanbeyan City and surrounding councils to progress these links, including future joint funding submissions to the Australian government.

As our city continues to develop, a planned and integrated approach towards the provision of road infrastructure will only become more important, and I am pleased that this government is leading the way in this regard.

Proposed expenditure agreed to.

Total appropriated to agencies agreed to.

Treasurer's Advance—schedule 1, part 1.20.

MR SMYTH (Brindabella) (9.05): The Treasurer's advance, of course, is the honey pot that the government often resorts to. It was interesting that on 24 June this year the government managed to take what was left and emptied the pot quite convincingly, leaving a mere \$467,000 in the pot.

Mr Assistant Speaker, some of the Treasurer's advance you can say has been used wisely. A great deal of it you would have to say is because of poor planning. For instance, the Chief Minister, Treasury and Economic Development Directorate got \$845,000 to meet cash requirements for annual leave entitlements. How is it you can do your budget and not include annual leave entitlements? For instance, Community Services got \$862,000 on the same day, 24 June, for annual leave entitlements following employee redundancies as part of the NDIS. You could say that it was unexpected but they certainly knew that these redundancies were coming and perhaps they should have planned for it. We know that in the outyears there is still money in the budget that is inflated against the number of employees that they will have in those years.

For instance, Chief Minister, Treasury and Economic Development got \$1.214 million for higher than anticipated sportsground irrigation costs and activities. This was across a year when I suspect that, in November and December 2014, it got quite hot. There were some fires around the country, people might recall. But the summer then waned. So it is interesting that we have fewer sportsgrounds but we suddenly had to find \$1.2 million for irrigation.

Plus there were some activities by the public housing renewal task force to facilitate the territory's participation in the commonwealth asset recycling initiative. I wonder whether Mr Coe has added that to his list of funding for capital metro. What

proportion of the \$1.2 million was for sportsgrounds? What proportion was for public housing renewal? That could perhaps be a question on notice. Again these are things the government should have known, and it is not unreasonable to expect them to know it.

Here is one that will tickle Mr Hanson's fancy: payments on behalf of the territory of \$1.25 million to meet cash requirements for a shortfall in funding of ACT Policing enabling services. Now, hang on a minute. We took \$15 million out of their budget. As a government they put \$3 million back in and said, "Aren't we good? We're bolstering police." But they still left Policing \$1.25 million for enabling services. I am not sure how the minister for policing comes up with her budget for policing, but you cannot take \$15 million out, put \$3 million in, still come up short by \$1.25 million and say, "We've got the budgeting right."

There was another one for Chief Minister's—\$4.686 million. This was to cover a shortfall in the first home owner scheme grant. We know what the grant is; we know what the trend is. It would be interesting to see what the difference was and why it was so short, as \$5 million for first home owners would clearly indicate that something had not been worked out properly.

There was another \$5.428 million for concessions. You could make a reasonable case that concessions demand might be hard to estimate, if more people come forward. But it is interesting that they left it until 24 June to ask for that money. It is interesting that we leave it so late. If they are urgent and unexpected, which is what the Treasurer's advance is there for, you would think that the government would have a better handle on all of this. But, as always, there is the last minute spend in the last week of the financial year—get another \$12 million or \$14 million out the door. I think it shows that there are problems with this government and their budgeting, and we would expect them to do better in the coming year.

MR BARR (Molonglo—Chief Minister, Treasurer, Minister for Economic Development, Minister for Urban Renewal and Minister for Tourism and Events) (9.09): Section 18 of the FMA provides the Treasurer with the authority to authorise an appropriation if there is an urgent or unforeseen need for expenditure during a fiscal year. The Treasurer's advance must not exceed one per cent of the total amount appropriated by all appropriation acts for that year. In 2015-16 an amount of \$47,400,000, representing one per cent of total appropriations for the financial year, has been included in this appropriation bill, and I commend it to the Assembly.

Proposed expenditure agreed to.

Total appropriations.

Question put:

That the proposed expenditure be agreed to.

The Assembly voted—

Ayes 8

Noes 7

Mr Barr	Mr Corbell	Mr Coe	Ms Lawder
Ms Berry	Ms Fitzharris	Mr Doszpot	Mr Smyth
Dr Bourke	Mr Gentleman	Mrs Dunne	Mr Wall
Ms Burch	Mr Rattenbury	Mr Hanson	

Question so resolved in the affirmative.

Proposed expenditure agreed to.

Clauses 1 to 11, by leave, taken together and agreed to.

Schedule 2 agreed to.

Title.

MR BARR (Molonglo—Chief Minister, Treasurer, Minister for Economic Development, Minister for Urban Renewal and Minister for Tourism and Events) (9.15): As this is the final speaking opportunity on the budget, I would like to take the opportunity to thank members for their contributions to the budget debate over the last three days, the estimates committee for their work in the intervening period, and indeed all of my ministerial colleagues and members of the government for their support in the considerable amount of work that goes into producing the annual budget.

It is a budget that is for Canberra—for Canberra suburbs, for Canberra's future; a budget that has a vision for a more inclusive city, one that is powered by renewable energy and with efficient public transport; one that will see our economy continue to grow and all Canberrans included in that prosperity. It is a very important budget for this city at this time, and gee, it stands in marked contrast to what we see from conservative governments elsewhere in this country. We are very proud on this side of the chamber of our support for a budget that is inclusive, a budget that seeks to grow this economy, to build this city and to continue our efforts to make Canberra an even better place to live. I commend this year's budget and all of the hard work of my ministerial colleagues to the Assembly.

Title agreed to.

Bill agreed to.

Appropriation (Office of the Legislative Assembly) Bill 2015-2016

Debate resumed from 2 June 2015, on motion by **Mr Barr**:

That this bill be agreed to in principle.

MRS DUNNE (Ginninderra) (9.17): We are on the home stretch, with only the Legislative Assembly to go; so I will be very brief. Earlier today I updated the Assembly on the quite significant project to accommodate 25 members of the Assembly beyond the ACT election on 15 October 2016. I will make no further comment on the matter, other than to say that the next Assembly will mark an exciting new chapter in the history of ACT self-government.

In relation to the specifics of the OLA budget, I express my disappointment that the Treasurer rejected the Assembly's call for funding for a dedicated security officer. The case put to the Treasurer was well made and based on recommendations made in a recent security review undertaken for the Assembly. The case was strengthened even further by the events that occurred in the Canadian parliament last year. Indeed entering the Australian parliament, a visitor must walk past heavily armed security personnel.

It must be acknowledged that the Assembly is not a national parliament but we stand as neighbours to Australia's national parliament. As such, we must take security seriously and take whatever measures are necessary to ensure the safety and security of the people who work in and visit the Assembly.

Further, in rejecting the Assembly's bid for a dedicated security officer, which I, as Speaker, included in my recommended appropriation, the Treasurer failed to follow the requirements of the Financial Management Act 1966. This failure, if not in the words of the act, certainly was against the spirit of the act. Section 22A of the act requires the Treasurer to present to the Assembly an appropriation bill for the Office of the Legislative Assembly. If the appropriation is less than the Speaker's recommended appropriation, subsection (2) requires:

Immediately after presenting the bill, the Treasurer must present to the Legislative Assembly a statement of reasons for departing from the recommended appropriation.

The Treasurer presented the OLA appropriation bill on 2 June, along with the explanatory statement. Neither the Treasurer's presentation speech nor the explanatory statement provided any explanation of the Treasurer's decision to appropriate less than the amount the Speaker had recommended.

I note in particular the requirements of the Financial Management Act that the statement of reasons must be provided "immediately after presenting the bill". It was not until 4 June that the Treasurer tabled a paper giving the statement of reasons. It seemed to me the urgency and spirit of the Financial Management Act would suggest the Treasurer would stand and give an oral account of his reasons, preferably in his presentation speech for the appropriation bill. I think that that is what most people had expected would happen on this occasion.

Further, in the same bill the Treasurer gave an appropriation to the Auditor-General that was lower than the recommended appropriation. Again the Treasurer failed to articulate the reasons for the lower appropriation, though in this case the reasons were outlined in the explanatory statement. In the case of the Auditor-General's

appropriation the Treasurer may have got there but certainly did not honour the spirit of the law. Once again I consider this regrettable.

I acknowledge some learning leeway is needed here because these laws are relatively new. I will be expecting better compliance with both the letter and the spirit of the law in the future.

It is also worth considering that although we have gone a long way in becoming a grown-up parliament with a separate appropriation which is the envy of many parliaments in this country, I think we still have a long way to go. In discussions with my colleague the Speaker of the New Zealand parliament I have learned recently that in the New Zealand parliament the appropriation is determined by the Speaker and the equivalent of the administration and procedure committee here, and it is put to the Treasury and it may not be modified by the Treasury and the appropriation which is sought by the legislature must be provided by the Treasury. That of course means that the legislature has to be modest and appropriate in its demands and not overreach, but so far the world has not come to an end in New Zealand where there is no leeway for the Treasury to say that they disagree with the legislature on the amount that needs to be appropriated.

All of this said, I do acknowledge the Chief Minister's support for some budget-neutral security improvements. Primarily these consist of tighter controls over all people entering the Assembly building including building occupants. These controls are being explored and will be tested and hopefully implemented as soon as possible. The matter of security is one of ongoing concern to me, and I hope that I can ensure that we do all that we possibly can within reason to ensure that members are safe within the Assembly.

That being said, I am, generally speaking, pleased with the process. This is the first year that the protocols between the Assembly and the Chief Minister in relation to the formation of the budget have been put out for a proper run, and they worked fairly effectively. I thank the staff of the Office of the Legislative Assembly, especially the governance area, for the work that they have done in relation to the protocols and I also thank the cooperation of the Chief Minister's department and Treasury in this matter.

MR SMYTH (Brindabella) (9.23): To back up the Speaker, I think it is very important that we understand the implication of not funding the security officer position for the Assembly. I certainly hope it is something that we do not come to regret but security is an issue that is with us. That issue, the need for heightened security, will be with us for some time, I suspect. I think it is unfortunate that that line has not been supported.

With regard to the funding for the Auditor-General, again it has been a long-held view that I have had that we should be moving to a fifty-fifty split of the Auditor-General's budget—50 per cent of budget to be spent on the financials, 50 per cent to be on performance. We did have agreement for that, I think, in the 2012-13 budget. It lasted for a year and then it disappeared, the move to get to that amount, so that we progressively lift from approximately seven or eight audits a year to about 12, which would be reasonable, I suspect, for a jurisdiction of this size.

It is not about chasing the government or catching the government out. Based on the numbers, for every dollar you spend on your auditor-general there would seem universally to be accepted a return of \$9 or \$10. It is about improving services, it is about getting better value for the spend, and it is something that should have been supported. I look forward in years to come to seeing it being restored.

MR BARR (Molonglo—Chief Minister, Treasurer, Minister for Economic Development, Minister for Urban Renewal and Minister for Tourism and Events) (9.25), in reply: I thank the Speaker and shadow treasurer for their contributions. In relation to some of the specific issues that have been raised, yes it is at times frustrating when your budget bids are not successful. Anyone who has been extensively involved in a budget cabinet process would realise that there are hundreds of worthy bids that are put forward each year and it is simply not possible to fund them all.

We were able to meet the vast majority of the funding requests that were put forward by the Speaker, and we had a good and robust discussion where the Speaker was invited into budget cabinet to present the proposals, answer questions, and then we had some follow-up discussions in relation to particular bids.

On the question of security, it is certainly the government's intent to work with the Speaker in relation to the next phase of construction works in this place to look to improve security. I think there is also an onus on members to ensure that they take responsibility for guests who are in the building.

This evening my office had uninvited a prayer group who are anti same-sex marriage arrive in my office physically without any invitation, without any expectation of their arrival—a large number of people who were let into the building by a member of the Canberra Liberals. I understand this group was marched around various offices in this place, which I understand is in clear breach of protocols in relation to how guests who come into this place are meant to undertake their business.

If we are going to have a process now where members are going to invite groups who have a particular agenda, whether you agree with it or not, and march into other members' offices in that way, I think it is a very poor precedent to set. I am concerned about this and I am happy to talk to the Speaker further, but I will not have my office invaded by people praying for me because I hold a different position to them on the question of same-sex marriage.

Mr Smyth: I think they prayed for all of us.

MR BARR: They may well have but it is inappropriate for a member to let a group in and do that sort of activity in this place. We all know that. And if it were turned around the other way and there were a group of activists who came and sat in other members' offices, uninvited in that way, you would be equally unhappy and upset by that. Yes, Madam Speaker, I will have a conversation with you about how we can improve security in this place, Mr Assistant Speaker, through you.

In relation to the Auditor-General, there is no evidence to back Mr Smyth's often-made assertion that for every \$1 that is invested \$9 is saved. I do not think there is any evidence to back that up in the ACT, and we will—

Mr Smyth: I will get you some evidence.

MR BARR: I look forward to that. My experience in this place over 10 years is that in fact it tends to go the other way. One dollar invested in the Auditor-General results in \$9 of additional expenditure, not money saved. But I look forward to that debate and I invite the shadow treasurer to present evidence. If he can present compelling evidence that I agree with, I will change my mind. If you can convince me, Mr Smyth, I will change my mind. I am at least open-minded enough to consider that. But just because you assert it—

MR ASSISTANT SPEAKER (Mr Doszpot): Mr Barr, please address your remarks through the chair.

MR BARR: Because the shadow treasurer asserts it, Mr Assistant Speaker, does not make it fact. We have already increased funding to the Auditor-General to an appropriate level for a jurisdiction of this size. Having said that, I am happy to support this and the government will support this appropriation for the Office of the Legislative 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**) proposed:

That the Assembly do now adjourn.

Legislative Assembly building—security

MR CORBELL (Molonglo—Deputy Chief Minister, Attorney-General, Minister for Health, Minister for the Environment and Minister for Capital Metro) (9.30): Mr Assistant Speaker, I also, through you to Madam Speaker, want to raise my concerns about the conduct of a group of people who were escorted into the building this evening by, I understand, Mrs Jones or members of Mrs Jones's office.

Earlier this evening, my office was visited by Mrs Jones and a group of 10 to 12 people who advised my staff that they wished to present me with a petition. I was in the chamber; my staff advised the group of this, and offered to take the petition on my behalf. The group subsequently commenced a small prayer vigil in the reception area of my ministerial office.

This was quite a large group of people and they were uninvited. My concern is similar to that of the Chief Minister—whilst members in this place can, of course, have in their offices whoever they choose, to take the liberty of access in this place to escort that group around, it would appear, not just to my office but to multiple ministers' offices this evening, on the pretext of presenting a petition but then conducting other activities, is, I think, a breach of the liberties that members have in this place. Mr Assistant Speaker, I ask if you could raise this matter with Madam Speaker and see if she is able to make inquiries as to what occurred this evening in this place.

Whilst I have no issue with being lobbied and I have no issue with meeting with people, I do have issue with members abusing liberties they have and simply fronting up uninvited on people's doorsteps with large delegations, purporting to do one thing and then promptly starting to do something else. I think it is inappropriate, and I would be grateful if the Speaker's office could look into that.

Tuggeranong football club

MS LAWDER (Brindabella) (9.32): I want to speak a bit about some recent activities of the Tuggeranong football club. Recently I was pleased to attend the opening of the Tuggeranong football club's new clubhouse at Greenway oval, which was officially opened on 11 July. It is worth noting that the new clubhouse was an election promise from the government, which they have now fulfilled. It was matched by the Canberra Liberals as well.

The clubhouse is a much-needed facility for that ground down there at Greenway. There are three different clubs that use and benefit from this new facility and the grandstand at Greenway oval. There is the Tuggeranong Hawks Australian Rules football club; the ACT Gridiron association, which includes the Tuggeranong Tornados; and the Tuggeranong Bushrangers Rugby League team. One of the stalwarts of the club, the ex-president, John Glenn, coordinated a user group of the three clubs that use the new clubhouse to progress the project. It has been many years in the making.

Let me turn to some other things that the club has been doing. Recently they had training on stopping domestic violence against women from the Domestic Violence Crisis Service. It was a great initiative by the football club to have their players undertake that training.

Another, less serious, thing that the club recently undertook was to put forward an application on behalf of Chief Wanganen to play in the EJ Whitten Legends game, reported in the *Canberra Times* of 27 June this year. Chief ran out on the field at Etihad Stadium. He was one of two local footballers who were selected from hundreds of applicants from all over Australia, so he was a local footballer rather than an ex-AFL footballer. He ran out onto the ground with the likes of Michael O'Loughlin and Billy Brownless. Chief started playing as a junior in the under 7s in 1983 and has been involved with the Tuggeranong Hawks ever since. He is quite a big unit; I would not like to come up against him in a football game or otherwise.

Coming up very shortly, on Saturday week, 22 August, Jay Kickett, a previous captain of the club, is expected to take the field for Tuggeranong against Ainslie. Last week Jay equalled the record number of first-grade games for the Tuggeranong Hawks. On 22 August, when he plays against Ainslie, he is expected to overtake Jimmy Rice, who was the previous record holder for the most first-grade games. It is quite fitting that the Tuggeranong Hawks game will be against Ainslie, because Jimmy Rice is now the coach of Ainslie. So he will be there at the ground when Jay Kickett is expected to become the record holder for the number of first-grade games for the club.

I have spoken before about the great community atmosphere of the Tuggeranong Hawks Football Club. They consider themselves a family. That is one of the reasons they have been such a success in community football. I would like to congratulate and thank Annette Ellis, the president of the club; Pat McLinden, the patron; Nathan Costigan, the captain-coach; and other board members—Kym Lovett, who is vice-president and sponsorship director; Gerrit Wanganeen, football director; Karen Kidd, secretary; Brad Clark, treasurer; Tamara Sullivan, social committee; and Colin Blunden, junior operations.

If you can get out to the game, it is at Ainslie football club on 22 August. You can see Jay Kickett beat or take on the new record for the number of first-grade games.

Salvation Army red shield appeal

DR BOURKE (Ginninderra) (9.36): I am sure that at least once in our lives we have had a knock on the door from a Salvation Army officer asking for a charitable donation, perhaps more than one, or we have donated during their annual red shield appeal charity drives. The Salvation Army's red shield appeal is celebrating its 50th year, and I had the pleasure of attending the red shield appeal thankyou function last Friday. The function was hosted by Major Gary Masters, who showed the successes in assisting the disadvantaged already achieved through community support and outlined his vision for how to meet community priorities in the future.

The ACT government are a strong supporter of the Salvation Army's good works, having donated to the shield appeal for many years now, and we continue this support, with Minister Berry committing to provide \$10,000 on behalf of the ACT government this year.

It is in this spirit that I would like to discuss the good works that the Salvation Army has been able to perform through the red shield appeal. As I am sure everybody in the chamber knows, last May the red shield appeal hosted many events to raise funds, including the red shield appeal doorknock and donation drives in public places.

The Salvation Army has a long and interesting history. Starting in London in 1865, the organisation expanded to Australia in 1880. Arising from Protestant Christian roots, the Salvation Army has championed many charitable aims, including breaking alcohol and drug dependence, along with providing refuge and assistance to those in need. Driven by religious belief, the Salvos profess a value for human dignity, justice, hope, compassion and community. With these values in mind, many thousands of people in Australia, including in the Canberra community, receive assistance from the Salvation Army and its volunteers.

Every week the Salvos provide many charitable services for the vulnerable in Australia, and specifically in the ACT. These include over 2,000 beds for the homeless and 100,000 meals for the hungry. The Salvation Army also contribute to achieving longer term goals, including providing training and jobs to more than 1,000 people through employment plus, aged care services to around 3,000 elderly people and assistance to more than 500 people addicted to drugs, alcohol or gambling.

The red shield appeal has been pivotal in achieving this great assistance for our community. The funding from this appeal has ensured that the Salvation Army can help provide a net for the least well-off in our society. The support that the Salvation Army has received nationally in the past 50 years of the red shield appeal has made a great difference to the lives of many of the disadvantaged, not just in Canberra but in Australia as a whole. I am sure everyone in the Assembly wishes them success in future red shield appeals.

Legislative Assembly building—security Commonwealth Parliamentary Association

MRS DUNNE (Ginninderra) (9.39): I want to speak about the CPA this evening. Before I do I want to spend a minute to address the issues raised by the Chief Minister and the Attorney-General. I heard about this about 5.30 this afternoon. I have not yet had an opportunity to investigate but I assure the Assembly that I will look into the events of this afternoon.

The conversation last week about my travel arrangements in relation to a recent Commonwealth Parliamentary Association executive committee meeting have raised some issues about the CPA which need to be addressed. I will leave it to others to decide whether converting a business class fare to two economy class fares at no cost to the ACT taxpayer and a net saving in excess of \$1,500 to the CPA constitutes some kind of abuse but I remind members that I sought and received advice from the Clerk and the ethics adviser before I left and complied with the CPA's own written rules.

My concern today, however, is the article that appeared on 3 August in the *Canberra Times* that related to the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association and the fact that the federal parliament had withdrawn from the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association. This has raised particular concerns and has reflected in criticism in letters to the editor where at least one writer has questioned the ACT Assembly's continued membership with the organisation. I think it is worth putting on notice what the CPA does.

The "Commonwealth" in the title refers to the Commonwealth of Nations, not the Commonwealth of Australia. It is an organisation which brings together parliamentary officers from predominantly Westminster democracies throughout the world to share experiences and learn from each other about the best ways to cooperate within a shared political and legal heritage which I, and I suspect all members, consider the best framework for delivering democracy in existence.

This is an international organisation. It is a huge international organisation. More than a third of all the nations of the world are members of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association. It is an organisation of old and new nations and has a

diversity of religions and races, and rich and poor, and they all work together harmoniously to build parliamentary institutions.

Following the publication of the article in the *Canberra Times* the ABC reporter asked me, “What is in it for the ACT?” It is true that the CPA is primarily directed towards larger and more established Westminster democracies providing assistance to smaller and more recent such governments. I leave it to members to decide which side of the divide the ACT Legislative Assembly belongs to. But I am sure you, Madam Assistant Speaker Lawder, with your experiences in Tanzania, Ms Fitzharris with her experiences in Canada, Dr Bourke with his experiences in Bangladesh, and Mr Corbell and me with our recent experiences in Wellington at a human rights conference, will see that we have much to learn from one another. It is not a one-way street.

I think that it is worth noting that the report in the *Canberra Times* said, for instance, referring to a report in 2010 to parliamentarians:

The report called for changes to the duration, frequency and cost of association events and described the purchase of a London home for the association’s secretary general as “totally inappropriate”.

I want to put on the record that no such home was ever purchased. There has been criticism of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association in the past. Many of the criticisms that were levelled at the association during the Rudd era by the President of the Senate, President Hogg, have been addressed. President Hogg was very keen on, and very instrumental in calling for, the establishment of proper audit procedures for the organisation.

I am pleased to report, as I reported to the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association meeting last week, that the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association’s office has been fully audited and it had, according to the independent internal audit adviser, one of the most glowing audit reports he had ever read. I think that that is an important thing to reflect upon.

The people of the ACT make a modest \$14,000 contribution to the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association. It is a great opportunity for members in this place to learn and to experience how other parliaments work. I think that no-one comes away from a conference like that without wanting to bring back to Australia and to this parliament some element that they have learned. I commend the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association and I would consider that the next time the *Canberra Times* wants to write about the CPA they might ask somebody who knows.

Aviation—Canberra air disaster

MR COE (Ginninderra) (9.44): I rise tonight to speak about a significant event in Canberra and the nation’s political history, the Canberra air disaster of 1940. To remind members of the facts of the disaster, let me read from an article that featured in the *Age* at the time:

Australia suffered a great loss at a most critical stage in her history this morning, when a Royal Australian Air Force bomber crashed a few miles from Canberra,

while carrying two service Ministers, the Vice-President of the Executive Council and the Chief of the General Staff, to a Cabinet meeting, which was to have been held here today. All the occupants of the plane, ten in number were killed.

The 10 victims of the crash were: Brigadier Geoffrey Street, the Minister for the Army and Minister for Repatriation; Mr James Fairbairn, the Minister for Air and Civil Aviation; Sir Henry Gullett, the Vice-President of the Executive Council; General Sir Cyril White, the Chief of the General Staff; Lieutenant-Colonel Francis Thornthwaite, Staff Officer to General White; Mr Richard Elford, private secretary to the Minister for Air and Civil Aviation; Flight-Lieutenant Richard Hitchcock, the pilot; Pilot-Officer Richard Wiesener, the co-pilot; Corporal John Palmer, the wireless operator; and Aircraftsman Charles Crosdale, the flight mechanic.

It is still not clear how the Hudson bomber crashed on a clear Canberra day, but the impact of the crash on the political history of Australia should not be underestimated. Prime Minister Menzies told the House of Representatives the next day:

We meet this afternoon under the shadow of a great calamity. Yesterday morning only a few miles from Canberra an aeroplane of the Royal Australian Air Force crashed and ten men—each in his own way performing his public duty—lost their lives ... It is my sad duty at this stage to speak particularly of our late colleagues, who were not only great servants of our country, but were the daily friends of all of us.

The loss of three cabinet members a month before the 1940 election was a significant blow to the Menzies government. Brigadier Geoffrey Street and Sir Henry Gullett were close supporters and advisers to the Prime Minister, and their loss was keenly felt in the cabinet. Ultimately, their death led to the resignation of Prime Minister Menzies and the downfall of the United Australia Party government in 1941.

The impact of the crash on the public was demonstrated when memorial services were held in Melbourne. The *Daily Telegraph* of 16 August reported that nearly 100,000 people stood silently in the streets of Melbourne as the coffins of nine victims were carried from the train station to the Church of England and Catholic cathedrals. The Prime Minister, all cabinet members, other political leaders, officials and media representatives travelled on the funeral train from Canberra to Melbourne. Memorial services were also held in Sydney and Canberra.

A memorial to honour the memory of those killed in the crash was erected at the crash site. Today the Australian War Memorial's Last Post Ceremony recognised the 75th anniversary of the air disaster and featured the story of General Sir Cyril White. For more information about the Canberra air disaster, I recommend that members read Andrew Tink's very informative book about the crash, *Air Disaster Canberra*.

Question resolved in the affirmative.

The Assembly adjourned at 9.48 pm until Tuesday, 15 September 2015, at 10 am.

Answers to questions

Parking—parking meters (Question No 453)

Mr Coe asked the Minister for Justice, upon notice, on 4 August 2015 (*redirected to the Chief Minister*):

- (1) What is the cost of (a) installation, (b) machines and (c) annual maintenance of (i) parking machines and (ii) parking meters.
- (2) For those items referred to in part (1), (a) how many were installed during the 2014-15 financial year and (b) which are leased and does the original contract include maintenance.

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

Parking Machines/Meters

Questions	Parking Machines	Parking Meters
1 (a) Installation	\$521	N/A
1 (b) Purchase	\$6110	N/A
1(c) Maintenance	\$1531	\$295
2 (a) Number installed 2014/15	Nil	Nil
2 (b) Number leased 2014/15	Nil	Nil

NB The new parking machines priced above were purchased and installed in the 2013/14 financial year. Maintenance is included in the purchase price of the parking machines

ACT Property Group—facilities (Question No 454)

Mr Coe asked the Minister for Economic Development, upon notice, on 4 August 2015:

- (1) What facilities does the ACT Property Group manage.
- (2) What is the size of the facilities in part (1).

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

- (1) In 2014-15 ACT Property Group managed 253 properties owned by the ACT Government, and 38 leases in commercial buildings on behalf of the Territory. A list of all the buildings owned by ACT Government can be found at **Attachment A**.

The sites managed by ACT Property Group include land based properties, such as the Parkwood Industrial Estate; land and building based properties, such as depots; and building based properties, such as government offices and community centres.

- (2) The properties, both owned and leased, consist of 480,445 square metres of government accommodation of which 101,771 square metres in owned buildings was used for government office and other accommodation, and a further 216,800 square metres of land and accommodation for community and commercial organisations. This includes the lettable area which incorporates land and/or building depending on the site arrangements.

ACT Property Group - List of Buildings

Suburb	Block	Section	Property
Acton	Pt 22	33	Acton Ferry Terminal
Ainslie	5	79	Corroboree Park Community Hall
Ainslie	25	6	Paterson Street Depot
Ainslie	10	27	Wakefield Gardens
Ainslie	4	38	Angas Street Depot
Belc District	1616		Kama Homestead (Blk 1416 & PCL land Blk 1418 Resurvey Blk
Belc District	1586		Parkwood Recycling Estate (landfill site)
Belc District	1540		Parkwood Rd Storeyard
Belconnen	2	7	Moubray St Parks Depot
Belconnen	13	21	Rainbow Cottage Early Childhood Centre
Belconnen	3	22	Belconnen Traffic Centre
Belconnen	44	54	Belconnen Community Centre
Belconnen	44	54	Belconnen Youth Centre
Belconnen	44	54	Ginninderra Early Childhood Centre
Belconnen	11	54	Belconnen Library
Belconnen	1	149	Ginninderra Water Police Plus Jetty
Bonython	9	21	Bonython Neighbourhood Hall
Braddon	6	8	Haig Street Depot
Braddon	16	24	KU Braddon
Calwell	7	72	Calwell Childcare Centre
Calwell	7	72	Calwell Neighborhood Centre
Calwell	10	798	Were St Parks Depot
Canberra Central	1343	0	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultural
Campbell	24	14	Campbell Cottage Child Care Centre
Campbell	16	49	White Crescent Depot
Campbell	Pt 6	119	Duntroon Dairy
Charnwood	5	31	Alkira Community Childcare & Preschool
Charnwood	37 & 38	95	Cooinda Cottage
Charnwood	Pt 14	112	Lhotsky St Parks Depot
Chifley	10	7	Chifley Community Hub
Chisholm	9	540	Chisholm Community Centre
Chisholm	10	540	Bunyarra Children's Centre
Chisholm	41	560	Old Tuggeranong Schoolhouse
City	19	10	Allara St Parks Depot
City	13	12	Waldorf Unit 150
City	22	19	North Building
City	3	20	Westlund House
City	3&5	31	Moore St Health Building
City	15	63	Magistrates Court
City	14	65	Convention Centre
City	5	68	Civic Early Childhood Centre
City	11	84	Griffin Centre
City	2	97	Civic Youth Centre
City	n/a		Merry-go-round

Cook	1	13	Cook Community Hub
Cook	3	13	Cook Playschool
Conder	5	281	Conder Neighbourhood Hall
Conder	8	229	Lanyon Community Centre
Cotter	Pt 504		Cotter Depot
Coombs	7	52	Stromlo Cottage
Coombs	Pt 6	52	Stromlo Depot
Cotter	Pt 504		Cottage 8 Cotter Road
Curtin	20	62	Artsound
Curtin	2	99	ESA HQ / Child Care
Curtin	12	60	Ron Reynolds Training Centre
Deakin	13	45	Gawler Cres (Latrobe) Parks Depot
Deakin	1	64	Deakin Preschool
Deakin	22	68	King Street Depot
Dickson	18	11	Dickson Stockdale St
Dickson	19-20	32	Dame Pattie Menzies
Dickson	13	30	Dickson Library
Dickson	2	33	Dickson Motor Registry
Dickson	14	72	Majura Community Centre
Dickson	27	73	Hawden St Depot
Downer	16	61	Downer Community Hall
Farrer	Pt 3	25	Longeranong St Depot
Flynn	7	18	Flynn Community Hub
Flynn	7	18	Flynn Early Childhood Education Centre
Forde	1	32	Forde Community Centre
Forrest	5, 7 & 12	13	Forrest Early Childhood Centre
Fyshwick	11	23	Fyshwick Early Childhood Centre
Forrest	6	24	Manuka Carpark
Fyshwick	Pt 26	6	141 Canberra Ave Parks Depot and separate asset - the driveway
Fyshwick	21	10	255 Canberra Ave Offices & Depot
Fyshwick	2	38	Newcastle House
Fyshwick	Pt 11	47	Freight Shed Kingston Railway
Gilmore	24	22	Gilmore Community Centre
Giralang	8	76	Giralang Community Hall
Giralang	5	80	Health Centre
Giralang	20	85	Tucana Street Depot
Googong	n/a		Googong Cottage
Googong	n/a		Chelsea Cottage
Googong	n/a		Visitors Centre, toilets etc.
Googong	n/a		Googong Depot
Gordon	60	484	Gordon Early Childhood Centre
Gowrie	2	228	Finlay Place Depot
Greenway	2	15	Greenway Child Care and Education Centre
Greenway	Pt 6	11	Scollay St Office Building & 10 Carports
Greenway	16	17	Tuggeranong Youth Centre
Greenway	22	19	Tuggeranong Child Care and Education Centre
Greenway	20	20	The Wave Centre
Greenway	Pt 4	45	Tuggeranong Library
Greenway	Pt 16	46	Pine Island Homestead
Greenway	1	72	Tuggeranong Seniors Centre
Griffith	22	3	former Stokes Street Preschool
Griffith	2	41	Manuka Childcare Centre

Griffith	2	43	Light St former Ambulance Stn
Griffith	39	78	Throsby St Depot
Griffith	46	78	Blaxland Centre (fmr Griffith Primary) and separate asset listing for
Griffith	50	78	Griffith Neighbourhood Hall
Griffith	1	95	Throsby House
Gungahlin	1 & 2	28	Gungahlin Children's Centre
Gungahlin	3	60	Gungahlin Community Centre
Gungahlin	3	60	Gungahlin Community Resource Centre
Gungahlin	3	60	Gungahlin Youth Centre
Hackett	6	12	Maitland House
Hackett	11	12	Community Centre
Hackett	13	12	Madigan St Depot
Hall	3	6	Hall Primary School
Hall	3	6	Hall Preschool
Higgins	4	11	Higgins Primary
Higgins	4	11	Higgins Former Baby Health Clinic
Higgins	3	11	Higgins Preschool
Higgins	19	12	Ginninderra Community Hall
Holder	Pt 2	21	25 Stapylton St
Holder	15	45	Grant Cameron Comm. Centre
Holder	17	45	Dixon Drive Depot
Holder	24	45	Holder Early Childhood Centre
Holt	Pt 3	18	Holt Community Hub
Holt	Pt 3	18	Holt Preschool
Holt	22	51	Kippax Health Centre
Holt	Pt 51	50	Ormsby Place Depot
Holt	4	88	Kippax Library
Hughes	Pt 14	28	Webster Street Depot
Hughes	11	44	Hughes Community Centre
Hume	2	8	Weighbridge
Hume	9	30	Tralee Homestead & Couranga
Isabella Plains	41	856	Isabella Plains Childcare and Education Centre
Isabella Plains	7	883	Isabella Plains Neighbourhood House
Kaleen	54	28	Kaleen Community Hall
Kaleen	26	44	Maribyrnong House
Kaleen	1	87	Radio Mast - Barton Hwy
Kaleen	27	89	Totom House Multicultural Early Childhood Centre
Kaleen	10	139	Kaleen Cubby House Early Childhood Centre
Kambah	1	115	Theiss Cottage
Kambah	15	122	Chirnside Circ Parks Depot
Kambah	25	286	Kambah Cottage
Kambah	40	346	Salem Children's Centre
Kambah	17	401	Kambah Early Childhood Centre
Kambah	20	443	ACT Health Village Creek Centre
Kingston	Pt 7	11	Cooinda Court No 20
Kingston	Pt 7	11	Cooinda Court No 1
Kingston	Pt 7	11	Cooinda Court No 2
Kingston	Pt 7	11	Cooinda Court No 3
Kingston	Pt 7	11	Cooinda Court No 4
Kingston	Pt 7	11	Cooinda Court No 19
Kingston	1	35	Causeway Hall

Kingston	1	35	Former Causeway Preschool
Kingston	Pt 15	49	Kingston Fitters Workshop
Kingston	7	62	Kingston Jetty
Kingston	8	62	Kingston Jetty
Kingston	9	62	Kingston Jetty
Kingston	10	62	Kingston Jetty
Kingston	11	62	Kingston Jetty
Kingston	12	62	Kingston Jetty
Latham	4	29	Macrossan Cres Depot
Lyneham	12	50	Macarthur House
Lyneham	14	41	Wattle St Depot
Lyneham	10	95	Gungahleen School House
Lyons	5	55	Tooms Place Depot
Macquarie	20	19	Birch Place Depot
Mawson	1	17	Chinese-Australian Early Childhood Centre
Mawson	Pt 5	17	Mawson Dr Depot
Melba	Pt 5	26	Brownlee Place Depot
Melba	16	40	Nellie Hall
Mitchell	1	16	Sandford St Depot
Mitchell	6 & 7	8	Mitchell PCL Depot
Molonglo Valley District	12 to 16	n/a	Formerly Kallenia Rivers (rural property)
Molonglo Valley District	Pt 20 and	n/a	Formerly Kallenia Rivers (rural property)
Molonglo Valley District	25	n/a	Blk 25 Molonglo Valley District
Molonglo Valley District	Pt23	n/a	Pt Blk 23 Molonglo Valley District
Namadgi	Pt 18		Bendorra Depot
Namadgi	Pt 18		Bendora Dam Cottage
Namadgi	Pt 18		Rangers Cottage Corin Dam
Namadgi	Pt 18		Depot Corin Dam
Namadgi	Pt 17		Glendale Depot & Workshop
Namadgi	Pt 360		Namadgi Riverview Cottage
Namadgi	Pt 360		Visitors Information Centre
Namadgi	Pt 12		Gudgenby Homestead
Narrabundah	2	29	Vocal House
Narrabundah	5	29	Narrabundah Community House
Narrabundah	8	29	Southside Community Centre
Narrabundah	13	44	Narrabundah Children's Cottage
Narrabundah	45	100	Narrabundah Business Park
Narrabundah	17	120	Nimbin Street Cottage
Ngunnawal	109	23	Gold Creek
Ngunnawal	10	44	Ngunnawal Neighbourhood Centre
Nicholls	21	73	Nicholls Community Centre
Nicholls	Pt 8	78	Parks Depot
Oaks Estate	11	7	Robertson Cottage
Oaks Estate	4	15	Oaks Estate Community Hall
O'Connor	61	10	Youth Coalition of the ACT
Page	19	10	Page Preschool
Palmerston	7	140	Palmerston Community Hall
Pearce	10	27	Pearce Community Centre
Pearce	12	27	Kemsley Place Depot
Phillip	27	8	Woden Library & Shopfront
Phillip	1	12	Lollipop Children's Centre
Phillip	1	12	Woden Community Centre
Phillip	9	54	Woden Business Park
Phillip	23	80	Woden Youth Centre

Phillip	29	80	Callam Offices
Phillip	3	107	Woden Bus Depot Carpark
Red Hill	26	14	former Quiros St Preschool
Red Hill	31	27	White House Preschool
Reid	3	39	Elimatta St Parks Depot
Richardson	1	450	Tuggeranong Homestead
Richardson	1	457	Richardson Community House
Rivett	5	29	Rivett Preschool
Rivett	7	29	Noah's Ark Long Day Care Service
Rivett	3	27	Bangalay Street Depot
Scullin	4	15	Broadsmith Street Depot
Scullin	13	43	Humpy Hall
Scullin	20	43	Frewin Place Centre
Spence	2	21	Dunkley Place Depot
Spence	4	32	Mount Rogers Community Centre
Spence	4	32	Baringa Child Care Centre
Spence	4	42	Rosehill Community Hall
Spence	7	57	Spence Children's Cottage
Stirling	5	22	Stirling Child Care and Education Centre
Stromlo Dist	485	n/a	Piney Creek 470 Uriarra Road
Symonston	4	49	Mugga Lane DAS Depot
Tharwa	6,7,8	7	Tharwa Primary School and Precinct
Tharwa	6,7,8	7	Tharwa Preschool and Precinct
Tidbinbilla	Pt 240		Cinerea Cottage
Tidbinbilla	Pt 240		Visitors Information Centre
Torrens	2	22	Torrens Community Hall
Tidbinbilla	Pt 240		Tidbinbilla Depot
Turner	1	65	Treehouse in the Park Early Learning Centre
Tuggeranong	1179 & Pt		Athllon Drive Depot
Wanniassa	14	130	Erindale Neighbourhood Centre
Wanniassa	1	132	former Erindale Police Station
Wanniassa	14	132	Gugan Gulwan Youth Centre
Wanniassa	Pt 51	132	Erindale Library
Wanniassa	36	132	Appletree House Childcare & Education Centre
Wanniassa	46	132	Illoura Childcare and Education Centre
Wanniassa	38	139	Wanniassa Community House
Wanniassa	1	178	Erindale Business Park
Wanniassa	1	203	Hyland Place Depot
Waramanga	6	46	Badimara St Parks Depot
Weston	Pt 1	21	Weston Creek Health Clinic
Weston	Pt 1	21	Weston Community Hub
Weston	34	64	Weston Creek Community Centre
Weston	15	67	Weston Creek Children's Centre
Weston Creek	Pt 1201		Yarralumla Woolshed
Yarralumla	Pt 1	39	Kaye St Depot
Yarralumla	Pt 1	39	Albert Hall
Yarralumla	1	102	Canberra Brickworks
Dunlop	2	82	Fassifern
Griffith	33	78	land (former Tennis Courts)
Griffith	34	78	land (former Pre School)
O'Connor	Pt 1	81	Fairfax Business Centre
Yarralumla	2	53	land (Loftus St)

**Capital metro—branded items
(Question No 464)**

Mr Coe asked the Minister for Capital Metro, upon notice, on 6 August 2015:

- (1) Since September 2014, has the ACT Government produced any more (a) Capital Metro foam trains, (b) Capital Metro cardboard trams, (c) Capital Metro drink bottles and (d) Capital Metro shopping bags.
- (2) What was the cost of producing any further items and how is this number broken down by each item listed in parts (1)(a) to (d).

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

- (1) (a) No. (b) Yes. (c) No. (d) No.
 - (2) The cost of producing 2,000 Capital Metro cardboard trams was \$3,419 (GST inclusive).
-

**Capital Metro Agency—consumer research
(Question No 465)**

Mr Coe asked the Minister for Capital Metro, upon notice, on 6 August 2015:

- (1) What polling or consumer research has been undertaken by the Capital Metro Agency since July 2013.
- (2) For any polling or consumer research identified in part (1) what was the (a) date on which the polling or consumer research was commissioned, (b) date on which the polling or consumer research was completed and (c) cost of the polling or consumer research.
- (3) Which companies were contracted to complete the polling or research for any items identified in part (1).

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

- (1) The Capital Metro Agency undertook two market research activities in 2014 relating to the community's views about the project.
 - (2) (a) Market research activity was conducted in June 2014 and November 2014. (b) The market research referred to in 2 (a) was completed in August 2014 and December 2014 respectively. (c) The cost of these activities totalled \$78,141.80 (GST inclusive).
 - (3) Piazza Research was commissioned to undertake these activities.
-