



# Debates

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Legislative Assembly for the ACT

**NINTH ASSEMBLY**

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**Thursday, 19 September 2019**

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

## **Petition**

*The following petition was lodged for presentation:*

### **Wanniassa bus routes—petition 27-19**

*By Ms Lawder, from 644 residents:*

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

This petition of residents of the Australian Capital Territory draws to the attention of the Assembly the neglect, disregard and dismay of Wanniassa residents who have been disadvantaged by the recent bus network changes and closure of bus stops in the suburb of Wanniassa. This affects residents including school children, the elderly, workers, people with mobility impairments, mothers, fathers and carers, grandparents, in fact all residents.

Your petitioners therefore call on the Assembly to:

Call on the ACT Government to reinstate some if not all Wanniassa bus routes and bus stops to enable social inclusion, ease of transport, and accessibility for Wanniassa residents.

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

*Pursuant to standing order 99A, the petition, having more than 500 signatories, was referred to the Standing Committee on Environment and Transport and City Services.*

## **Motion to take note of petition**

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

That the petition so lodged be noted.

**MS LAWDER** (Brindabella) (10.01): I would like to make a few comments about the Wanniassa bus petition. I pass on my thanks to the residents of Wanniassa, Kambah and Tuggeranong more generally, and some from further afield in Canberra. I would especially like to thank a local resident, a woman from Wanniassa, who has gone above and beyond in putting forward this petition, in putting copies of the petition in

local shops, and in even doorknocking houses in her suburb, so incensed was she by the removal of buses in her suburb. She has passed on to me not just the petition which has been lodged today but a number of comments from residents of Wanniasa that she collected during her walking around the streets and doorknocking. Let me quote:

For the past six weeks I have been speaking with many residents of Wanniasa and beyond affected by the cancellation of bus services in the suburb. These discussions have taken place at shopping centres, bus stops and in general walking the streets—

and doorknocking—

These cancellations have had a huge impact on people living in the Wanniasa Hills and Wanniasa area.

The distance to a bus stops now for a large number of households is over a kilometre and in some instances further. Much of the area is steep and uphill all the way. For others it is walking through an underpass and they don't feel safe. Some don't feel safe coming home from work in the dark and walking that distance—

which is much further—

Canberra is freezing in winter and hot in summer. Can you imagine what it is like for people with health issues walking over a kilometre up steep hills. Try walking in heels and carrying groceries. In summer people are going to be heat affected. In winter and wet weather and burn offs asthmatics are going to be put at risk.

There are many health issues, Madam Speaker. She goes on to say:

We don't want to hear from the government ... to stay indoors and out of the heat. That is a ridiculous statement when people have to rely on a bus service for all sorts of things.

She goes on:

For a month I walked the streets in the area that was serviced by the two bus routes that used to run along Longmore Cres and spoke with as many residents as possible to see what affect those cancellations had on them.

She continues:

... when I started looking into this I had no idea what an impact it had on people and how it had dramatically changed their lives and made their lives extremely difficult. In some instances it has totally robbed people of their independence and their social inclusion of day to day living.

I came across households where there was a sole resident. They were able to maintain their home and their garden but no longer had a car. The bus route was their life line to their independence. They could go to the shops, the bank, the

Doctor, the hospital and visit friends. In some instances they just caught the bus to talk to others and have an outing. To be able to go to the shops, buy a coffee and talk to the person at the next table. This has been taken away from them and they feel totally excluded from life so much so that some begged me to stay and have a cup of tea with them because they were just so lonely. They were relying on the generosity of their neighbours to pick up a few groceries for them. They are relying on their children or grandchildren to take them to appointments or to drive them around for other needs. People just don't have the money to catch a taxi everywhere.

There are many other examples, Madam Speaker, from older people, from younger people with families who are suffering from the cancellation of school buses and from people who have their grandchildren for a day or longer during the week and would have used the bus to take them out on outings. We have already heard that since the cancellation of these businesses Tuggeranong has seen a decrease in patronage of buses. The person who did the petition says:

Some residents have said it is taking them 90 minutes to get from their homes in Wanniasa Hills to the Hyperdome—

South.Point—

by bus. That is absolutely ridiculous. The trip by car takes 10 minutes.

They could have taken the bus on Longmore Crescent, which is no longer possible for them.

The person who did the petition goes on to say:

We see on our rates notice we are paying 5% for Public transport. What public transport? It has gone? You have taken away our bus services. The residents believe they are entitled to a 5% refund or the bus services back? We don't mind paying for education and health because everyone benefits from that but why should we pay for a bus service that has been cancelled ...

There is now a bus service that everyone does not benefit from. She continues:

... give us back the bus service we had.

Thank you for taking the time to read a few comments Nicole and hear how the cancellation of these bus services has affected people.

**MR PARTON** (Brindabella) (10.06): Like my colleague Ms Lawder, and also Mr Wall, I spend a lot of time talking to people in Wanniasa at the moment. They are absolutely dismayed. They are really angry. I have to say, Madam Speaker, that there are a number of conversations that I am not able to fully quote in this chamber because the language that is used by these people is not parliamentary. I can forgive them for using such language because they are so upset.

In this chamber, I have already mentioned Mary, who is 76 years of age and who has been a regular user of the buses for decades—for decades. Now she says that it is not

possible for her to catch the bus into Tuggeranong town centre. We delved into that further. I said, "Come on, Mary. It is possible." We worked out where the stop was. She said that she means that she has to do so much walking to catch the bus that she may as well just walk to Tuggeranong town centre. And that is what she does most days of the week. She is 76 years of age. She is walking into Tuggeranong town centre while she can. Madam Speaker, we are all getting older, and we know that at some point she will not be able to walk that far. I am assuming that at that point she will just stay in her home.

These people are angry. They say to me, "Mark, what can you do about it? What can we do about it?" I have to tell them that in the short term there is not a great deal that they can do. I have urged them to sign petitions like the one that Ms Lawder has facilitated coming to the chamber. Ms Lawder, Mr Wall and I have been involved in media appearances; we have had kitchen table discussions. I know that at a couple of those they said, "It would be wonderful if Mr Steel could join us at one of these kitchen table discussions." I am not sure that that is really likely.

Many of these people are on our side of 50, Madam Speaker. I tell them, "I am sorry to say this, but the Labor-Greens government is not likely to listen to you." They say, "Why?" I say, "Because according to Mr Barr you are too old and you are too far south." Too old and too far south! People over 50 do not matter. Tuggeranong does not matter. It is really important for us to put a flag in the sand and for us on this side of the chamber to say that you do matter to us: we will listen to you and we do listen to you.

I have a number of emails and letters here. I want to briefly mention Nicholas from Duffus Place, who is moving, partly because of the bus network. He is going to Woden. We are listening to you, and we will listen to you. Mrs Roy from Langridge Street, we will definitely listen to you. Peter from Wheeler Crescent was just ropeable; we are certainly listening to you. There is Dean from Balfour Crescent, and Frank and Paula from Balfour Crescent. There is Robert from Longmore and Sylvia from Sainsbury. There is Monica and her three girls from Gaunson. There is Felipe from Brooke Place, Patience from Holden Crescent and Arancha from Carr Crescent. We feel your pain and we will continue to trumpet this injustice extremely widely.

Question resolved in the affirmative.

## **Scar trees**

### **Ministerial statement**

**MR GENTLEMAN** (Brindabella—Manager of Government Business, Minister for Advanced Technology and Space Industries, Minister for the Environment and Heritage, Minister for Planning and Land Management and Minister for Police and Emergency Services) (10.10): I rise to update the Assembly on proposed reforms and other work to improve heritage compliance resulting from the investigations of the unauthorised removal of two Aboriginal scar trees in recent years. I committed to giving this statement through this year's estimates process, and I am pleased to provide this update to the Assembly.



Firstly, I would like to state that I recognise the importance of Aboriginal scar trees to our region's heritage and I share the significant disappointment in the loss of these two important trees. People are often surprised to learn that the ACT is rich in natural and cultural heritage. There is a perception that we are a relatively young city and do not have many heritage places or objects. This is far from the case.

Aboriginal occupation of the area has left a rich legacy spanning more than 20,000 years. There are many signs of this occupation throughout the natural and built environment, including scar trees, rock shelters and artefact scatters. Aboriginal scar or culturally modified trees are what is left behind in the skilful process of harvesting bark from a tree. The bark has many uses, such as coolamons, transporting food, water and even babies as well as shields for protection against attack.

Scar trees provide valuable clues about Aboriginal people's use of perishable materials. They tell us where Aboriginal people lived and help us find other nearby types of archaeological sites, such as scatters of stone tools. They provide Aboriginal people with an important connection to their culture and past.

The ACT government takes the destruction of heritage places and objects very seriously, and when these two issues were reported immediate site visits were conducted and investigations ensued. However, it is important to note that major damage or total destruction of heritage places and objects is rare in the ACT and is usually the result of unexpected events such as fire. We all remember, of course, the 2003 bushfires where we lost many of our early stockman huts as well as the devastating fire at the Canberra Services Club in 2011. Nonetheless, destruction of any heritage place or object is a live risk whether these are natural, built, or Aboriginal.

The government takes several measures to minimise the risk of destruction to our heritage places and objects. These include: making information publicly available on the ACT Heritage Register; heritage interpretation such as the Canberra Tracks signage; and, most importantly, having statutory planning approval processes in force under a range of legislation.

Where new developments are proposed information on Aboriginal scar trees is available and accessed across government, contractors, developers and the broader community. However, there are rare occasions where even these mitigation measures are not enough, such as in the case of natural disasters or general reckless or negligent conduct. The recent incidents of the unauthorised removal of two Aboriginal scar trees have highlighted the need to strengthen heritage compliance tools. This work is currently being progressed and I will provide further detail when I have provided an overview of the investigations into the removal of the two Aboriginal scar trees.

I note that in accordance with provisions of the Information Privacy Act 2014 the ACT government is not able to disclose detailed information on individual compliance matters. However, I can speak broadly to the matters.

The removal of MSYB1 at a school in Wanniasa was reported in April 2017 and investigated by Access Canberra. The investigation concluded that a genuine mistake

was made as part of confirming the area to be cleared and the tree was mistakenly felled as part of a larger program of tree removal. The contractor undertaking the clearance had sought advice from the Conservator of Flora and Fauna in line with statutory process prior to removing any trees and it was identified by the conservator as a tree not to be removed. Unfortunately, an administrative error by the contractor saw the tree wrongly removed during clearance.

Once the error was realised the contractor notified the ACT government straight away and expressed their regret. The investigation concluded that it was not malicious activity that resulted in the removal of the tree but, rather, a genuine and unintentional administration error. There was no evidence of a fault element under the Criminal Code 2002, and it was the investigator's opinion that there was insufficient evidence for the matter to be prosecuted.

A recommendation resulting from the investigation was that the government consider expanding the range of heritage enforcement tools currently available. This work is being progressed. Additionally, the Education Directorate is currently exploring a range of additional protection measures including developing a heritage identification database for contractors to ensure and enhance the protection of heritage assets on school sites. The Education Directorate is also exploring in consultation with representative aboriginal organisations, or RAOs, appropriate and respectful remediation for the site.

The removal of MST4 was reported in July 2018 by a member of the community. An immediate site inspection confirmed that the tree had been cut down and the trunk containing the cultural scar remained on the ground adjacent to the stump. An initial review of aerial photography indicated that the tree was cut down between December 2016 and March 2017. An ACT government investigation was unable to identify a responsible party or the circumstances of removal. No further compliance action can therefore be taken.

The trunk of MST4 has been temporarily relocated to a safe place to ensure no further damage occurs to the cultural scar. Its relocation and temporary placement was undertaken with the assistance of a qualified materials conservator and in consultation with the RAOs. Final arrangements on the long-term conservation measures for the remaining trunk and interpretation of the location are still ongoing between the land manager for Transport Canberra and City Services in consultation with representative aboriginal organisations.

These recent heritage compliance matters highlighted that the current deterrence system for heritage offences is not as effective as it could be. I have asked the Environment, Planning and Sustainable Development Directorate to explore the introduction of an on-the-spot fine scheme and repair orders. Under new legislation anticipated to be introduced later this year I propose to give the Heritage Council the power to use repair damage directions for people to repair damage they have done to heritage places and objects such as heritage houses and Aboriginal cultural sites.

The government will also introduce an infringement notice system where compliance officers can issue an immediate \$1,000 fine to an individual or a \$5,000 fine to a corporation for damage to a heritage place regardless of whether it can be repaired.

Knowing our region's history and the role it has played in shaping our present community makes it important to preserve heritage places and objects for current and future generations. The Canberra community recognises this and is passionate about our shared heritage. We have answered their call for more effective ways to deal with breaches of the Heritage Act and damage to heritage places and objects. In the past people have got away with damage because we have only had the big stick of prosecution, which, as we have seen, is not effective when damage is accidental. Limitations in the legislation have meant the Heritage Council has not been able to insist on repairs.

These amendments will let us take immediate action where a heritage place or object is damaged, and because we can deal with matters quickly and issue on-the-spot fines they should discourage people from committing an offence in the first place. The amendments will also give the Heritage Council the authority to issue a direction where there is an imminent threat to the heritage significance of a place or object. Heritage directions may include orders to carry out essential maintenance on a place, avoid adverse effects on a significant feature of a heritage place, and not undertake a development affecting the heritage significance of a place.

A new compliance policy will be released once the amended legislation has passed to guide the Heritage Council and compliance officers when to use which compliance tools, such as a direction, an infringement notice or prosecution. They will be able to both fine offenders and issue them with a direction to repair. Current options for prosecution will remain for serious damage.

The new processes will cut red tape and give the Heritage Council more flexibility in dealing with problems, allowing quicker, more appropriate outcomes. They will also bring the ACT into line with other jurisdictions. Given the shared disappointment expressed by my fellow MLAs at the recent budget estimate hearings, I look forward to their support when the proposed amendments are tabled and debated.

These changes will lead to positive heritage outcomes and have no significant financial impact to the territory. They are in direct response to concerns raised by you, Madam Speaker, and the community.

I present a copy of the statement:

Scar trees—Ministerial statement, 19 September 2019.

I move:

That the Assembly take note of the paper.

**MS LE COUTEUR** (Murrumbidgee) (10.20): I thank the minister for his update. As he noted, this is a result of discussion in the recent estimates process. It is a pity it has taken so long and that it took estimates to get the government to publicly comment on this and take it seriously. While trees can be a renewable resource, given current society and lifestyles in Canberra, scar trees are not a renewable resource. They are

part of our heritage that we need to conserve. We need to take it seriously because we cannot easily replace them, if at all.

I understand the Education Directorate is exploring additional protection measures to avoid this happening again. Despite this dreadful situation I am pleased that it is likely to lead to some strengthening of and improvement in our heritage laws. That is good. We will obviously look at the amendments when presented to the Assembly, but I anticipate that the Greens will support them.

The other thing I really would like to hear about and which was not part of the minister's statement was how the government, possibly the Education Directorate, is talking to the Aboriginal people affected by this. I have spoken to some of them, and the word ropeable comes to mind. They were not impressed, and it is very important that the government talks to the affected Aboriginal people and organisations about reparations and what we should do about this.

For anyone in the Assembly who is not aware of this, there is a picture of some scar trees on the external wall of Minister Berry's office on the second floor. If anybody wants to know what we are talking about they should have a look at the picture. Some of that is part of our heritage, which unfortunately is now gone.

Thank you, minister, for this update. I look forward to the amendments and I look forward to the ACT government talking to the affected Aboriginal organisations about reparations.

Question resolved in the affirmative.

## **Elder abuse**

### **Ministerial statement**

**MR RAMSAY** (Ginninderra—Attorney-General, Minister for the Arts, Creative Industries and Cultural Events, Minister for Building Quality Improvement, Minister for Business and Regulatory Services and Minister for Seniors and Veterans) (10.23): The abuse of older people in the Canberra community is something that certainly concerns us all. We all have older people in our lives, whether they are grandparents, parents, relatives, friends or neighbours, whom we care about, and we want to keep them safe from harm and exploitation. Older Canberrans have contributed so much during their lives and they continue to enrich our community. They deserve to be treated with dignity and respect in their senior years. It is important for all of us that we have robust protections in place to prevent and address elder abuse, including physical abuse, neglect and financial abuse, to ensure the wellbeing of all Canberrans at all stages of life.

For those who have been following the government's work on addressing elder abuse, they will know that the safety and wellbeing of older Canberrans are matters that are very close to my heart. Like family violence, elder abuse happens behind closed doors, perpetrated in secret against vulnerable victims. But, unlike family violence, which has been brought out into the light of public awareness and which is the subject of

significant research and analysis, the abuse of older people in Australia is still largely hidden, and its nature and prevalence are not well understood.

We know it is happening. We have probably all heard about shocking individual incidents, but there need to be more accurate ways to understand, identify and measure elder abuse. We also need to help the community to recognise the signs of elder abuse and to know how to report it and seek assistance for older people affected by these shameful behaviours.

That is why all Australian governments have agreed to focus on building an understanding of elder abuse and raising community awareness as the first two priority areas in the national plan to respond to the abuse of older Australians 2019-2023. The national plan was launched on 19 March 2019 and will serve as a compass to ensure that all jurisdictions progress in the same direction, and that we coordinate our efforts and share our learnings with each other for the benefit of older Canberrans.

During the process of developing the national plan we consulted widely. The national plan reflects the input of the ACT Ministerial Advisory Council on Ageing, COTA ACT, Legal Aid ACT, the ACT Law Society, ACT Disability, Aged and Carer Advocacy Service, and the Public Trustee and Guardian.

In addition to focusing on raising awareness, the national plan reflects other key priorities to address and prevent elder abuse which were drawn from consultation with stakeholders. These are strengthening front-line responses for older people experiencing abuse, working to harmonise enduring power of attorney legislation across Australia and setting up a national register of enduring powers of attorney, and identifying gaps in legislation for safeguarding vulnerable older people.

The national plan is supported by an implementation plan, endorsed by all attorneys-general in June this year, which sets out actions to be taken under each priority. The current implementation plan captures actions up to 2022. It is a living document that will be updated to reflect emerging initiatives, and it will be monitored by a national implementation executive group which includes two ACT senior officials.

The ACT government has already commenced a number of initiatives to safeguard the rights of older Canberrans, and we have more than 20 initiatives included in the implementation plan.

A part of our commitment to implement the national plan responding to the abuse of older Australians is to identify gaps in legislation that would safeguard the most vulnerable older people in our community. Given this commitment, I have instructed my directorate to commence work on a proposed specific criminal offence relating to elder abuse in the ACT, as I announced on 31 August. I will take this proposal to the community for their views later this year.

As part of our plan to develop Canberra into an age-friendly city, the government recognises that there is more work to be done to protect our older Canberrans from

abuse as they enter the more vulnerable stages of life. The protection of older people from any form of abuse is an absolute priority, and these protections are fundamental to the human rights of older Canberrans, who should be able to live free from abuse, violence and exploitation.

We know that the royal commission into aged care has already revealed some horrible circumstances where the abuse of older people has occurred both at home and in aged-care institutions. It is clear that we need stronger laws to protect older Canberrans from both physical and financial abuse. The creation of a specific elder abuse offence holds abusers to account and plays a significant part in keeping our older Canberrans safe in later life.

Our local framework document in the ACT is *Age-friendly Canberra: A vision for our city*, which I tabled in the Legislative Assembly on 21 February this year. An age-friendly city plan is currently being developed which will include targeted actions to ensure that older people are safe, secure and free from abuse and discrimination.

On 12 September 2019 I hosted a dedicated consultation forum on this topic. Older people and those who support them from across the community joined in discussions on how we can best tackle the issues of elder abuse and age discrimination in our community. A key initiative in the ACT is the establishment of the Older Persons ACT Legal Service, also known as OPALS. OPALS was a commitment in the 2018-19 budget. The government provided \$640,000 to establish a seniors rights service within Legal Aid ACT. OPALS commenced operation in July 2018 and was formally launched last November.

OPALS provides a broad range of free and flexible legal assistance to older people in Canberra, including help with elder abuse, enduring powers of attorney, guardianship and financial arrangements with family members. It also makes referrals to other services if needed. The OPALS solicitor travels to meet clients if needed, bringing services to the people who need them, rather than expecting vulnerable older people to come to them.

The demand for OPALS services demonstrates the community confidence in the help we are providing to older Canberrans. In the first financial year, OPALS provided legal advice and assistance on 98 occasions. In the last quarter alone, the figure was 58 occasions of advice and assistance, showing a twofold increase on the previous quarter.

Since July last year, OPALS has also taken over the older persons abuse prevention referral information line, known as APRIL, a phone line that was previously managed by the Community Services Directorate. Placing this service with OPALS has clear synergies in providing a single point of contact for assistance with elder abuse. OPALS received a total of 553 telephone calls last financial year, with nearly half of the calls received during the last quarter. This also reflects the ACT's participation in the single elder abuse national phone line: 1800 ELDERHelp, or 1800 353 374.

Since March this year, a telephone call made to 1800 ELDERHelp has been automatically redirected to the elder abuse phone line service of the jurisdiction in

which the caller is located. In the ACT the call is redirected to OPALS. The data collected by OPALS is de-identified and provided to the commonwealth, along with data from all jurisdictions, to help in the effort to develop a national picture of elder abuse. This national data picture will greatly contribute to our understanding of the nature and pattern of elder abuse and help to shape effective responses to it.

Early data and recent studies have indicated that financial abuse may be the most common form of abuse experienced by elderly people. This abuse is often perpetrated by family members or others that an older person knows and trusts. This trust can be abused to take control of their financial affairs.

The Australian Law Reform Commission has recommended consistent national reforms of enduring powers of attorney legislation to provide greater protections for people granting a power of attorney and a national register for all powers of attorney documents. This was adopted in the national plan's fourth priority area. To progress this recommendation, the Council of Attorneys-General established the enduring power of attorney working group to consider harmonisation of enduring powers of attorney laws and develop a proof of concept register for enduring powers of attorney documents.

Within the working group, the Justice and Community Safety Directorate is working very closely with our jurisdictional counterparts to examine and resolve complexities around the differing power of attorney legislation in each state and territory and what would be included in a register. It is certainly not an easy exercise, but we are working hard to get there.

I mentioned earlier that building community awareness is essential in driving a cultural change to stop elder abuse. We have funded a number of initiatives to build awareness across government services and in the community. ACT domestic and family violence front-line worker training is being rolled out to equip ACT government workers with the ability to recognise and respond to domestic and family violence and to refer on to relevant supports.

Foundation training will be rolled out for all ACT public servants. This training includes content on elder abuse and how ACT employees can respond and refer to appropriate support services. It will also help workers to understand the barriers that might inhibit older people from disclosing elder abuse. A second tier of more detailed training for key services will include a module on elder abuse for occupational groups that work with older people on a regular basis.

Our grants funding program is another key mechanism for addressing elder abuse. A total of \$80,000 in grant funding is provided annually through the ACT seniors grants program, which funds community organisations to complete projects in priority areas which include addressing elder abuse and promoting supported decision-making for older people.

The first round of the 2019-20 ACT seniors grants program closed on 2 September, and I look forward to announcing the projects which will be funded through this grant round. The 2018-19 grant round provided funding for a number of projects related to

elder abuse prevention, including \$6,000 for Legal Aid ACT to consult Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community members about elder abuse and to develop resources and proposals for dealing with the issue, and \$10,000 for ADACAS to counter elder abuse through individual advocacy and community education at aged-care facilities and organisations that provide services to seniors.

The 2017-18 grant round provided \$13,000 for Legal Aid ACT and Care Inc to work in partnership to produce a guide and deliver community and professional education for older people who are thinking about decisions such as selling their home and giving the money to someone who has agreed to care for them, having a relative move in with them, and/or giving or lending money to someone, and \$10,000 for the Conflict Resolution Service to develop resources that will empower individuals and families to resolve disputes themselves and to understand when and how to access specialised conflict resolution support services for seniors.

Madam Speaker, we have many initiatives in place and many more planned to address elder abuse within our community. I can assure you that the government will continue to take every opportunity to improve protections for older Canberrans, and we remain committed to ensuring that no-one in Canberra is left behind or overlooked. We are honoured to have older Canberrans who are here to share with us their invaluable experience and wisdom, and they certainly deserve all protections that we can provide.

I present a copy of the statement:

Protecting older Canberrans from abuse—Ministerial statement, 19 September 2019.

I move:

That the Assembly take note of the paper.

**MS LE COUTEUR** (Murrumbidgee) (10.37): I thank the Minister for Seniors and Veterans for his work in this area. It is obviously an area I am very concerned with, particularly given my status as the oldest member of the Assembly. I am encouraged to hear that the ACT is participating in the progression and implementation of the national plan, although I am concerned that the development of the national register for enduring powers of attorney is likely to be some considerable time away. I understand only feasibility is being explored at present, and I urge the minister to do whatever he can to encourage this to happen more quickly.

This has been touched upon in many forums, and many people I have spoken to feel that this is a substantial issue. Possibly it could be approached from a banking point of view. We have had some discussions with people who have had issues with powers of attorney and how they are used by banks.

Apart from the need for a national register of enduring powers of attorney, there is a need for education, and I am pleased that the minister referred to that. We have specific need for the education of potential attorneys and of the legal profession who are often called upon to write enduring powers of attorney. Based on personal



experience they do not seem to have a particularly good understanding of what a power of attorney is and under what circumstances it can be brought into operation.

I urge the minister to look at education, which I understand could be done in the ACT before the rest of Australia worked out the need for it. On that note, Victoria has an online enduring power of attorney form which has an awful lot more information than some people receive in the ACT when they fill in a power of attorney.

The education focus must not rely on the current frontline domestic and family violence training. I understand that there are some current challenges in the rolling out of that training and that it is only touching the tip of the iceberg in relation to elder abuse and truly understanding the issues of how to respond when somebody tells you what is happening to them. We need much better education for the potential attorneys, the person planning to enter into an enduring power of attorney and their advisers, be that the legal profession, JPs, or whoever.

Another theme that came through over and over again is that of isolation and loneliness. People perpetrating elder abuse tend to be the people older people have social contact with. The fear and reality of being left alone and isolated plays a significant role in how older people respond to elder abuse, be it financial or otherwise.

I constantly hear from people about situations where the older person knew that what was happening to them was not right but they did not wish to do anything about it because they valued the relationship more. Often those relationships are with their family—their adult children—and you can understand why they may not wish to alienate their only supports, especially in later years.

We also hear about the issue where it is the other way around where an older parent, often now only the mother, has been the carer for many years of an adult child—it seems to be normally the son—with a disability. They have been able to do that in their younger years but with declining health their child's issues are more than they can really deal with. That is elder abuse, but they put up with it because they believe that there is no alternative for their child. This is really sad stuff.

The other sad stuff about this was talked about at great length by Ms Lawder and Mr Parton earlier today that is, issues with our transport system. Our public transport system is such that some people are becoming socially isolated because it is not possible for them to get out of their homes.

While I appreciate that the primary aim of our bus system is to get lots of people from one place to another—that is good and that is what it should be—it also needs to ensure that everyone in Canberra is able to leave their homes in a reasonable fashion and is not stuck at home with no possibility of contact with other people. That results in the one or two people they do have contact with being incredibly powerful, and that can lead to abuse. In other jurisdictions a carer cannot become an attorney simply because of that problem. These are some of the saddest cases where the very limited social support older people have is abused and they basically have nowhere to go.

I thank the minister for seniors for his statement. We need a broad, society-wide response to this. A lot of this is the responsibility of the federal government, but there are things we can do. I look forward to this being an issue that we all take note of in the Assembly.

**MS LAWDER** (Brindabella) (10.44): I also thank the Minister for Seniors and Veterans for this ministerial statement about the need to protect older Canberrans from abuse. Indeed, back in June on World Elder Abuse Awareness Day I called on the minister and the government to take more action to combat the abuse of older Canberrans. There is tripartisan support for this in our Assembly. We all recognise that older Canberrans deserve our support, respect, and protection from abuse.

In many cases older people may not even categorise the circumstances in which they find themselves as abuse, so the educative process is very important. Providing a number of different pathways for people to seek assistance in various ways from various agencies and organisations is also really important. I know from my discussions with the minister that he is deeply committed to this as well.

This is such an important area. These are people who have contributed to our society over decades and decades and they deserve to spend their later years with dignity and respect free from financial, emotional or physical abuse. Elder abuse takes many different forms and the fact that it is often at the hands of people they know is something many of us find deeply distressing. I know we will do all we can to do more to address the issue of elder abuse.

Question resolved in the affirmative.

### **Building regulatory reforms—update Ministerial statement**

**MR RAMSAY** (Ginninderra—Attorney-General, Minister for the Arts, Creative Industries and Cultural Events, Minister for Building Quality Improvement, Minister for Business and Regulatory Services and Minister for Seniors and Veterans) (10.46): I am very pleased to update the Assembly on the building regulatory reforms and other work to improve the practices in the building industry and compliance with the building standards. As we promised, we completed a further 15 reforms by the end of last financial year, and these reforms include a new minimum documentation and information guideline for building approval applications for new and substantially altered apartment and commercial buildings. The guideline applies to all new applications for a building approval that are made after 1 September this year.

The new code of practice for building surveyors also started on 1 September 2019. These two documents work together. They outline the obligations of applicants and people designing buildings to provide sufficient information and they also detail the obligations of building certifiers to make sure that all the required technical information is provided to assess whether the building can comply with building standards. The code of practice also clarifies the expectations for minimum standards of practice for licensable work, including the general obligation to act in the public interest and specific requirements in relation to stage inspections. These are

nation-leading reforms and other jurisdictions have asked to come here to look at their implementation so that they can implement similar systems in their state.

To further strengthen the system and to help make sure that only people with the skills and the knowledge to be licensees are given a licence, I have declared new qualification requirements for new building surveyor licence applicants. These include that, from 1 November this year, they will need to complete an assessment relating to their role as well as the existing technical and experience requirements. This complements the building licence exams that were introduced earlier this year for classes A, B and C builder licence applicants.

The builders exam also applies to existing licence holders at the time of licence renewal, with the construction occupations registrar now having the power to select individuals to sit the exam. This includes people who have an identified poor compliance history, as well as people who have not done any recent work under their licence. The exam questions cover the licensees' obligations relevant to their licence class. It assesses interpretation of technical codes, standards, plans, drawings and other technical documentation and applying relevant information to building processes. This nation-leading reform was discussed at the recent building ministers forum and it will lead to further work to ensure our education system for builders is fit for purpose.

Since April 2019, 58 individuals across the three classes have sat an exam—30 in class C, 16 in class B and 12 in class A. Fifteen of these were new applicants, 26 had expired licences and 17 were renewals. Seventeen individuals did not pass their first attempt—10 class C builders, two class B builders and five class A builders. Those who did not pass their first attempt were invited to make a second attempt. Five people who sat an exam did not pass. Three of those were class C builders, one was a class B builder and one was a class A builder. These people will now be excluded from applying for a licence for six months.

The reforms include rolling out changes to licensing processes such as increased criminal history checks for building and building surveyors licences. The new guide for nominees of corporate and partnership licences also helps them to better understand their role and their obligations as well as the responsibilities of corporation or partnership.

A new regulation also requires that from 1 October 2019 any agreement for a builder to act as the landowner's agent to appoint the building certifier and apply for approvals for certain residential building work must be separate from a building contract. This helps landowners understand that they have the right to choose the building certifier and to make a more informed decision if they want to assign that right to someone else.

We have reviewed responses to the federal inquiry on insolvency and the result of other trials of various payment protection models. Further to these reforms, we have also developed a new online course on the ACT's building regulatory system for people intending to operate as building surveyors in the ACT or work in the ACT building industry.

Successfully completing the course is now compulsory for people applying who have not previously held a building surveyors licence. Releasing the course completed a further reform, taking the total to 29 of the 43 reforms now completed. We will be promoting the course to licensees, industry members and associations to help people better understand the building regulatory system.

The construction occupations registrar and Access Canberra continue to increase regulatory and enforcement action. Additional funding announced in this year's budget will add to the number of building inspectors available to inspect and audit building approvals and building work and support further compliance work.

Over the past 12 months Access Canberra has issued 10 notices directing building work to be undertaken to address non-compliant buildings, three rectification orders and 197 demerit points to construction licensees for issues including failing to comply with the Building Code. In the 2018-19 financial year building inspectors issued 29 stop notices to builders for building work that was contrary to building standards and would have potentially led to ongoing problems for the eventual owners and occupiers.

I am pleased to report that the rapid regulatory response team is continuing, following the success of the initial pilot. The team has resolved 224 cases by engagement, education and negotiation, without the need to undertake formal enforcement action. This gets outcomes for building owners more quickly and cheaply for minor matters and avoids the need for formal action which can be time consuming and expensive. If the team considers that the information that they have gathered shows that the matter requires further investigation or more serious action, it is escalated to the building investigations team. Another important reason for the success of this approach is the team taking the time to talk and listen to all parties so that they can determine what the real cause of the issue may be.

As well as regulation, we have a strong focus on education for both the community and the industry. In June I launched the build, buy or renovate web portal, which makes it easier for owners to navigate the building, buying or renovating process in the ACT. It also provides a centralised portal for easier access to information for the building industry on regulations, codes and standards.

I am pleased to advise that in the two months since the website launched there have been over 75,000 page views. The most viewed pages include pages for builder and electrician licensing, building approvals and development applications. We have also had over 1,000 views each on a range of pages that inform owners and purchasers about the building process and what they need to consider before they build, buy or renovate.

The better building quality information program, which will start next week, is designed to make people aware of their rights and their responsibilities when buying, building or renovating and where to seek help if something goes wrong. It also informs industry about the ACT government's building reforms and where they can go for information about industry requirements in the ACT construction sector. The

campaign includes a series of short videos that feature people who are illustrating buying an apartment, renovating, buying off the plan and building a new home. They highlight some of the issues that people need to be aware of and they direct people to the website for more information.

We are not stopping there. The remainder of the reforms will be completed over this coming year. The first modules of the new building auditing tool are being rolled out in the field, helping building inspectors to identify and record Building Code compliance issues. Consultation on the draft code of practice for builders closes on 20 September, and we will be starting consultation on alternative dispute resolution models for disputes about residential building work shortly. Over this next year we will also consult further on licensing and accountability measures for people designing and building, as well as for people contracting for off-the-plan sales. Consultation will also seek views on insurance and other protections for clients and building owners, as well as security of payments issues. The government will also continue with legislative reforms to make sure that we have a responsive and effective building regulatory framework.

As I have mentioned before in this place, while the government has a role to play, compliance and quality are not only the government's responsibility. I welcome recent statements and correspondence that I have had from industry and community bodies about taking their own actions to help lift standards in the industry and support the work that we are doing. We are happy to work with industry and community members to make sure that we have safe, healthy, sustainable and livable buildings in the territory.

I also mentioned that building issues are national. We will continue to participate in work under the building ministers forum on reforms and collaborate to be consistent with other jurisdictions, where appropriate. But each jurisdiction is at a different stage of reform. Our program is well advanced. The reforms in the ACT program have been chosen after a comprehensive review of the ACT system and consideration of what could be genuinely effective in improving practices and competency across the industry. We will continue to implement the remainder of the reforms over the next year until the end of the term of government.

I make no apology for pushing ahead to achieve better quality buildings for all Canberrans. There are specific pieces of work that are happening nationally which the building ministers forum have agreed to fund but they are not intended to delay state and territory reforms.

This is not the ACT acting in isolation or operating differently from other jurisdictions. No state or territory has committed to delay the implementation of necessary reforms in their jurisdictions while we wait for the commonwealth. State and territory building ministers have been clear about this: states and territories needed to continue with reforms and not slow down to allow national work to catch up. The reforms in the ACT also relate to the whole building system and include aspects such as contracting, education, dispute resolution and interventions for specific issues such as documentation that are not being considered nationally but are important to lasting reform.

I am proud to say that the work that we are doing in the ACT and the types of reforms that we are implementing have attracted the attention of other jurisdictions. I know that we are on the right track and we will keep going to implement reforms to benefit the community and strengthen the integrity of the building industry. I look forward to updating the Assembly again at a later date.

I present the following paper:

Building regulatory reforms—Six monthly update—Ministerial statement,  
19 September 2019.

I move:

That the Assembly take note of the paper.

**MS LE COUTEUR** (Murrumbidgee) (10.59): I thank the minister for that update about building regulation reforms. For a very large number of residents of Canberra, building reforms are an issue where we clearly have had a problem with lack of enforcement with the law to date, and I am very, very pleased to see that this is changing to some extent. I have repeatedly been told by people that there actually have to be real consequences for those people in the building profession who do not do the right thing and who actively break the law, which leads to very substandard buildings.

One issue I think would be interesting or desirable—more than interesting—for the minister to look at is the issue of building cladding, particularly on private buildings. I have been told by some people in the industry that in the ACT there are in fact a lot of buildings which have flammable cladding and which are in private ownership. I do not know if that is true or not, but that is something that potentially is a considerable worry to anyone who is in a building which may be in that circumstance.

Basically, I thank the minister for his work on this. I thank the government for putting some effort into compliance. I look forward to more happening in this unfortunate space.

Question resolved in the affirmative.

## **Electricity Feed-in (Large-scale Renewable Energy Generation) Amendment Bill 2019**

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

Title read by Clerk.

**MR RATTENBURY** (Kurrajong—Minister for Climate Change and Sustainability, Minister for Corrections and Justice Health, Minister for Justice, Consumer Affairs and Road Safety and Minister for Mental Health) (11.02): I move:

That this bill be agreed to in principle.

I am pleased to present this bill today. The ACT government is on track to deliver the legislated 100 per cent renewable electricity target in 2020, with the majority of renewable electricity delivered through deeds of entitlement with 10 renewable electricity generators which provide the ACT with the renewable electricity certificates produced on 20-year terms.

The Assembly recently passed the Climate Change and Greenhouse Gas Reduction (Renewable Electricity Target) Amendment Bill 2019, which legislated an ongoing 100 per cent renewable electricity target post 2020, ensuring that the ACT will maintain delivery of 100 per cent renewable electricity in perpetuity.

Additionally, the renewable electricity delivered under these deeds is critical for the ACT's greenhouse gas emissions reduction target of net zero emissions by 2045, as well as the interim targets for 2020 and onwards. Once the ACT reaches 100 per cent renewable electricity, our future greenhouse gas reduction targets will require a decarbonisation of natural gas and transport fuel consumption.

The ACT government is preparing for forecasts that a significant portion of this decarbonisation effort will take place through change to electric alternatives, such as reverse-cycle heaters, electric vehicles and electric or induction cooktops, which will lead to increases in electricity demand. The ACT's population also continues to grow quickly.

In order to deliver on the ongoing renewable electricity target and maintain zero emissions for electricity, the ACT government has announced a new renewable electricity auction to procure more renewable electricity supply as required to deliver on the legislated targets.

It is important to note that this bill, and any instrument increasing the limit on capacity, will have no direct impact on electricity bills. The ACT continues to have among the cheapest electricity prices in Australia while leading the world in climate change response. I expect that, even with the extra renewable electricity it intends to purchase to maintain the 100 per cent target on an ongoing basis, this will still cost less than \$4.90 per household per week, coming in cheaper than initially forecast.

The Electricity Feed-in (Large-scale Renewable Energy Generation) Act 2011 currently imposes a 650-megawatt limit on the capacity of generating systems in relation to which feed-in tariff entitlements may be held. This capacity limit has allowed the ACT government to sign deeds of entitlement to deliver on the target of 100 per cent electricity by 2020 but provides a roadblock to procuring more capacity, which will be required to support the recently announced auction. The ongoing target may require a series of auctions in future years and decades, if electricity consumption continues to grow.

The bill will provide a long-term solution to a long-term problem. By legislating to allow increases to the maximum capacity via disallowable instrument, the bill will allow the ACT government to deliver 100 per cent renewable electricity in perpetuity, in line with the target legislated by the Assembly.

By setting the limit via a disallowable instrument, the Assembly will continue to have an appropriate level of oversight and control over the limit on capacity. Upon passage of the bill, I intend to immediately publish a limit on capacity, to ensure that a limit remains in place after the 650-megawatt limit specified in the act is removed. I intend to set the limit on capacity to 900 megawatts, which is sufficient to cover forecasts for electricity consumption into the next decade.

In summary, this bill will enable the legislated 100 per cent renewable electricity target to be met in perpetuity through additional renewable electricity auctions as required, reducing the need for the Legislative Assembly to pass further minor legislative changes to the maximum limit on capacity. I commend the bill to the Assembly.

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

## **Statute Law Amendment Bill 2019**

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

Title read by Clerk.

**MR RAMSAY** (Ginninderra—Attorney-General, Minister for the Arts, Creative Industries and Cultural Events, Minister for Building Quality Improvement, Minister for Business and Regulatory Services and Minister for Seniors and Veterans) (11.07): I move:

That this bill be agreed to in principle.

The Statute Law Amendment Bill 2019 makes statute law revision amendments to ACT legislation under guidelines for the technical amendments program approved by the government in 2002. The program provides for amendments that are minor or technical and non-controversial. They are generally insufficiently significant to justify the presentation of separate legislation in each case, and are inappropriate to make as editorial amendments in the process of republishing legislation under the Legislation Act 2001.

Statute law amendment bills serve the important purpose of improving the overall quality of the ACT statute book so that our laws are kept up to date and are easier to find, read and understand. A well-maintained statute book greatly enhances access to ACT legislation. It is also a very practical measure to give effect to the principle that members of the community have the right to know the laws that affect them.

The bill contains a number of minor amendments with detailed explanatory notes, so it is not useful for me to speak about each of them individually. However, I would like to take the opportunity briefly to mention a few matters.



Schedule 1 of the bill amends the Cemeteries and Crematoria Act 2003 to clarify the regulation-making power and the functions of the authority in relation to opening, developing and building a cemetery or crematorium. The bill amends the regulation-making power to include express provision about opening a cemetery or crematorium. The bill also amends section 28A of the act to clarify that the functions of the cemeteries authority include developing and building a cemetery or crematorium.

Schedule 1 of the bill will make a number of amendments to the Financial Management Act 1996, the Lifetime Care and Support (Catastrophic Injuries) Act 2014, the Public Sector Workers Compensation Fund Act 2018 and the Territory Superannuation Provision Protection Act 2000 to ensure that financial investment provisions are drafted consistently across these acts and accurately reflect the territory's financial administrative processes.

Section 37 of the Financial Management Act is amended to clarify that transfers between the territory banking account and certain directorate banking accounts to facilitate investment may be made without further appropriation.

Section 38 is updated to reflect current administrative practice that an investment of public money may be made or managed for the territory by any entity, including a directorate, or an entity other than a directorate, such as an external fund manager. Amendments to section 38 also clarify that fees and expenses reasonably incurred for making or managing an investment may be deducted from the investment as a whole, not just from any interest received for the investment. The bill also removes subsections (9) and (10) of section 38 to correct an anomaly and to clarify the original intention that section 38 of the Financial Management Act applies to directorate banking accounts.

Finally in this section, a new definition of "returns" is inserted into each of the acts to replace the term "interest" in relation to investments. The acts currently refer to "interest" received from investments of public money. The dictionaries in the Financial Management Act and the Territory Superannuation Provision Protection Act define "interest" as including "a dividend and any other financial return on a deposit, loan or other investment". However, the ordinary meaning of "interest" would not usually include returns on investments such as dividends, capital gains or distributions. The new definition of "returns" includes interest, dividends, capital gains, distributions and any other financial return on an investment.

Schedule 1 of the bill amends sections 96 and 97 of the Motor Accident Injuries Act 2019, which set out formulas for working out an injured person's entitlement to income replacement benefits. The act currently includes superannuation in gross income when a worker's pre-injury income is less than \$800. This is problematic, as a worker's pre-injury income cannot be worked out until their gross income is known. During the debate on the Motor Accident Injuries Bill 2019 in the May sittings, the government flagged that there were technical issues with the approach and that this would need to be addressed.

The bill will correct these issues by instead including an extra superannuation amount for eligible low income workers when income replacement payments are calculated. The extra amount will be based on the superannuation guarantee charge percentage. An eligible worker will need to have a pre-injury income of less than \$800 per week but more than \$100 per week. The \$100 aligns with the weekly equivalent of the minimum earnings threshold for the superannuation guarantee.

An amendment is also made to the definition of “private medical examiner” in section 145 of the Motor Accident Injuries Act 2019 to require a private medical examiner to have both qualifications and experience, rather than qualifications or experience, that are relevant to the nature of an injured person’s injuries.

Section 138(2)(c) of the Public Health Act 1997 is omitted in schedule 1 of the bill. Under that section the executive may make regulations in relation to “cervical cytology”. Section 138(2)(c) is omitted because cervical cytology is now a commonwealth responsibility under the National Cancer Screening Register Act 2016.

Finally, schedule 3 includes amendments of acts and regulations that have been reviewed as part of an ongoing program of updating and improving the language and form of legislation. These amendments are explained in the explanatory notes and are routine technical matters, such as the correction of minor errors, improving syntax and omitting redundant provisions. Of particular note are the amendments to the Legal Aid Act 1977, which update the act with gender neutral language.

The bill, while minor and technical in nature, is another important building block in the development of a modern and accessible ACT statute book that is at the forefront in Australia. I commend the bill to the Assembly.

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

## **Sentencing (Parole Time Credit) Legislation Amendment Bill 2019**

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

Title read by Clerk.

**MR RATTENBURY** (Kurrajong—Minister for Climate Change and Sustainability, Minister for Corrections and Justice Health, Minister for Justice, Consumer Affairs and Road Safety and Minister for Mental Health) (11.15): I move:

That this bill be agreed to in principle.

I am pleased to introduce the Sentencing (Parole Time Credit) Legislation Amendment Bill 2019 into the Assembly. This bill amends the Crimes (Sentence Administration) Act 2005 and the Crimes (Sentencing) Act 2005 to introduce a parole time credit scheme into the ACT’s criminal justice system.

The practical effect of the bill is to ensure that, in general, if an offender's parole order is cancelled more than three months post release from custody but before the parole period has expired, the time the offender spent in the community in compliance with the conditions of their parole order is counted towards the offender's remaining sentence. However, the government has applied careful policy consideration to ensure that community safety and community trust are not eroded.

The bill includes a new part 7.5A in the sentence administration act which introduces a general rule that parole time credit applies to offenders who have their parole order cancelled. It provides exceptions from this rule for serious offenders who commit further serious offences while on parole, family violence offenders who commit further family violence offences while on parole, and offenders who commit any offences within three months of their release on parole. It provides a discretion for the court to apply parole time credit to offenders who fall within those exceptions if special circumstances exist.

It sets out detailed methods for the calculation of parole time credit. It includes provisions addressing how parole time credit will be applied when an offender commits a new offence in another jurisdiction whilst subject to a parole order made or registered in the ACT. It ensures administrative certainty in the application of the scheme by requiring the court and the Sentence Administration Board to state on the warrant, notice or order committing the offender to custody the date at which parole time credits stopped. And it includes transitional provisions which ensure that parole time credit will be available to all offenders who, on or after the commencement date, are on parole or who are in custody awaiting sentence for a new offence committed whilst on parole.

Currently, when a parolee is returned to custody following a breach of parole conditions, they are liable to serve the remainder of the sentence that was outstanding at the time they were released. For example, if a detainee is released on parole with 12 months remaining on the sentence and that person breaches their parole eight months into the parole period, currently they are liable to serve the full 12 months that had been outstanding at the time they were released.

The effect of the ACT's current parole system has been examined in various Australian Law Reform Commission reports, including most recently in *Pathways to justice: inquiry into the incarceration rate of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples*, which recommended the immediate abolition of parole schemes which require time served on parole to be served again if parole is revoked. Key justice stakeholders across Australia have noted the unnecessarily punitive effect of the current system, which in effect imposes an additional sentence on offenders.

In response to these issues, every other Australian jurisdiction except the Northern Territory has introduced legislative changes to develop schemes which credit time spent on parole. These schemes are known as clean street time or time to count.

Responses to combating crime are often viewed in binary terms as either tough or soft on crime. This simplistic duality has long had political resonance, but in reality the

tough on crime mantra and its impact on the people in the Australian prison system are negative, counterproductive and demonstrably ineffective in actually reducing crime and recidivism. The ACT government is committed to reducing recidivism by 25 per cent by 2025, utilising a justice reinvestment methodology. This is neither tough nor soft on crime; it is a world-recognised, evidence-based response to the drivers of criminal behaviour.

Research by the Australian Institute of Criminology has found that parole supervision reduces the risk of reoffending. While the impacts of parole time credit in the ACT context are hard to predict, evidence from other Australian jurisdictions suggests that introducing parole time credit could likely see a reduction in the number of offenders becoming institutionalised in the AMC, a result of the revolving door, but more importantly see detainees value the privilege of active participation in pro-social rehabilitative programs. And, Madam Assistant Speaker, this bill will continue to see the parole system used as a privilege and marker of good behaviour.

Parole is an important part of our justice system, as it also provides detainees with a structured, supported and supervised transition back into the community after a period of full-time custody. While on parole, the offender remains under sentence and continues to be supported and supervised, to ensure community safety and a positive reintegration back into family life, employment or education and the continuation of programs begun in custody.

Not counting time served in the community in compliance with parole conditions may remove the offender from the community for longer than was intended by the sentencing court, as requiring an offender to serve the period of time spent on parole in custody following a potentially minor or administrative breach has the effect of extending the time served under the sentence.

This operates as a disincentive for offenders to apply for parole, which decreases offender engagement with rehabilitation programs that would have been available to them while on parole and increases the prison population. Further, if offenders do not apply for parole despite being eligible and subsequently complete their whole sentence in custody, when they are eventually released from prison at the conclusion of their sentence they are released without any form of supervision. Important factors that militate against reoffending, such as housing and employment, may be jeopardised by offenders spending lengthier periods in custody and being released without supervision, leading to poorer community safety outcomes.

We have chosen to name the scheme “parole time credit” to reflect the strengths-based nature of the scheme and more accurately describe the benefit to offenders who complete crime-free time in the community. Introducing parole time credit means that most parolees who are returned to custody following cancellation of their parole order will be liable to serve the time remaining on their sentence at the time the parole order was cancelled, not the period that remained to be served when parole was granted. Using the example I referred to earlier, the offender would be liable to serve four months in custody, as the eight months they were in the community living in compliance with their parole conditions would be counted as time served against their sentence.

However, as noted previously, the government has no tolerance for offenders who repeatedly commit the most serious offences. Murder, manslaughter, inflicting grievous bodily harm, threats to kill, torture and kidnapping, along with manufacturing and trafficking controlled drugs, aggravated robbery and sexual offences, are among the offences which, if committed while a person is on parole for serious offending, will exclude the person from receiving the benefit of parole time credit. Reoffending of this type while on parole generates a community expectation around punishment and denunciation of the offender's behaviour. These elements are an essential component of any criminal justice system and are an appropriate moral response to the commission of serious offences which create significant harm for victims and the wider community.

While the bill introduces a presumption against granting parole time credit to offenders who commit these types of serious offences whilst on parole for a serious offence, the court has been provided with discretion to apply parole time credit in appropriate cases where special circumstances exist. Whether special circumstances exist will be a matter for the court. Providing this discretion recognises that there may be cases where the further offending or the subjective circumstances of the offender should not preclude recognition of a period of compliance with parole obligations, for example, where there has been a lengthy period of compliance, the new offending is less serious or of a different type to the original offending, or there are other circumstances that make it appropriate to recognise parole time credit.

For example, it is well known that recovery from drug addiction takes time. If an offender on parole for a serious offence has been engaging with rehabilitation and counselling services and is otherwise compliant with parole but, after a period on parole relapses and this results in the offender facing new serious drug-related charges, for example, the court may determine that the circumstances of the offender's situation may nevertheless merit the application of parole time credit. This approach recognises that in some circumstances it may be appropriate to acknowledge the offender's rehabilitative efforts or other subjective circumstances in determining whether parole time credit should be applied.

The bill provides for a delayed commencement date to better support the courts, justice agencies and services, and the legal fraternity to put in place the necessary administrative arrangements to support the scheme. This includes development of the requisite systems to calculate combined sentences. The government firmly believes that these systems, which are currently operating across much of Australia, will be securely in place in the coming months.

The bill balances the introduction of a much-needed scheme to credit offenders who live in the community in compliance with their parole conditions with the need to ensure community safety and maintain the basis of the principles of sentencing, including punishment and deterrence. The bill brings the territory's sentencing framework into line with other Australian jurisdictions and responds to the Australian Law Reform Commission recommendation in the *Pathways to justice* report in a timely yet considered and localised fashion. I commend the bill to the Assembly.

Debate (on motion by **Mrs Jones**) adjourned to the next sitting.

## **Workers Compensation Amendment Bill 2019**

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

Title read by Clerk.

**MS ORR** (Yerrabi—Minister for Community Services and Facilities, Minister for Disability, Minister for Employment and Workplace Safety and Minister for Government Services and Procurement) (11.27): I move:

That this bill be agreed to in principle.

Today I am pleased to present the Workers Compensation Amendment Bill 2019, which makes amendments to the Workers Compensation Act 1951. Access to workers compensation is a fundamental workplace right. All workers should be able to engage in their employment confident in the knowledge that support services will be provided if they are injured or become ill because of their work.

For the more than 140,000 private sector workers in the ACT the Workers Compensation Act establishes a framework for the delivery of medical, allied health, rehabilitation and income support in the event of work injury. The changes in this bill will ensure that the act continues to cover all workers by aligning important definitions with contemporary work arrangements. It also makes a number of technical amendments to assist administrative clarity and transparency.

One of these changes is to clarify matters in relation to the default insurance fund. The fund provides safety net services for workers who would otherwise be unable to access workers compensation following injury. This might occur if a worker's employer failed to hold a valid workers compensation policy or if an insurer has been wound up. As currently drafted the act makes a principal contractor responsible for providing workers compensation to the employees of any subcontractor they engage if the subcontractor fails to hold a valid workers compensation policy. If in the rare instance that a subcontractor and the principal of an injured worker are both uninsured this bill will ensure the default insurance fund is able to step in and support the injured worker.

The government wants to support injured workers and believes no-one in the territory should be financially disadvantaged by an employer's failure to hold compulsory insurance. The proposed amendment will clarify that workers are covered for workers compensation claims where both the contractor and principal are uninsured—in other words, it is not just limited to where the contractor is uninsured. The bill also makes a minor technical amendment to clarify how the levy on workers compensation insurers that funds the safety net insurer's operations must be calculated.

The bill also addresses the application of the act to family day care and in-home care workers. We know many working parents in the ACT rely on childcare services. This includes more than 1,000 families who choose family day care and in-home care over

centre-based day care arrangements. These workers are among the most vulnerable in the territory, which is why in 2006 the ACT government legislated to make it clear that they should have access to workers compensation.

To identify the workers that would be covered, the 2006 amendments referenced definitions established in commonwealth legislation. That legislation was subsequently changed. Unfortunately, this has resulted in some confusion about the continued application of the Workers Compensation Act to family day care and in-home care workers.

Clarification was initially provided by a declaration made under section 16A of the Workers Compensation Act. This was necessary to address the immediate risk to those works in relation to their coverage under the workers compensation legislation. However, the act still uses terms that are out of date, and the amendments in this bill will update the act to use more contemporary definitions for these workers.

Essentially the bill will declare people working in an approved family day care service under the Education and Care Services National Law (ACT) Act 2011 as workers for the purposes of the Workers Compensation Act. This amended definition will capture both family day carers and in-home carers, in accordance with the longstanding policy.

This government is committed to ensuring that the ACT workers compensation scheme continues to support timely, safe and durable return to work outcomes through effective injury management and income support for all injured workers. The Workers Compensation Amendment Bill 2019 is a demonstration of that commitment. I commend the bill to the Assembly.

Debate (on motion by **Mrs Jones**) adjourned to the next sitting.

## **Education, Employment and Youth Affairs—Standing Committee**

### **Report 6**

**MR PETTERSSON** (Yerrabi) (11.32): I present the following report:

Education, Employment and Youth Affairs—Standing Committee—Report 6—*Management and Minimisation of Bullying and Violence in ACT Schools*, dated 16 September 2019, together with a copy of the extracts of the relevant minutes of proceedings.

I move:

That the report be noted.

On 4 April 2019 the Legislative Assembly referred an inquiry into the management and minimisation of bullying and violence in ACT schools to the education, employment and youth affairs committee. As the committee notes in the report, the referral instructed the committee to take all identifying evidence “in camera and to hold documents on a confidential basis”.

This broad restriction has resulted in the committee arranging hearings, quoting evidence in the final report and not being able to share information with the public as it normally would. However, what we did was to release the submissions, hold hearings, and visit schools both here in the ACT and interstate. What we have not done, however, is to release the transcripts of those hearings and those visits. The committee encourages the Assembly to think carefully regarding referrals like this in the future. They are warranted in certain circumstances, and I firmly believe that this is one of them.

As part of the inquiry, the committee conducted a number of in-camera hearings, speaking to eight organisations and six individuals. The committee also visited nine schools and received 27 submissions. The committee notes that all schoolteachers and school leaders that the committee spoke to are committed to the elimination of bullying and violence in schools.

The committee made 23 recommendations and nine findings in its report. The recommendations focused on developing systems and tools for parents and students to report incidents of bullying and violence, and tools that support all stakeholders understanding what will happen following an incident being reported. The committee also highlights the need for a systematic approach to social and emotional learning programs operating in schools.

The committee would like to acknowledge the significant contributions from those participating in the inquiry, either by writing submissions or by attending as witnesses.

I want to be very clear on one point that I have just mentioned. From the witnesses and the visits that we undertook, it is very clear to me that teachers and principals in our schools care deeply about their students. They are all working hard to ensure that our schools are safe and positive places. I would also like to highlight something for those listening in who have a keen interest in our schools, and this is fleshed out in different aspects throughout the report: ACT schools are safe places. They are amazing places of learning, filled with exciting opportunities. There are instances of bullying and violence in our schools but they are the exception.

In regard to students, every student has the right to an education. That includes students exhibiting problematic behaviour and those who have been victims to bullying and violence. I freely admit that it is challenging to balance the right to education when this conflict arises, but I believe that the system in place now is a good one and I hope that our recommendations will make it an even better one.

There are a couple of recommendations that I would like to highlight. With respect to recommendation 6, for students who are victims of bullying and violence, I think that one of the easiest short circuits to that cycle is to give students the ability to pursue their education at another school. I think we can all agree that, ideally, this would not be needed, but in ensuring that the right to an education for every student is maintained, sometimes this is required.



We currently see this occur with students leaving for private schools from public schools. I am also aware that in certain circumstances this has occurred between public schools. But in regard to public schools, it is under-utilised and not readily available as a choice. I think it would be best if students and their families did not need to leave the public system and that this was better utilised.

With respect to recommendation 9, the work of learning support units is incredible, and I have really enjoyed, over the past couple of months, getting to understand the finer detail of their work. What has become clear to me and to several other committee members is that not all of these learning support units are the same. They are incredibly different between schools, with certain specialisations benefiting certain students more. Allowing students who need certain learning support units to have better access to those units is a good thing. That means giving some flexibility when it comes to priority enrolment areas for those students.

With respect to recommendation 11, the flexible offsite program is a very new initiative and it is not something that I had much detail on before venturing into this inquiry. It stems from some previous programs that existed at schools. It is not located at a single school; it is now on its own standalone site, and it is absolutely incredible. I hope that this program is expanded and that it will open on the north side, sooner rather than later. But I do completely understand that this is a very new program.

Finally, recommendations 18 and 19 relate to self-reporting portals for bullying and violence. A recurring theme that pained me was the communication breakdowns that led to certain incidents being responded to poorly. Allowing direct reporting of these incidents will mean that they are responded to better.

In closing, I would like to thank my fellow committee members, Mr Parton and Mrs Kikkert. They were productive and made it easy to work through a very serious topic. I would also like to thank our committee secretary, Ms Harkins, for her hard work and attention to detail. This committee inquiry was unlike any other that I have been a part of, and she showed great mastery of the Assembly's proceedings to allow us to navigate it. I am very pleased to provide the Assembly with a copy of the report.

**MR PARTON** (Brindabella) (11.38): This was a tough inquiry, as was highlighted by the chair. I, like you, Madam Assistant Speaker, enjoy most of my work here, but there were large chunks of this inquiry that I did not enjoy because it was harrowing. Those of us who have children know that feeling that you get when your children are hurting, when your children are in pain, but you feel powerless to do anything about it. Particularly when they are younger, your kids look to you in the belief that you can fix it and sometimes you cannot. We heard from so many people who were in that situation, and it certainly tugged at my heartstrings. When you pack your children off to school in the morning, you should do so in the belief that they will be safe. In too many cases, that has not been the case.

Please understand, Madam Assistant Speaker, that I am a temporary member of this committee, standing in for my colleague Elizabeth Lee, so I have not dealt a great deal with the education portfolio in my time here. I must say that, through this inquiry,

I have much greater respect not only for our schoolteachers but for our school principals in particular.

I am sure Mr Pettersson would agree with me on this. During the inquiry we met with school staff at various schools in the ACT and interstate, and I am in awe of the balancing act that they do. My reading of a school principal's job, on the basis of what I have learnt in this inquiry, is that it is comparable to riding a unicycle on a high wire while juggling fire sticks; then your phone rings. It is nearly impossible to pull it all off and to do it correctly, and to do it in a way that all of the stakeholders believe is the right way to do it. I take my hat off to them.

It is a long and relatively complex report. I would urge all of those who have been affected by this to read it in full; I think you need to do so. Among the recommendations are that there should be more access to social workers and youth workers, as well as school psychologists, and access to psychological support services outside school hours.

There are, as Mr Pettersson mentioned, some recommendations around our priority enrolment area policies. I think currently they are a little too inflexible when it comes to families who are affected by bullying and violence. The report also includes a recommendation around personal protection orders, which, for the most part, cannot be effectively enforced in a school situation. Surely, we can find a way to draft those orders in such a way. I understand that this is outside the realm, in a lot of cases, of what the ACT government has control over, but surely we can find a way to put those orders together in such a way that they can be a useful means to de-escalate ugly situations. That is what the orders are supposed to do.

There is also mention in this report of the somewhat restrictive referral conditions of the inquiry. There was an obligation to take all evidence that could identify any person or school associated with bullying in camera. We all understand why this condition was put in place; we all get it. But the reality was that, when you actually got to the nuts and bolts of doing the inquiry, it did make it difficult on a number of levels for us to do our job properly.

I say that with all respect to the minister. We all understand why these conditions were put in place, but it did make it nigh on impossible for members of the public to follow any progression of the inquiry. I think it created a perception that we were doing things secretly because we were fearful of revealing the truth. That is not the case, but it did not inspire faith in this process from those who were waiting patiently on the sidelines.

I want to draw—and I know Mr Pettersson mentioned this, too—particular attention to this paragraph in the “conduct of the inquiry” section:

The Committee note that it has undertaken sensitive inquiries previously and always balanced the need to protect vulnerable witnesses against the need for transparency. The Committee would encourage the Assembly to be conscious of including limiting provisions in future referrals to ensure that the activities of a committee are not impeded.

I thank my colleagues Mr Pettersson and Mrs Kikkert. It was a great pleasure to work with both of you. Thanks to Kate Harkins, who managed to pull so many threads together. There were so many threads and she did a really good job of pulling them together to a workable point so that we could put these recommendations together. I give a big thanks to everyone who gave evidence, and I genuinely hope that we can move forward in this space.

Question resolved in the affirmative

## **Planning and Urban Renewal—Standing Committee Report 9**

**MS LE COUTEUR** (Murrumbidgee) (11.44): I present the following report:

*Planning and Urban Renewal—Standing Committee—Report 9—Draft variation No 360—Molonglo River Reserve: changes to public land reserve overlay boundaries and minor zone adjustment, dated 28 August 2019, together with a copy of the extracts of the relevant minutes of proceedings.*

I move:

That the report be noted.

I will start with comments on behalf of the committee in my role as chair of the committee and then move to my personal comments. First of all, of course, I thank my fellow committee members, Mr Parton, Ms Orr until the last deliberation, and Mr Pettersson, who took over at that point.

Today the planning and urban renewal committee is tabling its ninth report, into draft variation 360. The variation covers changes to public land overlay boundaries and minor zone adjustments for the Molonglo River reserve. The Minister for Planning and Land Management referred this variation to the committee on 22 March 2019, pursuant to section 73 of the Planning and Development Act 2007.

The committee received three submissions, held one public hearing and heard from seven witnesses. Evidence to the committee was focused on the future of the part of Coombs known politely as the Coombs peninsula, less politely as the Coombs tip, which is bordered by the Molonglo River reserve on three sides. The committee's four recommendations respond to this evidence and set out a proposed way forward for the future of Coombs peninsula. The committee extends its thanks to everyone who provided information and evidence to this inquiry, including directorate officials, interested organisations and members of the community.

This completes my remarks as the chair of the committee and I will now make some more personal comments.

The Coombs peninsula is currently on the land release program. However, a number of witnesses and I do not believe it should be developed for housing at all. First of all,

it is a small site surrounded by the Molonglo River reserve on all three sides and that is why it is called the tip or the peninsula. If you look at it, that is exactly what it is.

What happens on this site will impact directly on the reserve. For example, many builders do not control their rubbish very well. Any visit to new suburbs will show you building waste blowing all over the place. Rubbish from the peninsula will blow straight down the hill into the reserve and the river.

Second, the Coombs peninsula contains an area of pink-tailed worm-lizard habitat. This lizard is listed as vulnerable both nationally and in the ACT and this habitat should be protected. Third, the peninsula is next to a very narrow part of the reserve. It is less than 200 metres wide at that point. Research shows that narrow reserves like this just do not adequately protect biodiversity. There is too much impact from the surrounding activities and not enough room for fauna to move freely through the corridor.

Fourthly, the site has some beautiful views along the river and I think it would probably be a good spot for recreation. I do not know whether this can be made to work but the government is currently consulting, or arguing, whichever way you want to put it, with a number of local residents about the site for a playground. It is possible that there could be some space on the Coombs peninsula to have some or all of that as a playground without compromising its environmental values. And certainly, any compromise would be vastly less compromising than turning it all into residential, as is planned.

Finally, the number of dwellings which are being planned is very small, only 30. Taking this land off the land release program will make no material difference to the overall rate of land release or to Canberra's housing supply.

In conclusion, for all these reasons, the Coombs peninsula should be set aside for environmental and possibly recreational purposes. As the committee has recommended, it should be rezoned to hills, ridges and buffer zone and be permanently withdrawn from the land release program.

Question resolved in the affirmative.

## **Report 10**

**MS LE COUTEUR** (Murrumbidgee) (11.49): I present:

Planning and Urban Renewal—Standing Committee—Report 10—*Draft variation No 355—Calwell Group Centre: Zone Changes and amendments to the Calwell Precinct Map and Code*, dated 27 August 2019, together with a copy of the extracts of the relevant minutes of proceedings.

I move:

That the report be noted.

It has been an exciting time for the planning and urban renewal committee and I am glad that all members present agree with that. On 2 April this year, pursuant to section 73 of the Planning and Development Act 2007, the Minister for Planning and Land Management, Mr Mick Gentleman, referred draft variation 355, Calwell group centre, zone changes and amendments to the Calwell precinct map and code, to the standing committee for consideration and report to the Legislative Assembly.

On 11 April we advised the minister that we would be conducting an inquiry into the draft variation. The committee held one public hearing and heard from six witnesses, including business owners, town planners and the Minister for Planning and Land Management together with directorate officials. The committee received one submission, which brought a wide range of issues to the committee's attention.

The report has six recommendations, the first being the normal one that, subject to the following recommendations, the draft variation be approved. I thank all the people who provided information and evidence to the inquiry. I particularly thank my fellow members of the committee: Suzanne Orr; Mr Michael Pettersson who replaced Ms Orr; and Mr Mark Parton as the continuing member.

I will make a few comments on the recommendations on my own behalf. Recommendation 3 is a standard recommendation that the ACT government finalises development of master plans in a more timely fashion. We recommend this in all of them because they need to do that.

Recommendations 4 and 5 are the ones that people will find more surprising coming from the planning committee; I think this is the first time in this Assembly that we have recommended more development than the government has. We want to make this variation work for the Calwell shopping centre and, as far as we could see, the government was proposing such a small change that it would be economically impractical. We could see no ill effects from developing a bit more.

Recommendation 4 refers to area A, which is the car wash site. We are proposing that that be amended so residential uses are permitted on the ground floor in areas where there is not a designated primary active frontage. We heard evidence that allowing residential only on higher floors was not economically viable so leaving things as recommended would mean an unviable business continued there.

The more interesting one is recommendation 5, which talks about the parts of the main Calwell shopping centre block, which could have additional storeys. The government proposed only a small bit on the eastern side that was going to look like a tower on one side. Apart from looking silly in my opinion, it did not seem to make an awful lot of sense. The Woolworths underneath that site has recently been revamped so clearly the redevelopment was not going to happen in the next 20 years.

The committee recommended extending the development along the whole back of the shopping centre. That will create the possibility of something happening, as long as rules and criteria are put in to protect solar access and future residents from amenity issues which could arise from any relocation of the loading docks. This does not mean

that there will necessarily be redevelopment at Calwell but it does mean that at least there is a possibility.

It is unbelievable to think that recommendation 6 is necessary, but it is that the ACT government ensure shadow diagrams are provided to the committee and the ACT community for all future variations. It is hard to imagine how the government could think a worthwhile evaluation could be done of a redevelopment without knowing where shadows are cast. I thank committee members for their input and commend our report to the government.

**MR PARTON** (Brindabella) (11.54): I want to speak briefly to both reports. I was waiting for coffee this morning with my old friend Mr Barr. We were chatting about how willing things have become in the chamber of late but how our committee system is where you are likely to see collegiate bipartisanship. We see it in particular in this planning committee with the three members from the three parties.

I do not believe that any of us on this committee sees themselves as a planning guru—although maybe I should not have said that because Suzanne might have seen herself as a planning guru—but there is great benefit in a different set of eyes looking at these scenarios. My genuine belief is that the committee's recommendations on both Calwell and the Molonglo River reserve are extremely well thought out and to a large degree are just commonsense outcomes after dealing with all the evidence.

I thank Ms Le Couteur, Ms Orr and now Mr Pettersson. I also thank Annemieke Jongsma, who is an absolute gem. That is all I have to say; I am not going to go into the detail because Ms Le Couteur covered that exceptionally well in her statements.

Question resolved in the affirmative.

**Sitting suspended from 11.56 am to 2.00 pm.**

### **Questions without notice**

#### **Labor Party—staff behaviour**

**MR COE:** My question is to the Chief Minister and head of the executive. The New South Wales Labor Party is under intense scrutiny following a major scandal with alleged illegal donations and corruption. Today it is reported that members of the ACT Labor Party and staff of ACT Labor MLAs were seen celebrating this issue. Chief Minister, is this behaviour acceptable and representative of your government, and what responsibility do you take for staff mocking corruption issues?

**MR BARR:** No, I do not think this behaviour is acceptable. I believe that doing silly things and putting them on the internet is not a good practice for anyone. I am disappointed in what I have seen. I know I speak on behalf of all of my colleagues in expressing that disappointment. I think those young people would, if they had their time again, not have posed for a photograph in that way.

The government is of course conscious of the need to address integrity issues within government. That is why we intend to progress with legislation that will ban property

developers from donating to political parties here in the ACT. That is a concrete step that this place could take to ensure that issues that we have seen in New South Wales, on both side of politics, frankly, are not seen here in the ACT.

**MR COE:** Chief Minister, how many of your team's staff members were involved in this event, and did they come from the non-executive, the executive or both?

**MR BARR:** I understand about seven; none from executive staff, all from non-executive.

**MS LAWDER:** Chief Minister, what action have you taken to investigate this issue?

**MR BARR:** I have certainly expressed my disappointment in relation to this matter. It is not something that needs to be investigated. I think we know that a silly thing was done and put online. Be very clear that the actions of those individuals are ones that they have expressed regret for and have apologised for.

The business of doing silly things and putting them on the internet is not restricted just to people in Young Labor. I note that there is someone sitting on the other side of the chamber who put something pretty silly on the internet just yesterday, in relation to young people and climate change. That was a quite patronising statement from—

**Mr Wall:** Well wishes for a sunny day.

**MR BARR:** Well wishes for a sunny day indeed. It highlighted that doing silly things and putting them on the internet is not restricted to just young people; it also includes former leaders of the opposition.

*Members interjecting—*

**MADAM SPEAKER:** Members, come to order, please. Ms Le Couteur, you have the floor.

### **Planning—environment and planning forum**

**MS LE COUTEUR:** Thank you, Madam Speaker.

*Members interjecting—*

**Mr Coe:** Did you get an ALDI bag as well?

**MADAM SPEAKER:** Mr Coe, you are warned.

**MS LE COUTEUR:** My question is to the minister for planning and relates to the cancellation of the environment and planning forum, which used to be an important consultation forum for community councils, community organisations and industry bodies. Minister, why did you cancel the environment and planning forum?

**MR GENTLEMAN:** I thank Ms Le Couteur for the question. Of course, the government does believe in having important discussions with the community. In relation to this particular forum, it has been held for quite some time. We do, of course, believe that we should engage in regular consultations with individuals, community groups and industry bodies. The environment and planning forum is one way in which the planning directorate engages with community groups. It is important that we have those engagements.

In relation to this particular forum, the directorate looked for the ability to engage in new ways. I did not make the decision to cancel the forum; it was the Director-General of EPSDD, in looking at new ways that we can communicate with the rest of the ACT in regard to future planning.

**MS LE COUTEUR:** Minister, the forum was a good opportunity for attendees to hear each other's views plus to get information for the directorate. What new consultation arrangements will there be and how will they deliver the benefits of the previous forum?

**MR GENTLEMAN:** When Mr Ponton began in the role of chief planner he gave an undertaking that he would look at new and innovative ways to engage with our community to make sure that engagement was as effective as it possibly could be. We want to hear from a range of voices across Canberra on matters important to planning and the environment. Mr Ponton has advised members of the forum that he takes engagement with community and stakeholders very seriously. The cancellation of the forum is to allow a review of its effectiveness; it should not be taken as a move away from his commitment to engaging with the community.

**MR PARTON:** Minister, why do you continue to trumpet your consultation credentials but then shut down avenues by which members of the community can engage, particularly those members who disagree with your position?

**MR GENTLEMAN:** I did not shut it down at all.

**Ms Lawder:** You cancelled it.

**MR GENTLEMAN:** No, I did not cancel it. The directorate that was engaged in the forum made the cancellation. I support the work that Mr Ponton does. He is looking for new and innovative ways to engage with the community. He advised the forum of this and they are seeking a new opportunity.

### **Hospitals—aged-care transition**

**MRS DUNNE:** My question is to the Minister for Health. Do ACT Health and Canberra Health Services comply with the federal aged-care policy relating to the maximum number of days a patient spends in hospital after being found to require permanent residential care?



**MS STEPHEN-SMITH:** I thank Mrs Dunne for the question. It is a challenge across health systems around people being able to be discharged to appropriate residential aged-care facilities. It is a challenge for the hospital that often appropriate residential aged-care facilities are not available when people are ready for discharge. To the greatest extent possible obviously we want to move people out of hospitals into appropriate residential aged-care facilities where a bed is available. In the ACT there is a shortage of residential aged-care facilities and beds and that is the responsibility of the federal government. They are responsible for funding aged care.

We work very closely with all players across the health sector to ensure that people can be discharged from hospital in a timely way but also that they receive health care in residential aged-care facilities to prevent them from coming into hospital when that is not necessary.

**MRS DUNNE:** Minister, what is the average number of days a patient spends in an ACT hospital before moving to permanent residential care services after they have been assessed?

**MS STEPHEN-SMITH:** I thank Mrs Dunne for the question. I will take that question on notice and come back to the Assembly with the answer.

**MR WALL:** Minister, how many residential care beds are currently available to support patients transitioning from hospital in the region, and who determines what is classified as a suitable bed?

**MS STEPHEN-SMITH:** Again I will take that question on notice, acknowledging that the provision of residential aged care is a commonwealth responsibility. It is something that we are monitoring closely in terms of ensuring that older people in the ACT have an appropriate place to be discharged to.

This is complex. People may also want a residential aged care place that is close to their home, close to their community, close to their family. There is a whole range of details that need to be taken into account in terms of discharging people. I will come back with some further information to the Assembly on notice.

### **Hospitals—aged-care beds**

**MR WALL:** My question is to the Minister for Health. Minister, what is the cost to ACT Health per bed day of keeping a patient in hospital while they seek or wait for a permanent residential aged care space?

**MS STEPHEN-SMITH:** I will take that question on notice in terms of the detail but I note that the cost of an individual patient is going to vary depending on their individual needs. I am not sure that we will have a figure that is an average cost for that particular group of patients who are in a particular situation requiring transition to residential aged care. If we have that information I will bring it back to the Assembly, noting that people will have different levels of acuity and different levels of support requirements. The average day cost for each of those individuals may differ.

**MR WALL:** Minister, what funding is provided by the commonwealth per bed day for a patient in hospital while they seek a permanent residential care space?

**MS STEPHEN-SMITH:** I will take that question on notice and come back to the Assembly with the answer.

**MRS DUNNE:** Minister, is the government complying with federal guidelines relating to the maximum number of days in hospital? If not, is it doing so because commonwealth funding is more lucrative to the territory than actually discharging people from hospital?

**MS STEPHEN-SMITH:** Canberra Health Services obviously takes all measures to try to comply with guidelines. I can absolutely assure the Assembly that it would certainly not be the case that any extra length of stay would be because of any difference in cost. We are very keen to get people out of the hospital when it is not appropriate for them to be there. Improving patient flow through Canberra Hospital is a very high priority and a focus of the timely care strategy, which Mrs Dunne will get around to being briefed on in October.

### **Canberra—events**

**MR GUPTA:** My question is to the Chief Minister. Chief Minister, how do Canberra's major events benefit our local economy?

**MR BARR:** I thank Mr Gupta for the question. Our major events are, of course, big contributors to the territory economy. For example, Floriade and Enlighten generate around \$45 million in combined economic benefit to the territory each year. These events create jobs, they support local businesses and they help to fill our hotels, restaurants and cafes, generating significant benefits for Canberrans. They play a crucial role in attracting people to visit our city, often for the very first time, and to come back for repeat visits.

We use our major events to showcase the best of our city—our local products, experiences and talent—while also supporting sectors of the local economy. Tourism is now one of the territory's largest private sector employers, providing jobs for over 17,000 Canberrans. Our 2020 tourism strategy supports event growth, to grow our visitor economy and to grow visitor expenditure in the territory to \$2.5 billion by 2020. We are well on our way to achieving this goal off the back of another boom year for tourism in the ACT, with record highs in both domestic and international visitors to Canberra.

**MR GUPTA:** Chief Minister, how was attendance at this year's Enlighten festival?

**MR BARR:** I am very pleased to advise the Assembly that this year's Enlighten festival again broke all records, in terms of both attendance and economic benefit. In 2019, the festival achieved a combined attendance of a little over 328,000 people and generated \$5½ million in direct expenditure. This is up from 319,000 and \$4.8 million in direct expenditure in 2018. This is a fantastic outcome for the Enlighten festival.

Some 11.2 per cent of attendees came from interstate or overseas, and around 11,000 of these people came to Canberra just to attend one or more of the Enlighten festival's events. This is testament to the quality of the festival programming.

The 2019 Enlighten festival comprised a suite of feature events, including the illuminations; the Canberra night noodle markets; Lights! Canberra! Action!; Symphony in the Park; Canberra Day activities; the Canberra Balloon Spectacular; and the ever-popular hit 104.7 Skyfire event.

In 2020 the festival will again run for 17 days, from late February till the middle of March. Next year it will coincide with the Australian Tourism Awards, which the ACT is hosting and which will be held at the beginning of March. The awards present an opportunity to showcase Canberra to the Australian tourism industry during the Enlighten festival.

**MR PETTERSSON:** Chief Minister, what can we expect from this year's Floriade?

**Mr Parton:** Flowers?

**MR BARR:** Floriade is Australia's biggest celebration of spring and, yes, there will be flowers—for those very clever interjectors from across the aisle. It will be held in Commonwealth Park, and it is celebrating its 32nd year. This year's theme is "World in bloom" and is inspired by cultures across the globe. It showcases designs across 21 in-ground flowerbeds and 189 raised flower beds and features over one million bulbs and annuals on display.

Using ACT government events to showcase and support Canberra businesses is a key priority for Floriade. This year it has again renewed its partnership with Pialligo Estate to run their Pialligo Urban Cafe. The event will host three pop-up bars this year with Capital Brewing Co, Contentious Character and Underground Sprits all having a presence.

NightFest also returns this year running from 3 to 6 October. It features live music performance and stand-up comedy. This year's Floriade will again feature the very popular Dogs Day Out, Veterans Day and Floriade in the suburbs. I invite all members to enjoy Australia's premier celebration of spring, only a short walk from this building. Get out and enjoy the best celebration of our city's wonderful spring season.

### **Transport Canberra—school student patronage**

**MISS C BURCH:** My question is to the Minister for Transport. I refer to data from a brief you received as the incoming transport minister that indicated that in comparison to 2018 levels "patronage of the public network on school days by school students has been broadly level". Minister, given that you were aware that more school students are not using the public transport network on school days, despite having had their school bus services cut, why are you continuing to force parents to drive their children to and from school by not providing dedicated school services?

**MR STEEL:** I thank the member for her question. I note that in the next sitting week I will be tabling some further information related to the petition that she brought to the Assembly in relation to this matter. More school students are in fact using public transport in Canberra than before the introduction of the new public transport network. During term two 2019 the number of journeys made by school students on school days was 0.77 per cent higher than in term two 2018. This equates to around 120 more journeys by school students each school day. On non-school days, including public holidays, we have seen a large increase as well.

**MISS C BURCH:** Minister, when will you fix Canberra's school bus network?

**MR STEEL:** I thank the member for her question. It is very positive that we are seeing more students using public transport overall. Before the new network started we saw many students already using the route bus network and not necessarily dedicated school bus services. We have been working very closely with school communities to look at how the new system has been operating. I have met with some of those schools to talk about some of the specific issues and we will continue to do so as the new network continues.

**MRS JONES:** Minister, why, given the tiny statistical increase caused by bus interchange bus changes, has network 19 failed to get more students using public transport to get to and from school?

**MR STEEL:** I thank the member for her question but she clearly has not listened to my previous answers. We have more students using the public transport network overall, and that is a very good thing because we want to encourage everyone, particularly from the earlier stages, to use public transport and to see it as a viable alternative. Of course, with the new system, we changed to a hub and spoke model; so we did expect to see a slight increase in the number of boardings per journey made. That is what we have seen, but it has not been too dramatic and we are still seeing large numbers of students using the system.

### **Transport—park-and-ride bike facilities**

**MR MILLIGAN:** My question is to the Minister for Transport. I refer to information you received in your incoming minister's brief regarding the budget policy "Supporting More Canberrans to Park and Ride". In the briefing it states there has been \$2.5 million allocated for a park-and-ride facility along Well Station Drive but "the current design does not provide for bike facilities". Minister, given the amount of funding for this project, why were bike facilities not considered in the original design of this project?

**MR STEEL:** I thank the member for his question. Of course we have also funded a park-and-ride strategy which we will be working on over the coming months. This is going to set out a strategic plan for how we deliver park-and-ride facilities across the territory in the right locations and in relation to the facilities that they provide.

I continue to have discussions with Pedal Power who have also put to me that they would like to see more bike-and-ride facilities across Canberra. I will consider those when we get to the procurement stage for the projects that we have got funded.

**MR MILLIGAN:** Minister, how does this decision to not include bike facilities in the original design at a major park-and-ride facility support the government's integrated active travel strategy?

**MR STEEL:** Not every park and ride has a bike-and-ride facility at the moment. We are certainly interested in what we can do to encourage people to use their bikes. I am happy to consider the member's suggestion in relation to the specific facility at Well Station Drive once we get to the procurement process, which we have not done at this stage.

**MISS C BURCH:** Minister, what other transport infrastructure projects currently being undertaken do not include active travel facilities?

**MR STEEL:** There is a range of transport infrastructure projects around the territory, a massive increase in the investment we are making in roads across the territory. We are investing in the Monaro Highway upgrades. I do not believe that there is specific investment in active travel there, because it is not meant to be a public transport corridor, nor an active travel corridor. We continue to look at how we can do that in relation to projects that we have. Yesterday I announced that we are progressing with procurement in relation to the duplication of William Hovell Drive. We will ensure that an off-road bike path is required along the 4.5 kilometre length of that duplication, as well as on-road facilities.

### **Floriade—city-wide events**

**MR PETTERSSON:** My question is to the Minister for the Arts, Creative Industries and Cultural Events. Minister, with Floriade now well underway, please can you update the Assembly on some of the other events that are also on in association with Floriade, including taking some events beyond the city centre for the enjoyment of all Canberrans.

**MR RAMSAY:** I thank Mr Pettersson for his question, noting that last weekend Floriade in the suburbs was out and about in Gungahlin.

I am pleased to advise that this year's Floriade includes a new component, as I mentioned, called Floriade in the suburbs, which is designed to take a taste of Floriade out to the town centres and encourage casual community gatherings in some of our great suburban parks and our town squares. I was inspired by the parties at the shops that were part of the Centenary celebrations in 2013 which created opportunities for the Canberra community to come together for fun, food and activities in their local areas.

Floriade in the suburbs is happening in each of the five major suburban hubs on different weekends throughout Floriade. Those locations are Gungahlin, last weekend;

Belconnen, this coming weekend; and Tuggeranong, Molonglo and Woden. Each will feature free children's activities, live music and multicultural dance featuring local dance troupes, all celebrating the Floriade 2019 theme of "The world in bloom". There will be food and drink vendors at each site but people are encouraged to make it a picnic day as well as enjoy coffee, ice cream, beer and wine from local vendors. Mini-mobile versions of Floriade floral displays have been specifically created for the events and will be accompanied by our specially commissioned giant Floriade gnome known as Floyd.

I encourage all members to get out and about to see the local Floriade in the suburbs event and to celebrate all that is great in the local areas around this great city. Dates, times and locations are available on the VisitCanberra website.

**MR PETTERSSON:** Minister, can you provide the Assembly with information about the return of the popular Floriade side event, Windows to the World?

**MR RAMSAY:** I thank Mr Pettersson for the supplementary question. Windows to the World is a fantastic opportunity to celebrate Canberra's multiculturalism, to provide insight into the world of international diplomacy and to generate further awareness of Canberra's role as a global, connected city with strong international relationships.

Windows to the World 2019 is an election commitment from the 2016 election following a popular debut in 2013 as part of Canberra's centenary celebrations and a highly successful follow-up in 2015. It will include open days at various embassies, high commissions and other official residences on the weekends of 12 and 13 October and 19 and 20 October.

At present 45 diplomatic missions are participating in this year's event; 11 with a diplomatic mini expo at Floriade and 37 holding open days across those two weekends. Tours of five embassies have already sold out—those for Belgium, Japan, Mexico, Switzerland and the USA. There are also tours of Parliament House and Government House.

I encourage all those Canberrans with an interest in learning more about Canberra's important role as the diplomatic heart of the nation to book for one of the rare opportunities to get up close to the iconic architecture, the beautiful gardens and the interesting people who make up our diplomatic community. Information is available online at [windowstotheworld.com.au](http://windowstotheworld.com.au).

**MS CHEYNE:** Minister, can you please provide further information about Floriade Floyd who has quickly become a Canberra Festival season icon?

**MR RAMSAY:** I thank Ms Cheyne for the supplementary question, noting that Floriade Floyd will be out in Belconnen this weekend. I am pleased to advise that Floriade Floyd is indeed proving to be a smash hit wherever he appears in Canberra and across the region.

To enhance the flowers, to reflect the joyous colours of Floriade and to reference the iconic Rotary gnomes, local Canberra artists, Geoff, Peter and Jenny Filmer were commissioned to make a giant gnome sculpture which would be the centrepiece of the Floriade in the suburbs events. Floyd stands at 2.5 metres tall and he took 500 hours to craft. He has captured people's imaginations and, indeed, has taken off on social media with his own Instagram account.

The competition to choose his name attracted over 750 entries, some of which inevitably suggested the name Gnomey McGnomeface. However, by far the most popular name suggested was Floyd or Pink Floyd or other variations on a rock theme. Other popular suggestions included Gnorman, Gnomeo and Florence as well as Garry, Gazza, Griffin, Jerome and Walter.

I thank all Canberrans for getting on the Floyd bandwagon. He can be seen around the town for the next month, including at Floriade in the suburbs town centre picnics as well as at the National Arboretum, the Canberra Airport, CMAG, the universities, Garema Place and Lanyon Homestead. He has also already made two interstate visits to regional centres at Wollongong and Albury as part of the promotion of Floriade and was extremely well received in those locations as well.

### **Transport Canberra—network 19 complaints**

**MR HANSON:** My question is to the Minister for Transport. Minister, I refer to data provided in your incoming minister's brief that stated that the Transport Canberra call centre received around 4,900 complaints within the first two months of network 19 commencing. Minister, what impact have the changes to the bus network had on the workload of Transport Canberra call centre staff?

**MR STEEL:** I can come back with some specific numbers, if you like, Mr Hanson, in relation to the workload of staff during that period. But we did expect, with a very significant change to the transport network—the largest since 1999—that there would be a significant number of people who would need to contact Transport Canberra either for information or to make complaints or indeed to provide bouquets for some of the services that we are providing with the new network, with more frequent services more often. I expect that there would have been quite a workload during the immediate period, but I understand that that has now levelled off, as the new network becomes embedded.

**MR HANSON:** How many bouquets were received by call centre staff, and what training have staff had for any abuse or other verbally unacceptable behaviour that occurs when they are receiving calls?

**MR STEEL:** I am happy to come back with those specific details. I believe they were provided, actually. I will have to check and see whether we can provide those numbers again for the opposition if they have not already seen the numbers.

**MISS C BURCH:** Minister, how many call centre staff have taken stress or personal leave due to the public reaction caused by changes to network 19?

**MR STEEL:** I will take that question on notice.

### **Light rail—stage 1 construction issues**

**MR PARTON:** My question is to the Minister for Transport: are you aware of any construction issues with light rail stage 1, specifically issues surrounding stormwater or electrical infrastructure, that were not addressed prior to the project's completion?

**MR STEEL:** I am aware that the construction work was signed off by the independent certifier. That should give confidence to the whole community that the construction was completed as expected by government.

**MR PARTON:** Minister, what is the ongoing cost to the Canberra ratepayer for the maintenance and repair of faulty stormwater or electrical infrastructure associated with light rail stage 1?

**MR STEEL:** As the member is aware, we provide availability payments on an ongoing basis year by year to Canberra Metro under the terms of our contract. We will continue to do that over the life of the contract.

**MISS C BURCH:** Minister, what will you do personally to ensure that future construction is of the highest building quality?

**MR STEEL:** I thank the member for her supplementary question. We have just published the lessons learned report for stage 1, where we look forward to making sure that in future extensions of the line we learn from the major infrastructure project that we have already undertaken and we transfer the skills and expertise into future stages of the network. That is why it is so critical that we start on stage 2A of this project as soon as we can so that we can make sure that the skills and expertise that have been built up, that corporate knowledge, continue in the next stage of the project, taking it down to Woden. Of course, it is yet to be seen whether the Liberals actually support that extension.

### **Schools—energy efficient infrastructure**

**MS CHEYNE:** My question is to the Minister for Education and Early Childhood Development. Minister, can you please provide an update on the school boiler replacements that were announced in this year's budget?

**MS BERRY:** I thank Ms Cheyne for the question. The ACT government is investing \$15.9 million over four years across nine public schools for an energy efficient heating system renewal program. The schools included are Hawker College, Telopea Park School, Red Hill Primary School, Forrest Primary School, Fadden Primary School, Mount Stromlo High School, Alfred Deakin High School, Wanniasa Hills Primary School and Lyneham Primary School.

In four schools the government is replacing gas-fired boilers with electric heat pumps. In two schools the government is installing hybrid gas-electric systems, and in three



schools new, efficient gas condenser boilers are being installed. As an example, at Hawker College, a hybrid gas-electric system is being installed for the first time. Space-use analysis has been completed and the design of the system is almost complete. The system is scheduled to be installed before winter next year.

The program is expected to save 621 tonnes of carbon dioxide annually once all systems are installed. In addition to this program, the heating system at Melba Copland Secondary School is being upgraded using the same principles.

**MS CHEYNE:** Minister, what are the benefits to schools and students of these upgrades?

**MS BERRY:** These upgrades are of course about improving environmental sustainability in schools. But they also improve the learning environment for our students. Class environment is one of the factors that influence student learning. A comfortable, fit-for-purpose learning environment is critical for getting the best out of students. Upgraded heating systems improve the comfort of students and teachers, making sure that they can focus on learning. Creating comfortable environments also supports inclusivity, ensuring that all students feel safe and valued and are able to engage in the learning process.

As every Canberra family knows, heating and cooling are energy-intensive activities. By upgrading heating systems in our schools to make them more efficient, the government is making a significant impact on our energy use. Part of the environmental sustainability benefit is a reduction in utility bills, enabling those resources to be directed to other priorities.

And of course it is hugely important that the government set the best possible example for the ACT's future leaders. Investing in sustainability programs in schools is a critical part of that. I am proud of the contribution that ACT students are currently making to tackling climate change. I hope that the government can continue to encourage their leadership through our own actions.

**MS CODY:** Minister, how else is the government improving energy efficiency and reducing carbon emissions in ACT schools?

**MS BERRY:** There are many ways ACT public schools are improving their energy efficiency and reducing carbon emissions. For example, double glazing can make a huge difference to heating efficiency. At Turner Primary School the windows and doors to the hydrotherapy pool have recently been double-glazed. At North Ainslie Primary School the junior school hall and classrooms have been double-glazed. On the south side at Wanniasa Hills Primary School the kindergarten and years 3, 4 and 5 classrooms and staffroom have all been double-glazed. This year we are installing air locks to Gordon Primary School and Melba Copland Secondary School's Melba campus. These projects are due to be completed by the end of the year.

Increasing the number of trees surrounding our buildings also assists with long-term management of heating and cooling and provides students with cool shade in the playground. That is why the government has invested in its tree planting program. The

government has also completed 25 heating, ventilation and air conditioning audits over the past three years, helping to identify future opportunities for improvements. All of this work ensures comfortable learning environments for students and teachers and contributes to the ACT's goal of zero net emissions by 2045.

### **Transport Canberra—network 19 complaints**

**MRS JONES:** My question is to the Minister for Transport and Minister for City Services. Minister, how many complaints have you received via Transport Canberra's official social media channels about network 19?

**MR STEEL:** I thank the member for her question. I am happy to come back on notice, given the level of detail that she is after.

**MRS JONES:** How many of those complaints have been responded to?

**MR STEEL:** I thank the member for her question. I am happy to come back on notice in relation to that. Obviously, with social media it is often difficult to respond to everyone, and specifically to understand whether they are in fact the person that they purport to be on social media. I am happy to come back to you specifically in relation to the policy of how TCCS responds to people, when they are engaging on a social media platform in particular.

**MISS C BURCH:** Minister, how many people work in that social media team and have they been provided with training and support to deal with abuse and harassment?

**MR STEEL:** I thank the member for her question. I am happy to come back on notice in relation to that.

### **Transport Canberra—weekend bus services**

**MS LAWDER:** My question is to the Minister for Transport. Minister, how many bus drivers are rostered to work on this weekend's bus services?

**MR STEEL:** I thank the member for her question. As I have explained many times in this place, we continue to make sure that we roster drivers to deliver as many services as we can, right up until the day of the bus service being delivered, because we want to provide as many services as we can to Canberrans on the weekend.

I outlined this week, when I tabled the action plan to improve reliability of weekend services, 10 actions that we will be taking to improve weekend reliability. That will include the use of standby drivers on the weekend particularly to take over shifts where there has been an unexpected loss of one of the drivers so that we cannot deliver that shift. We will be looking at continuous recruitment of bus drivers to deliver more services on the weekend as well as a range of other actions that we will be taking to improve reliability.

**MS LAWDER:** Minister, how many bus drivers are required to meet this weekend's scheduled services and, as of today, how many bus drivers do you have rostered on?

**MR STEEL:** I thank the member for her question. I will come back to her with the specific numbers. Last weekend we had around 84 per cent of services delivered. That does not meet the expectations of the community or the government in relation to reliability, and that is why we will be immediately starting a new timetable for weekends, starting on the 28th of this month. We will be looking to have that as an interim timetable before we then increase services over the longer term.

We need to be able to do this to take the time to recruit more drivers to the system. We have had over 250 applicants thus far, as part of our recruitment process, which is very good news. One of the actions under the weekend reliability action plan is that we will be screening the applicants for those who are particularly willing to work on the weekend so that we can deliver reliable services under the network.

**MISS C BURCH:** Minister, under your action plan as released this week, when will the weekend bus services return to the originally promised schedule and frequency?

**MR STEEL:** When we can be assured that we can deliver a reliable service. The new system will start on the 28th. Tomorrow the new timetable will be provided to the community to download. People can get hard copies of that timetable from various locations, including at ACT library services, if they wish. Once that timetable comes in, we will be looking at how we can recruit more bus drivers, as we have done on a continuous basis over the past few months. At the point where we think we can deliver more services, we will.

### **Health—infrastructure investments**

**MS CODY:** My question is to the Minister for Health. Minister, what will the expansion of the emergency department at Calvary mean for the territory?

**MS STEPHEN-SMITH:** I thank Ms Cody for the question and her interest in the expansion of the emergency department at Calvary Public Hospital, Bruce.

The expansion of Calvary's emergency department will deliver 22 additional treatment spaces, bringing the total to 61. We will see more doctors, nurses, administration and other health professionals joining the ED team over the next two years to staff this additional capacity.

Importantly, the expansion will increase overall treatment spaces in Calvary's ED by more than 50 per cent, a major boost to hospital emergency services on the north side. This will mean an increase in emergency department treatment spaces of almost 20 per cent across the ACT by March next year. Once complete, the expanded Calvary ED will feature a redesigned and larger fast-track stream and an expanded short-stay unit to help with patient flow through the ED. Enhanced waiting areas will make people more comfortable as they wait for treatment. The expansion of ED capacity and staffing at Calvary will assist in lowering waiting times for triage categories where the urgency of time-critical intervention is clear.

This expansion is a \$6.7 million capital works project from the 2018-19 budget, combined with \$22 million in the 2019-20 budget to ensure that the expanded capacity is appropriately staffed. This was part of an additional more than \$40 million in funding to Calvary over the next four years of the 2019-20 budget for increases in both emergency services and elective surgery capacity.

This is just one part of the major infrastructure investment that is being made by the ACT government. The health of Canberrans will always be a priority for the ACT Labor government, and we will continue to invest in ensuring that our community receives high quality health care when and where Canberrans need it.

**MS CODY:** Minister, could you update the Assembly on the government's broader agenda for health infrastructure in Canberra?

**MS STEPHEN-SMITH:** I thank Ms Cody for the supplementary. The ACT government has demonstrated record levels of investment in ACT public health services in recent years. The government has invested more than a billion dollars in health infrastructure in the last decade. This has seen investment in the Canberra Hospital, Calvary hospital and in the community and has included new, fit-for-purpose facilities as well as significant upgrades to existing assets.

We have invested in a network of walk-in centres with new centres coming to Weston Creek this year and the inner north next year to join existing centres in Belconnen, Tuggeranong and Gungahlin.

We are delivering on our commitment for a new health facility for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Canberrans with \$12 million in funding being provided to Winnunga Nimmityjah, and it was great to be there at the sod-turning the other week. And of course we have delivered a whole new rehabilitation hospital at the University of Canberra Hospital.

To futureproof our health system we are looking at how we can better deliver health services to Canberrans to ensure that they receive high quality health care when and where they need it through territory-wide health services planning. A key part of this work is Canberra Hospital's master plan which will help to guide future capital investment and decision-making for the renewal of the campus.

This master plan will include our major investment in the SPIRE project to deliver a new, state-of-the-art emergency surgical and critical-care facility for the hospital and provide high quality, person-centred care in an environment that incorporates the latest advances in technology and models of care to improve health outcomes and operational service efficiency for Canberrans into the future. This represents the biggest investment in healthcare infrastructure since self-government.

**MR GUPTA:** Minister, could you please outline how the future planning of our health infrastructure takes environmental outcomes into consideration?

**MS STEPHEN-SMITH:** I thank Mr Gupta for the supplementary. Canberra Health Services and the ACT Health Directorate have been working closely with the zero emissions team in the Environment, Planning and Sustainable Development Directorate to build a blueprint for zero emissions for the public health sector. Building on the great work done by Canberra Health Services in making their day-to-day operations more sustainable, the zero emissions blueprint will help to guide future investment in our buildings, fleet and operations to facilitate a step change in reducing CHS's carbon footprint.

With the development of a new master plan for the Canberra Hospital campus, we have the opportunity to embed sustainability as a guiding principle for the long-term development of infrastructure at Canberra Hospital, and provide a framework for how we plan for future community health assets and future investment in the Calvary Public Hospital, Bruce.

We also know that a more environmentally sensitive built environment, including improved outdoor green spaces and better urban design, can contribute to better health outcomes and happier staff and visitors. I look forward to ongoing improvement in the sustainable development of our health facilities and hospitals and ensuring that patients and visitors from across the ACT and surrounding region can heal in a space that is not only a great healthcare facility but also a welcoming and healing place to be.

Through master planning and our continuing capital works program, the government is bringing these principles into reality, particularly through the substantial investment in the SPIRE project, which will provide a bigger emergency department and more operating theatres and deliver even better health services for the Canberra community, when and where they need it.

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

### **Supplementary answer to question without notice Planning—environment and planning forum**

**MR GENTLEMAN:** I have some more information in regard to Mr Parton's question on how EPSDD are engaging. I can advise that Mr Ponton is currently working with the secretariat and his colleagues in other directorates on how we can best engage with members of this forum and the wider group on key policy matters within EPSDD. I understand that this work will be completed in the coming month, and Mr Ponton will be sending information to members advising of a meeting on the future mechanism for engagement this year, with the new process to be formalised in 2020.

In the meantime, they are consulting, through phone, correspondence and the your say portal, on important community engagements, including the ACT planning review, the urban sounds daytime noise levels into the evening, sustainable energy policy, and the draft Territory Plan variation for Common Ground Dickson. Shortly, we will be engaging the community on the Dickson pool forecourt upgrades, the Canberra Nature Park draft management plan, the draft Territory Plan variation for the Gungahlin town centre, and the Red Hill integration plan.

## Leave of absence

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

That leave of absence be granted to Mrs Kikkert for today due to her attendance at a funeral.

## Papers

**Madam Speaker** presented the following paper:

Committee Reports—Schedule of Government Responses—Ninth Assembly, as at 16 September 2019.

**Mr Gentleman** presented the following papers:

Health, Ageing and Community Services—Standing Committee—Report 7—*Inquiry into Drugs of Dependence (Personal Cannabis Use) Amendment Bill 2018*—Government response, dated September 2019.

Water Resources Act, pursuant to subsection 67D(3)—ACT and Region Catchment Management Coordination Group—Annual report 2018-19.

Confiscation of Criminal Assets Act, pursuant to subsection 258(4)—ACT Policing Confiscation of Criminal Assets Reports for the financial years 2003-04 to 2016-17.

## **ACT and Region Catchment Management Coordination Group—annual report**

**MR GENTLEMAN** (Brindabella—Manager of Government Business, Minister for Advanced Technology and Space Industries, Minister for the Environment and Heritage, Minister for Planning and Land Management and Minister for Police and Emergency Services) (2.49): Pursuant to standing order 211, I move:

That the Assembly take note of the following paper:

Water Resources Act, pursuant to subsection 67D(3)—ACT and Region Catchment Management Coordination Group—Annual report 2018-19.

I am pleased to be able to table the 2018-19 annual report for the ACT and Region Catchment Management Coordination Group. On 4 August 2015, the ACT Legislative Assembly amended the Water Resources Act 2007 and established the coordination group as a statutory body. The coordination group's membership includes the relevant CEOs of the key ACT directorates; Icon Water; the National Capital Authority; and the general managers of South East Local Land Services, Queanbeyan-Palerang Regional Council, Snowy Monaro Regional Council and Yass Valley Council respectively. The coordination group is independently chaired by Emeritus Professor Ian Falconer and the community is represented by water expert Dr Fiona Dyer, from the University of Canberra.

I met with Professor Falconer twice during the past financial year and received positive updates on the coordination group's efforts. I want to take this opportunity to commend Professor Falconer for his service to the coordination group. Professor Falconer has completed his role as chair, leaving behind a successful legacy as an influential and passionate advocate for delivering better water resource outcomes for the ACT and surrounding region. He has led the coordination group since its inception and I look forward to welcoming a suitable successor in due course. On behalf of the Assembly, I thank Professor Falconer for his service and dedication.

The catchment strategy seeks to improve resilience and the ability to address change for the ACT and region, particularly in terms of increased potential for temperature rises, rainfall variation, more extreme climate events such as bushfires and flooding, and changing land use, particularly increased development.

The annual report details the major achievements of the coordination group, provides an update on the broader progress on implementation of the catchment strategy and sets out the priorities for 2019-20.

Let me mention some of the notable highlights from the coordination group in 2018-19. Phase 1 of the healthy waterways Lake Tuggeranong water quality research program was completed, with phase 2 now underway. There was the successful continuation of the H2OK stormwater education program, which last year included a water-impacting awareness survey of 330 Canberrans that demonstrated that the program is making a real impact.

Efforts to secure the region's water resources were increased through diligent and thorough investigations into the feasibility of water trading. Multiple water infrastructure projects were constructed, including four rain gardens, eight wetlands, two ponds and two waterway restorations in 14 suburbs across Canberra. Fruitful and positive engagement throughout the year with neighbouring jurisdictions, water resource managers, catchment group leaders and government agencies has helped guide our decision-making for managing the region's water resources and waterways. And there has been the endorsement of an interjurisdictional investment framework so that we can continue supporting water catchment initiatives across the region.

The government supports the proposed activities of the group for 2019-20. Some of the more notable activities that the group will focus on are undertaking distribution of funds through the interjurisdictional investment framework now that this framework has been endorsed; working to improve data monitoring by working more closely with citizen science groups like Frogwatch and Waterwatch; intensifying efforts to investigate the feasibility of water trading as an economically rational and flexible way to manage our precious water resources; distributing the recently produced ACT and region catchment post-emergency recovery plan and establishing a working group to look at how all surrounding jurisdictions can adopt and implement this important initiative; and developing water discharge guidelines for the proposed Queanbeyan water sewage plant to ensure protection for Lake Burley Griffin.

I would like to once again thank Professor Falconer and all members of the coordination group for their time and commitment. The dedication of the group and the professionalism they have demonstrated in achieving great management outcomes are a vital asset for the territory and the surrounding region. I commend the report to the Assembly.

Question resolved in the affirmative.

### **Health, Ageing and Community Services—Standing Committee**

**MR BARR** (Kurrajong—Chief Minister, Treasurer, Minister for Social Inclusion and Equality, Minister for Tertiary Education, Minister for Tourism and Special Events and Minister for Trade, Industry and Investment) (2.54), by leave: Pursuant to standing order 211, I move:

That the Assembly take note of the following paper:

Health, Ageing and Community Services—Standing Committee—Report 7—  
*Inquiry into Drugs of Dependence (Personal Cannabis Use) Amendment Bill*  
2018—Government response.

I am pleased to present the government's response to the standing committee's inquiry into the Drugs of Dependence (Personal Cannabis Use) Amendment Bill 2018, a private member's bill. The government thanks the committee members and the secretariat for the work that has gone into the preparation of the committee's report. We would also like to thank those who took the time to make submissions and to appear at the committee. As this standing committee report has implications for more than one portfolio, I am tabling the response on behalf of the government.

The standing committee made 16 recommendations. Of those, the government has agreed to four, noted eight and not agreed to four. The government is committed to evidence-based and practice-informed responses to drug use that minimise the harm caused by drugs in our community, in line with the ACT drug strategy action plan for 2019-21. It is in this context and through this lens that the government has examined the bill and the committee's report.

The recommendations agreed to by the government include: supporting the private member's bill, which we will do subject to a number of amendments the government will move and has previously outlined; monitoring demand for health services following passage of the bill; and delivering public information campaigns with information about the health implications of using cannabis and what will change when the bill is passed.

Recommendations which the government has noted include those relating to definitions for cannabis in different states; those relating to offences for smoking in public places or near children; the recommendation to develop a new drug driving test; a recommendation to include an express authorisation for the use of cannabis; a recommendation to intervene in prosecutions; and a recommendation to overturn previous convictions for possession or use of cannabis. These recommendations are



not necessarily at odds with the government position and can be addressed in different ways outside of this legislation.

There are, however, a number of recommendations that we have not agreed to at this time. These include permitting a larger number of plants to be grown by individuals and households; allowing artificial cultivation; increasing the amount of cannabis that an individual would be able to possess to 100 grams; and allowing group cultivation or cannabis clubs. In each case, we consider that these recommendations would go beyond the intent of these reforms, which is to minimise the harm from drugs for small individual users, and not to encourage or support sophisticated or larger scale cultivation and consumption of cannabis.

Madam Assistant Speaker, the government has very openly and consistently said that we believe that the private member's bill is not a revolutionary change but, rather, a logical next step of the simple cannabis offence notice, SCON, scheme. In this context, the government is tabling the response to the committee's report and recommendations that reiterates the points that we have made to date, including our submissions to the inquiry. Contained in the government response is an outline of the amendments the government will seek to move when this bill is next called on for debate in the coming sitting week.

I again thank the committee for their work, as well as the many people who appeared or made submissions. I commend the government's response to the Assembly.

Question resolved in the affirmative.

## **Renewable energy**

### **Discussion of matter of public importance**

**MADAM ASSISTANT SPEAKER** (Ms Cody): Madam Speaker has received letters from Ms Cheyne, Ms Cody, Mr Coe, Mr Gupta, Mrs Kikkert, Ms Lawder, Ms Le Couteur, Mr Milligan, Mr Parton and Mr Pettersson proposing that matters of public importance be submitted to the Assembly. In accordance with standing order 79, the Speaker has determined that the matter proposed by Mr Gupta be submitted to the Assembly, namely:

The importance of the ACT leading the nation on the transition to 100 per cent renewable energy sources.

**MS BERRY** (Ginninderra—Deputy Chief Minister, Minister for Education and Early Childhood Development, Minister for Housing and Suburban Development, Minister for the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence, Minister for Sport and Recreation and Minister for Women) (3.00): I seek leave to speak on the MPI.

Leave granted.

**MS BERRY**: I am happy to have the chance to talk to the MPI and I thank members for granting leave to give me that chance. In May this year the ACT Legislative Assembly declared a climate emergency, the first Australian state or territory to do so. This government is nation leading when it comes to taking action on climate change

and the government understands that it is critical to support youth-led action like tomorrow's climate strike because we understand that children and young people will live in the world that we leave behind.

It is clear that strong leadership and immediate action are required to avoid catastrophic climate change. Globally, Australia is already well behind. Young people and students understand this and governments and politicians need to listen. All the students who demonstrated leadership at the school climate strike in March will demonstrate that leadership again tomorrow when they bring the community together again for the climate strike.

Just as I did in March, I am backing students who want to take action on climate change, with the permission of their parents or carers. Participation in activism is a learning experience in itself and I believe that all young people should have the chance to engage in creating change through activism. I am really proud to have supported the students who are committed to take action and I am proud to see that the March climate strike has made waves around Australia as well as around the world. I can feel momentum building and I can see that when people stand together we can create change towards a more equitable and sustainable future.

It is clear that hearing the voices of students matters. When I speak with young people I hear that they want a greater say in what and how they learn. They see themselves as decision makers with their learning environments, and through actions like tomorrow's strike they are showing that they can influence change. That is why student agency has been a key principle of the future of education strategy. A school that listens to its students provides a better education, and a community that listens to its young people has a brighter future. I want to see more students participating in civic engagement, which is why the ACT prioritises sustainability in school curriculums. I want even more students to use their voices to create a more equitable and sustainable future.

Unlike Mr Wall, who has suggested that students should just stay in school, the government understands that learning does not happen just in the classrooms. These students who are striking tomorrow are giving effect to the learning that they have engaged in through the sustainability cross-curriculum priority. ACT students are applying their learning to this life-changing issue and they should be absolutely applauded for it.

Yesterday two strong young women from Lyneham High School came to the Assembly to tell us politicians some home truths. Amelia and Zoe are showing impressive leadership in bringing together their peers, workers and others in the community to take a stand for action on climate change.

I have already spoken in this place about my daughter's blunt honesty with me on this issue and she continues to be direct with her thoughts on the issues of climate change in our world. I encourage her and I encourage all ACT students to participate tomorrow, to have their say and to be heard.

**MR GUPTA** (Yerrabi) (3.04): I am delighted to stand today to speak on the importance of the ACT leading the nation on the transition to 100 per cent renewable energy sources. Our government is responding to the significant global challenge of climate change. We are leading the nation by demonstrating what is possible and showing that substantive progress can be made with strong leadership, political will and smart policy design and implementation. It has been an exciting week for our jurisdiction in relation to the ACT government's track record on transitioning to renewables.

Yesterday the Australia Institute released a report that the ACT will be the first major jurisdiction outside Europe to reach 100 per cent renewable energy. We are projected to completely transition away from fossil fuel-based energy supply by October.

Chief Minister Andrew Barr joined Ben Oquist from the Australia Institute for a politics in the pub discussion last night focusing on the ACT Labor government's track record when it comes to transitioning to renewable energy. The Australia Institute have noted that the ACT shows how substantive progress can be achieved when the government is willing to exercise leadership, formulate smart policy and communicate it effectively to constituents.

The Australia Institute report follows the unveiling of the ACT climate strategy 2019-2025 last week. The strategy will allow us to reach our target of net zero carbon emission by 2045. The ACT is a small jurisdiction but we are making a big difference.

As we accelerate to 100 per cent renewable energy our government is taking further steps to reduce net emissions, which predominantly emanate from transport and gas from households and buildings. We will achieve this through our considered plan that will take measures such as accelerating the uptake of electric vehicles, planting trees and implementing a just transition away from gas. It is incredibly important that the ACT leads the nation on the transition to renewable energy. The world is rapidly moving toward renewable energy and the market is also relentlessly moving in that direction.

Prime Minister Scott Morrison has snubbed the UN climate summit and the federal government has no real plan to address climate change. It is particularly important that we lead the change as the federal government has lagged on climate change. The states and territories are doers. The state and territory governments provide the majority of services and service implementation. In this capacity, it is important that we are leading our jurisdiction in the right direction and empower other jurisdictions to do the same.

While the federal government drags its feet it is important that we design and implement strong policy and have a political will to do the right thing and lead by example. It is important that we set an example for other jurisdictions that a transition to renewables creates opportunities for technology and development, training and education as well as jobs. The ACT accounts for approximately 1.6 per cent of the population. However, we have 3.3 per cent of renewable energy jobs. The opportunities for research and development, training and business are well

demonstrated in the ACT. These tangible benefits are well documented and are encouraging other jurisdictions to make such transitions.

The threat of climate change is imminent and undeniable. People from around the world are mobilising to send the message that we need to act and we need strong leadership. As many of us in this chamber are aware, the global climate strike is happening tomorrow. It is timed to occur three days before the UN climate crisis summit. People from around the world are striking in order to send a clear message to our world leaders that they must commit to immediate and decisive action on climate change.

Yesterday I had the privilege of meeting young activists who represented the Canberra school strikers for climate action. Whenever I meet young climate activists I am struck by how energised they are to take action on climate change. They understand the problem and they want to work on the solution. There are many wonderful and passionate people who need our government to do the right thing and take strong action on combatting climate change. And I personally will be joining students tomorrow at the climate strike and hope to see many in this chamber there with me.

In conclusion, I am incredibly proud to be part of our ACT Labor government. We are the leaders in taking up technology and innovation and in responding to challenges in an effective and just way, and our successful transition to renewable energy is a perfect example of this. I look forward to continuing to engage with our community and work towards a smarter, healthier, zero net emission future.

**MS LAWDER** (Brindabella) (3.10): We can all stand up today and agree that 100 per cent renewables are important and that, here in the ACT, we accept the science of climate change. The Canberra Liberals have always had a strong position on the environment. In 1997 the then minister for the environment, Gary Humphries, announced that the ACT government would work towards reducing the territory's greenhouse gas emissions by 20 per cent below 1990 levels by 2018, at that time an ambitious and bold step.

In the last Assembly, I, as shadow minister for the environment, announced that the Canberra Liberals would form part of the tripartisan support for the targets of 100 per cent renewable energy by 2020 and zero net emissions by 2050. Of course, that target has since been moved forward. That commitment has been reaffirmed in this place many times by my colleague Elizabeth Lee during this term, in her role as shadow minister for the environment, and she would do it again today if she were not on leave.

I am proud to state again that the Canberra Liberals are committed to both the achievement and maintenance of the 100 per cent renewables target in the ACT and achieving zero net emissions by 2045. It is important that we lead the way. Due to our size and comparative density, we have a lot of benefits that other jurisdictions simply cannot match in achieving these goals. The people of Canberra have a passion for sustainable practices, and many have the ability to afford to take them up.

We have also benefited from the investment that renewable energy has brought to the Canberra economy: \$500 million of investment has been pumped into the local economy, with jobs in the sector growing at 12 times the rate of anywhere else in Australia. But as with any policy, we are always mindful of the dilemma—in fact the trilemma—of policy initiatives. For example, we always like to consider the affordability, sustainability and reliability of renewables.

The current government have secured renewable energy. They assure us that they can maintain that level into the future, but the affordability has been a long time coming and in summer there are often issues with reliability. We have seen that in some other states. These are the concerns that we keep in mind, because Canberrans complain to us about skyrocketing energy bills and trying to keep up with the ever-moving goalposts of changing policy around wood heaters, gas heaters and electrical heaters, only to be told over and over again that they need to dig deeper and sacrifice more to achieve the goals, leagues ahead of their neighbours across the border.

Notwithstanding our concerns about balancing social, economic and environmental issues, I am proud to reaffirm our commitment to a 100 per cent renewable energy target in the ACT, and zero net emissions by 2045. It is important that we lead the way, and we will continue to do so. That is what Canberrans, in the main, expect us to do.

**MR GENTLEMAN** (Brindabella—Manager of Government Business, Minister for Advanced Technology and Space Industries, Minister for the Environment and Heritage, Minister for Planning and Land Management and Minister for Police and Emergency Services) (3.14): I have just heard from the Liberals about trilemmas and changing policy. Like the rest of the Canberra community, I am sick of the Canberra Liberals and their utter failure to take climate change seriously.

Rather than working to better our city, those opposite spend their time trying to be more conservative than Mr Scott Morrison's government, and trying to be more right-wing than Mr Tony Abbott. It shows how inexperienced the opposition are. Not only are they refusing to accept that climate change is happening; they are now attacking young Canberrans. They are belittling the very generation that will have to deal with the consequences if we do not meet the Paris commitment to limit global warming by two degrees or less.

In a week when students have been asking for their voices to be heard, in a week when this government has built on its leadership on climate change and renewable energy through a comprehensive new strategy, and at a time when ACT firefighters are helping to fight fires in New South Wales and Queensland caused by unprecedented hot and dry conditions, across the chamber we had Mr Hanson, a former leader of the inexperienced Canberra Liberals, immaturely posting and joking about the weather in relation to tomorrow's climate strike. Madam Assistant Speaker, I will table the tweet that Mr Hanson produced. I present the following paper:

Climate strike—spring snow—Copy of tweet by Mr Hanson, 17 September 2019.

Those opposite should condemn Mr Hanson for this exercise. If the Leader of the Opposition had any gumption or experience, he would have already come in here and publicly reprimanded Mr Hanson. But we know that Mr Coe is far more likely to cheer on this behaviour. We know that, deep down, Mr Coe does not believe in climate change and will do what the federal Liberals have done. The real joke here is that the Canberra Liberals believe they are fit to govern in the ACT.

**Ms Lawder:** A point of order, Madam Assistant Speaker. Mr Gentleman cannot know what Mr Coe, deep down, thinks. He is casting aspersions upon Mr Coe's character. He cannot say that he knows, deep down, what Mr Coe believes.

**Mr Gentleman:** There is no point of order.

**Ms Lawder:** I would ask you to ask him to withdraw.

**MADAM ASSISTANT SPEAKER:** There is no point of order.

**Ms Lawder:** Really?

**Mr Hanson:** He is a guru. He knows it all; he is all-knowing.

**Ms Lawder:** He is not the Speaker; you are.

**MADAM ASSISTANT SPEAKER:** Thank you, Ms Lawder. I do know my position today. I am actually an Assistant Speaker, and I have ruled that there is no point of order.

**MR GENTLEMAN:** The real joke here is that the Canberra Liberals believe they are fit to govern in the ACT. Mr Coe will unwind this city's action on climate change. We already know that our shadow ministers are recklessly indifferent, and this latest travesty shows that Mr Coe is a leader for reckless indifference.

All of the work that we have done to make Canberra a world leader on climate action would be destroyed by a Canberra Liberals government. They do not support renewable energy. Instead, like Mr Morrison, they love coal. Let us take a look at what the Canberra Liberals did this week. They copied the playbook of their brethren in the Queensland Liberal National Party and chose misinformation. Their mendacity knows no bounds.

Let us be clear, Madam Assistant Speaker: the ACT's climate change strategy will move us to zero net emissions while giving Canberrans the freedom to choose when and what they drive, how they cook and how they heat their homes. If we do not act on climate change, the most disadvantaged Canberrans stand to suffer the most. This government is tackling climate change while helping those in our society that most need our help. We are growing our city, making it more vibrant and protecting our environment. We are making our city more sustainable through our commitment to renewable energy, and we are doing this while growing our economy.

Contrary to conservative thinking, it is possible to do all of these things at once. Our efforts on climate change and our leadership on renewables bring new industry and innovation to our city. An experienced government like us can do all of this. An inexperienced and immature opposition misleads and has no vision. The choice could not be more clear, Madam Assistant Speaker: a Labor government that is leading the way or an inexperienced Liberal government that does not believe in renewable energy and does not listen to experts when it comes to climate change.

**MR HANSON** (Murrumbidgee) (3.18): Madam Assistant Speaker, I feel compelled to engage in this debate. I would like to echo the sentiments of Ms Lawder. She has outlined the long and distinguished history that we have in this place, in terms of our support for renewables. In fact I would like to note, as the Leader of the Opposition at the last election, that we had tripartisan targets that we took to the election. We have maintained support for those. The Canberra Liberals have a very proud history of supporting measures that are achievable, affordable and responsible.

We support pragmatic measures that achieve outcomes, not alarmism. We are increasingly seeing alarmism in the shifting sands that is the Labor Party position. I note that Bill Shorten, when it came to the climate strike earlier this year, was opposed to students taking action outside school hours. I do admit that that did not end well for him at the federal election, but it seems that the Labor Party's position is ever-shifting as they seek even greater levels of outrage.

We are getting on with the business of actually supporting measures that make sense and that will achieve the outcomes we want. Indeed when the climate emergency was announced in this place by members opposite, it was proposed by the Canberra Liberals that we end or restrict air travel, all of the junkets that members opposite love to take. Mr Rattenbury, Mr Barr and Mr Gentleman swan overseas with their entourage to see what is happening overseas, in various cities in Europe, America, Singapore and elsewhere.

This is a practical measure that could have been taken by this Assembly. There is limited action that we personally can take in this debate. That is one that we could have taken, and the Labor Party and the Greens voted against it. This is the same party that has scrapped a whole bunch of school buses, so that students and their parents have to get into cars. There are many hundreds more vehicle movements throughout the city because they scrapped the school buses.

There is a lot that we can do; there is lots that we should do. We do not agree with turning off people's gas. We do not think we should turn off people's gas that they use to heat their homes and cook their food. But we do support, as I said, those measures that are reasonable, responsible, achievable and affordable.

What I do not support—and this is the same, I think, as Mr Shorten's position earlier this year, the former federal Labor leader; I am not sure what the current leader's position is—is causing alarm, scaring children and using children as part of our own political activism. I fear that is what is happening here, because this student strike is no longer a student strike; it has been taken over by politicians. Mr Gupta wants to go

down there. Other politicians will want to go down there for the photo opportunity. We have heard that; no doubt we will see the Labor Party and the Greens politicians down there, getting their photo op and using children in many ways for their own political objectives and, as we know, in many cases, whipping up fear and concern amongst those children.

In reality, in this jurisdiction, through the combined efforts of both Liberal Party and Labor Party governments, we have the most ambitious targets, both for renewables and for carbon emission reduction, in Australia.

This group opposite are never as happy as when they are outraged. They will take up any level of outrage; they will come in to this place and accuse others, smear, and, as Mr Gentleman did in his speech, and as he regularly does, try to smear the federal government repeatedly and conflate a whole range of issues.

What we are talking about here today, though, is action on renewables. I think that what we have seen is tripartisan support across the Assembly, and I am disappointed that those opposite would seek to change that. It does seem that those opposite are always wanting to create alarmism, dissent and disquiet in the community. But when it comes to actions that they could take individually by restricting their flights, they refuse to do so. When it comes to taking simple actions, like maintaining school buses, we see those opposite cutting them.

I commend Ms Lawder for her position here. I know she is standing in for Ms Lee. I look forward to the continued outrage from those opposite. It does not bother me, but I am sure it does bother a lot of children when this government seeks to, in many ways, hype up concern for what seems to be their own political purposes.

**MS ORR** (Yerrabi—Minister for Community Services and Facilities, Minister for Disability, Minister for Employment and Workplace Safety and Minister for Government Services and Procurement) (3.24): I am pleased to contribute to today's discussion on the importance of the ACT leading the nation on the transition to 100 per cent renewable energy sources. Members are aware of my strong passion for climate action and I am proud to stand as an elected member of ACT Labor, a party which takes seriously the responsibility of acting on climate change.

We are a small jurisdiction that punches above our weight. We know that it is thanks to all of us Canberrans who acknowledge the climate crisis that we can continue leading the nation in transitioning to a clean future. This government's strong climate agenda is based on evidence and the need for us to do what we can to protect our natural environment and the people who call our beautiful city home.

Next year we will achieve our target of 100 per cent renewable electricity. We should be proud of the fact that from next year our homes, our schools, our hospitals and our community spaces will be powered by clean, renewable electricity. Just this week we have been recognised as the first major city outside Europe that will successfully transition to 100 per cent renewables, and this is no small feat.



As elected representatives it is our sole responsibility to represent the people who put their trust in us and elected us to advocate on their behalf. I know in my electorate of Yerrabi that people want their governments, both locally and federally, to be doing everything within their power to act against the climate crisis. The ACT government has a strong set of plans and initiatives to ensure that we take responsibility for mitigating the effect of climate change and environmental destruction.

This week we have released the ACT climate change strategy that sets out ambitious and important goals for our future. We will support Canberrans to transition from using gas as an energy source to electricity. In the past we have encouraged people to make the switch from gas and heating sources like wood fires, however, it is now time for us to act on the evidence before us and move towards our more renewable energy mix.

We will plant more trees in areas that need help to reduce the urban heat island effect, including in the newer suburbs of Gungahlin, so our homes can be cooler in the summer months and our suburbs can be protected from the increasingly harsh weather conditions. We will support households to improve their energy efficiency and in turn reduce their energy bills. We will reduce greenhouse gas emissions in the ACT with our target of net zero emissions by 2045 still on track.

We will do all of this to ensure that we transition to a cleaner future, making sure that every Canberran is supported to make the change and not just those who can already afford to do so. Our government wants Canberra to remain the nation's climate change capital because it is up to us to lead the way. Unfortunately, as everyone across the ACT knows, the current federal government are doing nothing to combat the climate crisis. They have no vision, they have no climate action agenda, and they have no idea how to fix the mess they have created.

Thankfully younger generations are holding the federal government and us ACT representatives to account. Tomorrow people across the world will take part in the global climate strike. Here in Canberra we are lucky to have passionate activists fighting for real action from governments and industry. Yesterday some of us Labor and Greens members met Zoe and Amelia, two incredible young people organising within their communities to pressure us as elected representatives to make real change.

Zoe and Amelia represented the Canberra school strikers for climate action at the Legislative Assembly and presented their plans for how governments can take real action on the climate crisis. It is thanks to their commitment and passion for our future that thousands of Canberrans will take part in tomorrow's strike.

These girls are strong, they are intelligent and they are fired up because they are sick of the conservatives doing nothing. Despite members opposite believing that they are just kiddies, those of us on this side of the chamber respect them and acknowledge that they are much better leaders than some of the Liberals here and across the country.

Under this government the ACT will continue to lead the nation in transitioning to a cleaner future and will continue to support all Canberrans who want to act against the

climate crisis. I am pleased to contribute to this matter of public importance, and I hope to see all members of this place at tomorrow's strike.

**MR RATTENBURY** (Kurrajong) (3.29): I am very pleased to speak on Mr Gupta's MPI on the importance of moving to 100 per cent renewable electricity in the ACT. As members have heard me talk about before in this place, this has been a very successful policy for this territory both environmentally and economically. This stems from a decision we took back in 2010 to legislate a 40 per cent reduction in greenhouse gas emissions from the territory. In setting ourselves that ambitious goal we were necessarily forced to think about what policy measures would get us there, and as we come up to 2020 we are right on the doorstep of achieving that 100 per cent renewable electricity target and the 40 per cent reduction in greenhouse gas emissions.

Those environmental benefits have been achieved in a cost-effective way for Canberrans. When the government first modelled this proposal it suggested it would cost ACT households \$5.20 per week. The modelling has come down and our best estimate at the moment is a maximum of \$4.90. I was interested to read in yesterday's *Canberra Times* in an article by Simon Holmes a Court that he thinks the impost currently sits at less than \$1 a week largely because the level of subsidy required for renewables has plummeted in recent years and because of the careful mechanism built into the contracts for difference which means that when electricity prices are high ACT consumers are protected.

A great example of that is during a week of high temperatures in 2017 three of our large-scale solar farms in the ACT returned almost \$1 million to ACT electricity users as an offset against future energy prices. That is an example of how this has made sense environmentally and economically.

When it comes to the economic impact we also know that the contracts will lead to at least \$500 million dollars of economic investment and benefit to the ACT over a 20-year period. If anything, I think that is a conservative estimate. By the ACT becoming recognised as a hub of renewable energy excellence a range of other opportunities are arising. People are coming to work here and are seeking to partner with the ACT because of the recognition of the intellectual capability, research and innovation in the territory.

The 100 per cent target has been a very successful policy both for the ACT and for the environment. I look forward to being able to further report on it as more data becomes available. I would be pleased to provide members with insights as to the various sources of data that tell the story of the impact of the 100 per cent renewable electricity target.

I was pleased to see the report from the Australia Institute yesterday which identified the ACT as the first jurisdiction outside of Europe to achieve this goal. That was a really interesting piece of research that highlighted what can be done when you have the political will to take the bold decisions and go forth and get stuck into it.

What we have seen today during the MPI reminds me of the *Gremlins* movies of the 80s. The gremlins were cute and fluffy until you poured water on them when they frankly turned pretty feral and became very hard to handle. That is what we have just seen from the Liberal Party. The cute and fluffy Liberals have turned up to the Assembly today and have gone, “Oh! Climate change. We’re into that. We’ll take action.” They have obviously dried themselves off because Mr Coe has spent most of the week being the gremlin covered in water.

We have seen an extraordinary reaction from the Canberra Liberal Party to the latest climate action plan for the ACT. The policy the Chief Minister and I announced on Monday sets out a considered plan for the ACT to continue on its pathway to zero net emissions by 2045. We have seen this week the most extraordinary misrepresentation of that policy by the Canberra Liberals.

Mr Hanson has come in here today and said, “We support pragmatic measures, not alarmism.” Well, let’s us look at some of the alarmism that has been peddled by the Canberra Liberals this week, including by Mr Hanson in today’s debate when he said, “We don’t agree with turning off people’s gas.” I would like Mr Hanson to show me where in the strategy it says that people’s gas will be turned off.

The government has made a clear commitment that we need to phase out gas. Natural gas is a fossil fuel that is contributing to global warming. We need to move away from natural gas, but the suggestion from the Canberra Liberals that the government is actually going to turn off people’s gas is outrageous. If you want to talk about creating alarmism, let’s look at what the people across the chamber have been doing all this week, in this city.

We saw a quote from Mr Coe in the *Canberra Times* that the reasonable way to achieve any emissions reduction is not waving a big stick around and banning people from using their cars and heating their homes. Where in the strategy does the government say it is going to ban people from heating their homes? This is outrageous. This is a disgusting raising of fear in our community that has seen people contacting radio stations saying, “What am I going to do when the government comes and removes my gas heater?”

The government is not going to remove anyone’s gas heater. What we are saying to people is, “At the end of the life of your product in 20 to 25 years”—that is what happens with these pieces of machinery; they actually wear out—“make the smart choice and transition to electricity. Remove your connection fees for gas and have one single connection cost.”

We know that the price of gas has skyrocketed. It is no longer, as we have been told for the past couple of decades, a cheap source of energy. Gas is no longer the clean source it used to be. It was clean relative to black coal fired power but compared to 100 per cent renewable electricity, gas is no longer the clean fuel it was once marketed as.

Mr Coe has described the new climate strategy as a gross intervention. What is it for the Liberal Party? Are we going to deal with climate change or is dealing with climate change a gross intervention? In the laissez faire world of the Liberal Party it is a gross intervention to deal with the most significant environmental challenge facing our planet. That is what we have heard Mr Coe say this week.

Mr Coe said in what was a borderline hysterical interview that the ACT government is deliberately driving up the cost of petrol. What evidence has he got for that? This is the fearmongering and disgraceful tactics we have seen from the Canberra Liberals this week. This does not help anybody in our community move through what are challenging issues.

We have had Miss C Burch tweeting that the Chief Minister wants to ban people from using their cars on the weekends. That is not the government policy. That is not in the climate strategy. This is outrageous. It is their own social media echo chamber, and that is probably the saving grace here, but this is not government policy.

I call on the Canberra Liberals to enter into this debate with a degree of integrity. Mr Hanson has said we should not have alarmism. I completely agree with him, but let's look at who is peddling the alarmism in this city.

The climate strikers came yesterday to visit the Assembly. I thank Ms Le Couteur, Mr Gupta, Mr Pettersson, Mr Gentlemen, Ms Orr, Ms Cheyne, Ms Stephen-Smith and Ms Berry for joining me in welcoming them into the Assembly and taking the time to listen to them. There was, of course, a remarkable dearth of members from the other side of the chamber who bothered to come along and listen.

**Ms Cheyne:** How many?

**MR RATTENBURY:** I believe Mr Parton walked past—probably on his way out to get lunch—and stopped for a minute or two, so credit for that. But the rest of the Canberra Liberals were so busy apparently that they could not listen to the students who had an important point to make to the members of this Assembly. Mr Hanson was too busy back in his office thinking up mean tweets to direct at the climate strikers. Is that the best thing he has to do with his time? Surely he can find a better use of his time than dreaming up mean tweets directed at students.

We will continue to put in place sensible policies that produce an orderly transition for the ACT to being a clean, green, renewable city of the future with a striving economic sector based on the industries of the future. We will not resort to the alarmism. We will not be cowed by the outrageous tactics of the Canberra Liberals. We will continue to talk to the community about the important steps that need to be taken to address the most serious environmental issue this planet faces.

*Discussion concluded.*

## **Executive business—precedence**

*Ordered that executive business be called on.*

## **Energy Efficiency (Cost of Living) Improvement Amendment Bill 2019**

Debate resumed from 15 August 2019, on motion by **Mr Rattenbury**:

That this bill be agreed to in principle.

**MR COE** (Yerrabi—Leader of the Opposition) (3.39): The opposition will not be supporting the bill that is before us. At a time when many families are struggling, we should not be increasing the cost of electricity, increasing the cost of living in the territory, through such regulation.

The scheme put forward in this legislation effectively increases the electricity bills of every Canberran to provide a rebate to a small number of households to replace systems, appliances, items and now insulation with more energy efficient products. It is worth remembering that the government once had schemes that involved replacing dryers with new dryers, and it was not too long ago that gas was in vogue and electricity was out. This government also had schemes that were all about replacing electric heaters with instantaneous gas heaters. There are all sorts of anomalies with this scheme and with past schemes. We are very concerned about the impact that this is going to have on the cost of living in the ACT.

What is being proposed is not a full rebate; instead, it requires a co-contribution from the participant, which could still be thousands of dollars. The scheme targets priority households who are already under pressure with rates, fees, taxes and charges, all of which have been imposed by this ACT Labor government. Once again, we have a government that is treating the symptoms rather than treating the cause.

Where the scheme is unaffordable, the government will step in, apparently, and give households a loan, a loan that could further trap these households in debt. How responsible is it for us as legislators to be giving out a loan to people who are financially doing it tough? We have to ask these questions, because if we are not careful, we will end up perpetuating that difficult situation that they are in.

In effect, to participate in this scheme, a low income household will be paying thousands of dollars that they probably cannot afford on new appliances to perhaps save a few dollars, perhaps a hundred dollars, on their bills. Meanwhile, every Canberran will be paying more for their electricity. Meanwhile, every single Canberran will feel a further impact on the cost of living in the ACT, including low income earners who are supposedly the target of this scheme.

Those who are doing it toughest will end up paying twice. They will pay through the additional levy, which is embedded in their electricity bills, but they will also have to make a co-contribution, which could be a huge amount of money. Interestingly, the scheme is not for the purchase of essentials like fridges and freezers, but it includes items like televisions. I do not believe it is in line with community expectations that every household in Canberra could be paying for a government scheme to replace TVs.

This bill, by its nature, by its purpose, by its very objective, is intended to increase energy bills in the ACT. It should be called the “Energy Efficiency (Increasing the Cost of Living) Amendment Bill”. Instead, the government is going to try and use this as a way to dish out presents to certain households. In reality, it is going to increase the cost of living for all Canberrans. To that end, the opposition cannot support it.

**MS ORR** (Yerrabi—Minister for Community Services and Facilities, Minister for Disability, Minister for Employment and Workplace Safety and Minister for Government Services and Procurement) (3.44): I rise to speak in support of the Energy Efficiency (Cost of Living) Improvement Amendment Bill 2019 and highlight the positive impact it will have on our environment and the lives of Canberrans.

Improving the energy efficiency of Canberra homes and buildings is an important part of the ACT’s transition to a cleaner economy and future. I have previously spoken in this place about improving energy efficiency in the ACT. I am pleased that this bill will respond to the calls I have made to ensure that the EEIS improves the lives of all Canberrans.

This bill will extend the operation of the energy efficiency improvement scheme until 2030, which will see additional annual energy efficiency compliance periods conducted across the city. By extending the operation of the EEIS, we can be confident that more Canberra homes will be able to reduce their energy usage and contribute to our efforts in reducing our impact on the environment.

In taking action on climate change and creating a more environmentally sustainable Canberra, we must ensure that the entire community is involved, not just those who can afford to act on their own. I strongly believe that as a government we must advocate for environmentalism for everyone. Through this bill, we are ensuring that low income households across the ACT will benefit from the energy efficiency improvement scheme.

We know that low income households are not easily able to make improvements to their own homes, and rising energy bills only make it harder to get by. By improving energy efficiency—whether it be draught-proofing, replacing old heating and cooling systems or upgrading existing appliances—the household budget will see both short-term and long-term benefits through the reduction of bills and maintenance costs.

This bill will increase the priority household target to 30 per cent, to ensure that households who need support to become more energy efficient receive the resources they need. These priority households will be supported in addition to the government’s investment in improving the energy efficiency of the ACT’s public housing stock.

The government’s ACT housing strategy delivered by Minister Berry clearly outlines our commitment to providing equitable housing options for Canberrans. Objective 1F, which aims to encourage well-designed, environmentally sustainable and accessible housing, will particularly support this government’s cost of living and energy efficiency improvements initiative.

Overall, we are acting to ensure that households across Canberra are more energy efficient and we are supporting our entire community to be involved in our transition to a cleaner future. Passage of this bill will build on top of our government's strong record of taking real action on climate change and supporting Canberrans in reducing cost of living pressures. Canberrans can trust that under our government we will transition to a cleaner future and deliver more equitable outcomes for every single Canberran. I commend the bill to the Assembly.

**MR GENTLEMAN** (Brindabella—Manager of Government Business, Minister for Advanced Technology and Space Industries, Minister for the Environment and Heritage, Minister for Planning and Land Management and Minister for Police and Emergency Services) (3.47): How disappointing this has been. We saw the crocodile tears from Mr Hanson and Ms Lawder in the MPI debate. Mr Coe had a chance in this debate. He had the chance to speak positively about climate action and to show that he gets it and he listens to the experts. Instead, he proved my remarks in the MPI debate. It is clear from Mr Coe's contribution that he will undo this government's renewable energy and climate change policies.

Mr Coe uses words like "affordability" and "reliability" when talking about renewable energy. We have heard these words before. They are from Mr Tony Abbott's playbook, one that was used to attack renewable energy. Mr Coe had the chance in this bill to undo his alarmist stories about this government's climate change strategy, and he did not. The Canberra Liberals do not accept the science of climate change or the need to act. In this particular bill, we hear from the Canberra Liberals that they will not support needy households that need some assistance.

It is clear that those opposite are inexperienced and unfit to lead. The choice could not be more clear: a Labor government that is leading the way or an inexperienced Liberal government that does not believe in renewable energy and does not listen to experts when it comes to climate science.

**MR RATTENBURY** (Kurrajong—Minister for Climate Change and Sustainability, Minister for Corrections and Justice Health, Minister for Justice, Consumer Affairs and Road Safety and Minister for Mental Health) (3.49), in reply: I am pleased to be sponsoring this bill through the Assembly because this extension will clearly show the government's commitment and capacity to effectively deliver on the actions included in our new climate strategy to deliver effective policies—policies that have won awards and policies that make a real difference for Canberra's households. This scheme is a key delivery mechanism for the climate change strategy. The strategy sets out the next phase of the ACT's response to climate change, taking the steps to achieve a resilient, net zero emissions Canberra by 2045.

Climate change is a major challenge and we understand the gravity of the issues we face and the need for urgent action. But we also see opportunities for our region, and the ACT is well placed to take advantage of these in becoming an international hub for climate change innovation and solutions. The climate change strategy has been developed in coordination with the planning, transport and housing strategies, which together provide an integrated approach to building a smart, prosperous and highly liveable, net zero emissions city.

This act that we are talking about today provides for a market-based scheme that places an obligation on electricity retailers in the ACT to achieve energy savings. The objects of the act are to encourage the efficient use of energy, reduce greenhouse gas emissions associated with energy use in the territory, reduce energy use and costs and in particular assist low income households suffering from utility cost stress. The scheme works by establishing a territory-wide energy savings target and obliging individual electricity suppliers to deliver savings to achieve the target.

Large tier 1 retailers are required to achieve energy savings by undertaking eligible activities in Canberra households and businesses. ActewAGL is currently the only tier 1 retailer and to date has delivered nearly all the EEIS energy and abatement savings. Smaller tier 2 retailers can opt to pay an energy savings contribution in lieu of delivering activities. The act requires that these contributions be used to support activities consistent with the objects of the act. About 15 tier 2 retailers currently operate in the ACT, and their energy savings contributions have funded activities such as scheme administration, relevant Actsmart programs and the solar flow income initiative.

The scheme has proven to be highly effective in reducing Canberra's emissions. Over 1.3 million energy saving items have been installed under the scheme, to achieve more than 6.5 million gigajoules of lifetime energy savings and 500,000 tonnes CO<sub>2</sub> equivalent of greenhouse gas emissions. This is equivalent to taking approximately 165,000 cars off Canberra roads for a year, to give you a sense of the scale of impact that the scheme has had.

An important point to discuss today—and I think it is particularly relevant in light of the comments from Mr Coe—is that the scheme supports households and small to medium businesses to reduce bills. To date, the scheme has delivered about \$400 million in lifetime energy bill savings to around 74,000 households and businesses. Importantly, close to 19,000 priority low income households have received EEIS savings. Savings have also been delivered in about 16,000 rental properties—16,000 renters who really suffer from that classic split incentive problem have benefited from this scheme—and through this scheme we have managed to overcome that issue that has plagued rental properties in this city and other places for decades.

I comment in particular on the scheme's contribution to a just transition to net zero emissions. The benefits that the scheme delivers to low income households are largely achieved through its priority household target. This target ensures that a proportion of scheme savings is delivered in low income and vulnerable households which pay a high proportion of their income on energy and are least able to make improvements and invest in efficient items without assistance. The priority household target is expressed as a percentage of the tier 1 retailer's energy savings obligation.

I review the scheme's delivery each year, aiming to set the priority household target at an optimal level that provides significant assistance to low income households while maintaining the scheme's economic efficiency. From 2015 until this year the previous climate change minister and I set the priority household target at 20 per cent, but



I have been able to increase that target to 30 per cent for 2020 as a result of several related initiatives. In particular, the government has allocated more than \$7 million to assist public housing properties to upgrade to more efficient heating and hot-water systems. The government has also expanded the scheme's original categories of priority households so that more low income households are eligible for the greater discounts they receive.

I must say that those programs in public housing are particularly important. I have been to some of the households who have benefited from these upgrades. To meet the householders who say, "I can't believe what a difference it makes to have this new and improved device or a more modern device installed in my home, and I have noticed the difference in my energy bills," is really inspiring. It tells me that we are getting these programs right, that people who are struggling to meet their energy needs are really benefiting personally and directly from these programs. It is great to have those moments in this job, which can be a tough job at times, and to get out and meet the people who really benefit from these schemes that we put in place.

Another point in support of the bill is the clear evidence that the scheme is achieving health and wellbeing benefits across Canberra. The scheme's 2018 compliance period was the first year in which space heating and cooling activities delivered a large proportion of scheme savings. To take account of this development, and recognising that efficient space heating and cooling can improve comfort as well as costs, new survey questions were included, aiming to learn about any health and wellbeing impacts.

The representative sample of scheme participants who took part in the phone survey was enthusiastic about the impact of their new appliances in keeping their homes comfortable in summer and winter. A full 76 per cent believe that new equipment has made a substantial impact on comfort at home.

Scheme participants were also impressed with the impact of new appliances on improved physical or mental health, with 49 per cent saying that the new appliances had made a substantial improvement, and one out of five believing it had made a huge difference. Those who had experienced health benefits were asked to explain them. While some were simply happy to be warmer, for others the installation had impacted greatly on their physical and mental health. There is also evidence that the scheme's space heating and cooling activities have reduced absenteeism, with 17 per cent of respondents feeling that their households were experiencing fewer sick days.

Importantly, these health and wellbeing outcomes are being experienced by those most in need of assistance as well as those more able to pay their heating bills. Of those reporting improvements, 18 per cent were public housing tenants and 37 per cent were other low income priority households.

This bill extends a highly cost-effective scheme which delivers a range of economic benefits to the territory. Electricity retailers pass the scheme costs through to ACT electricity customers. An independent review of the scheme completed in 2018 reported average household electricity bill costs, due to the scheme, of 58c per week over the life of the scheme, balanced against savings of \$2.60 achieved

on average across all Canberra households. Participating households are making average weekly savings of \$5.78.

As I said when I presented the bill, small and medium businesses are estimated to save \$154 million and households are expected to save more than \$210 million over the lifetime of products installed. The independent review of the scheme found the scheme had been operating with a benefit to cost ratio of four to one, making it extremely cost effective. Indeed, rather than imposing a cost on carbon savings, this scheme has been delivering an economic benefit of lifetime savings to the ACT economy valued at \$190 per tonne of greenhouse gas emissions that are avoided.

Modelling has shown that a balanced approach in setting the scheme metrics to optimise economic and social equity and environmental outcomes will continue to deliver strong economy-wide benefits over a 10-year extension. The net present value of benefits to the ACT economy has been modelled at \$15.4 million for an extension which retains the current energy savings target and pass-through costs to householders and businesses. At that level, householders and businesses would not see any increase in energy costs as a result of this bill—not see any increase in their energy costs as a result of this bill.

I am happy to provide a further briefing for the Canberra Liberals after the passage of this bill. The speech we heard today was full of opinions but not a lot of evidence. I am very happy, and I am sure my officials in the Environment, Planning and Sustainable Development Directorate would be happy, to go through these details for members of the opposition if they are interested. The government is continuing the modelling work so that an initial energy savings target may be set at an optimal level following legislation of the scheme extension.

While on the topic of cost-effectiveness, it is worth reminding the Assembly that this scheme is also helping to develop sustainability industries in the territory. Before an electricity retailer or authorised installer can undertake eligible activities, they must complete induction training on the scheme and the individual activities they will be undertaking. Since the scheme began in 2013, 93 induction training sessions have been held, attended by more than 550 installers, most of them from local companies.

Another important point is how this bill relates to the ACT's successful achievement of the 100 per cent renewable electricity target by 2020. In short, the bill both responds to and supports the target. The bill responds to the target by redefining the energy savings obligation as an energy metric measured in megawatt hours of electricity saved instead of tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent. The use of the electricity metric of megawatt hours is a convenience to support scheme delivery by electricity retailers. Where the scheme delivers gas or other energy savings which are more commonly measured in joules, these will be converted to megawatt hours for target setting and reporting purposes.

This change was recommended by the independent review and reinforced by modelling which showed that this approach will best serve the scheme's cost-effectiveness in the context of 100 per cent renewable electricity. The energy metric will unlock new benefits to the ACT economy by supporting upgrades to

electrical equipment which would not receive any credit if the scheme retained its emissions metric after the ACT transitions to zero emissions electricity.

Modelling confirms that there are substantial untapped opportunities for energy savings in the ACT, through both electrical upgrades and the transition of heating systems off gas. The scheme's new energy metric will be agnostic to the source of energy and will support all types of efficient upgrades. When I introduced the bill, I referred to the new insulation activities that have recently been introduced to the scheme. Modelling shows that these new eligible scheme activities will be cost effective using the new energy metric, along with upgrades to both electric and gas heating systems, refrigerators, pool pumps, water heating air compressors and more. I do note that refrigerators were in that list.

When this scheme delivers upgrades from gas heating systems to efficient electric alternatives, it directly reduces Canberra's greenhouse gas emissions. When it replaces old inefficient electrical equipment with efficient upgrades, it supports the 100 per cent renewable electricity target post 2020. In doing so, this bill supports the recent amendments to the Climate Change and Greenhouse Gas Reduction (Renewable Electricity Target) Act, which has locked in our renewable electricity targets for the long term.

The bill also expands the scheme to potentially include transport activities. This change has strategic benefits, since 100 per cent renewable electricity means that transport will account for 62 per cent of emissions in the ACT from 2021. As I have spoken about this week, this presents new challenges. While the scheme cannot deliver savings from transport until activities are both developed and then picked up by electricity retailers, there is considerable interest in these developments. Work is already underway to investigate options for energy efficiency rebates on electric vehicles and other transport options.

There are a number of measures in this bill that produce administrative streamlining. That is, of course, the important part of the scheme. I thank officials for their work on those measures.

Before closing, I can confirm to the Assembly that thorough consultation and engagement processes have been completed throughout all stages of developing the bill. The bill was informed by a public workshop, in-depth interviews, focus groups and other workshops, as well as post-implementation surveys incorporating feedback from over 2,000 scheme participants. Further consultation and another stakeholder forum informed the development of the bill. The consultation has confirmed the benefits associated with the scheme and the widespread support for its continuation as provided by this bill.

In concluding, I simply want to reflect on some of the figures that have been independently put together as to the effects of this bill. The energy efficiency saving scheme will have saved an estimated 739,000 tonnes of carbon dioxide by 2020. Over the lifetime of products installed, households are expected to save more than \$210 million, with an average weekly saving of \$5.78. Businesses are estimated to save \$160 million, with average weekly savings of \$96. More than 19,000 low income

households are expected to save nearly \$70 million off their energy bills over the lifetime of the items installed under the EEIS. We are increasing the priority household target. These figures highlight the fact that Mr Coe's speech today was simply not accurate. I am disappointed. I am prepared to share all of this information in great detail with our colleagues across the chamber to show them that these sorts of schemes make a real impact for people in our community. I commend the bill to the Assembly.

Question put:

That this bill be agreed to in principle.

The Assembly voted—

Ayes 11

Noes 8

Ms J Burch	Ms Orr	Miss C Burch	Mr Parton
Ms Cheyne	Mr Pettersson	Mr Coe	Mr Wall
Ms Cody	Mr Ramsay	Mrs Dunne	
Mr Gentleman	Mr Rattenbury	Mr Hanson	
Mr Gupta	Ms Stephen-Smith	Mrs Jones	
Ms Le Couteur		Ms Lawder	

Question resolved in the affirmative.

Bill agreed to in principle.

### Detail stage

Bill, by leave, taken as a whole.

**MR RATTENBURY** (Kurrajong—Minister for Climate Change and Sustainability, Minister for Corrections and Justice Health, Minister for Justice, Consumer Affairs and Road Safety and Minister for Mental Health) (4.08): Pursuant to standing order 182A(b), I seek leave to move an amendment to this bill which is minor and technical in nature.

Leave granted.

**MR RATTENBURY:** I move amendment No 1 circulated in my name and table a supplementary explanatory statement [*see schedule 1 at page 3680*]. This is a very minor technical amendment that is really about the detail. This clause substitutes clause 4(1) of the bill to clarify the instruments that will be repealed by the clause. Clause 4(1) will now provide that the current instruments, which were notified on 9 and 12 August 2019, will be repealed when clause 4(1) commences by way of ministerial notice. This is a rather technical tidy-up but an important one for the effectiveness of the scheme.

Amendment agreed to.

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

Bill, as amended, agreed to.

## Adjournment

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

That the Assembly do now adjourn.

## Jeannie (Fay) Skyring OAM—tribute

**MR RAMSAY** (Ginninderra—Attorney-General, Minister for the Arts, Creative Industries and Cultural Events, Minister for Building Quality Improvement, Minister for Business and Regulatory Services and Minister for Seniors and Veterans) (4.09): I rise this afternoon to celebrate the immense contribution that Fay Skyring made to the arts and crafts community of our city and our nation.

Fay died on 11 August this year at the age of 87, after a long and fruitful life of creativity. I extend my sympathy to Fay's husband, Graham, and to her daughters, Fiona, Sally and Melissa, during this difficult and sad time. I also acknowledge Graham and a number of other family members, friends and colleagues who have joined us in the Assembly today.

Recently I was privilege to attend a memorial service for Fay at CMAG, and I was able to hear many tributes to her, including from Graham, whose love for Fay and her achievements was so evident in his moving words, which remembered Fay as a loving wife and mother, a great photographer and colourist and a weaver of very significant note.

After Fay moved to Canberra with her family in the 1970s, she was introduced to weaving. She was taught by Pam McDougall, one of the early members of the Canberra Spinners and Weavers, and became a member of the group herself, exhibiting and attending classes and workshops. Fay was awarded a grant by the National Capital Development Commission to study textiles in Japan, and returned eager to establish a weaving workshop where the Canberra community could learn this craft.

She was a generous mentor and a wonderful teacher. Fay's students have spoken of her meticulous attention to detail, and her great patience and friendship while they were learning the complicated skill of weaving at the Skye Workshop, when she established the space in 1985 at Ainslie Village, funded by a commonwealth employment program grant. Several of her students went on to develop careers in textiles.

Fay was an active member of Craft ACT and she participated in a key exhibition of theirs, *Office Environment*, which aimed to showcase local craftspeople during the planning for Australian Parliament House. Fay's skill as a weaver caught the eye of

the APH architect, Romaldo Giurgola, and its arts and crafts program coordinator, Pamille Berg, who subsequently commissioned Fay to produce custom handwoven fabrics for the suites of the Prime Minister, the Leader of the Opposition and the Speaker.

As Meredith Hinchliffe, who is also with us in the gallery this evening, has observed:

The project required imagination and expertise with the colour and design aspects, experimentation and determination to refine the technique, and the capacity to complete the job under pressure.

Fay was subsequently commissioned to reproduce the fabric three times for the re-upholstery of furniture pieces at Parliament House. The work was recorded in a 2013 documentary called *The Warp and the Weft*, a weaving story of national significance produced by Richard Snashall and commissioned by CMAG. CMAG also cares for upholstery fabric samples for Parliament House created by Fay Skyring and Di Lansdown, which they generously donated to the gallery. These featured in last year's excellent CMAG exhibition *Crafting the house on the hill: art, design and the building of Australian Parliament House*.

In 2017 Fay was awarded the Medal of the Order of Australia—a fitting recognition of her service to the creative arts and to the community of Canberra. In closing, I would like to acknowledge and remember Fay Skyring for her generous contribution to our arts community and the creative legacy that she leaves for Canberra and far beyond.

## Kashmir

**MS LE COUTEUR** (Murrumbidgee) (4.14): I rise this afternoon to speak on an international issue of grave concern—that is, the situation in Kashmir. Last week a prominent member of Canberra's Islamic community, Mohammad Ali, came to speak with me, along with his compatriot Iqbal Khan. Both gentlemen are longstanding Canberrans and have been very active in contributing to multiculturalism in our community, and I thank them for their contributions.

Mr Ali and Mr Khan told me about some of the complexities in the region of Jammu and Kashmir. There is a long history of territorial dispute and conflict between India and Pakistan. Sadly, we are all too aware of the political unrest and grievances associated with this circumstance. Adding to this burden is the religious divide in what is a predominantly Muslim state—India being, of course, a majority Hindu country.

The United Nations has been actively involved over a number of years in the dispute between India and Pakistan over Kashmir. The UN Security Council has passed a resolution stating that the people of Jammu and Kashmir should be able to decide their own fate with free will in a UN-organised plebiscite. This resolution was passed very shortly after partition and India's and Pakistan's independence.

The UN, as well, has provided many reports and recommendations regarding human rights abuses and concerns in that part of the world. Over the past year the violence in Kashmir appears to have increased, with a July 2019 UN report stating that 160 civilians were killed in 2018 alone. Unfortunately, the UN does not have any mechanism—the world does not have any mechanism—for countries to be held accountable for the atrocities talked about and documented in UN reports like this.

Possibly as a result of that report, in August this year India stripped Jammu and Kashmir of its semi-autonomy and statehood. At the same time, thousands—possibly hundreds of thousands—of additional Indian troops were sent to the Kashmir Valley and a curfew was imposed. Most communications with Kashmir have been stopped. The curfew and the communications blackout have meant it is entirely unclear if inhabitants of the region have access to food, health services or any of their basic needs. Reports claim that some 3,000 people, including politicians, businesspeople, activists, aid workers and journalists have been detained trying to enter the region. It appears to be completely blockaded and it is unknown how many people internally have been imprisoned or worse.

The fear of violence is so severe that parents are afraid to send their children to school. Clearly there appears to be no access to justice. There is the reality—not the fear—that, without any information from Kashmir, people outside are unable to know if their families and loved ones are safe or what is happening to them.

We know that, typically, in situations like this there is indiscriminate killing, arbitrary detentions, rape, torture and oppression. I know that people in Canberra—and I am sure in the rest of Australia and around the world—with family and friends in Kashmir are thinking along these lines. These actions have an impact on people around us in Canberra. We have a community of Kashmiris here in Canberra who are very anxious and depressed because they are unable to ascertain any reliable information about their family and friends, and they certainly cannot talk to them.

This is a humanitarian issue as well as a political and religious issue. But it is a humanitarian issue first of all, and the Canberra members of the Kashmir community would like Canberra—and, of course, the rest of the world—to be aware of the situation. As I have said before in this place, we are all human, we are all equal and we need to treat each other as brothers and sisters, and with compassion. Sadly, around the world, this simple act of kindness does not always occur. As the Indian politician—and possibly saint—Mahatma Gandhi said, “Live simply so that others may simply live.” This is a good maxim for all of us, for all our lives.

### **Kurrajong electorate—Dickson**

**MS STEPHEN-SMITH** (Kurrajong—Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs, Minister for Children, Youth and Families, Minister for Health and Minister for Urban Renewal) (4.19): I rise to speak briefly about recent activity in Dickson, in my electorate of Kurrajong. Dickson is an important hub, not just for the inner north but for all of Canberra. Dickson’s unique shops, quality of services and jobs draw people from across Canberra. It is great to see this part of the city growing and thriving.

Dickson pool is a very important part of the area and a place where I spent many happy days in summer in my childhood and younger years. Last week I was very pleased to announce that the Dickson pool forecourt will get a refresh for the upcoming summer. Visitors to Dickson pool will soon enjoy an exciting new outdoor space with more shade, trees, soft surfaces, bike parking, seating and public art by an artist from nearby ANCA Gallery.

During the community engagement on section 72 Dickson we heard that one of the community's top priorities for section 72 was upgrades to the Dickson pool forecourt. These improvements will initially be temporary so that we can talk to pool users in the wider inner north community to find out what is working, how people use the space and what could be improved. Following this feedback the government will work with the community to develop a detailed design for permanent works.

Last week I also had the pleasure of joining Minister Berry at section 72 for the announcement of the cohort and concept designs for Common Ground Dickson. Common Ground, an ACT Labor election commitment, will provide long-term housing for people facing chronic homelessness, focusing on supporting women and children, families and single parents and older women—growing cohorts in need of assistance. Through sensitive design, which was shaped by previous section 72 consultations, Common Ground Dickson will provide four new social and affordable homes with a mix of one, two and three-bedroom units to support the needs of a mix of tenants. In time, the tenants will be part of our inner north community, close to facilities, services and public transport at the Dickson group centre.

Common Ground will also deliver more green space, trees, play spaces and an attractive and safe environment for pedestrians and cyclists. I encourage residents of the inner north to go to the ACT government's your say website to learn more about Common Ground Dickson and see the designs. I believe Common Ground Dickson will be something all residents in the inner north can be proud of, and I look forward to following the progress of this important project.

On the other side of Cowper Street, the City Renewal Authority is exploring ways to reinvigorate the Dickson group centre while retaining the special qualities that make Dickson one of Canberra's most distinctive precincts. Following the release of the Dickson Place plan, the City Renewal Authority is rolling out its Woolley Street project, which is a series of ideas to improve access, amenity and public use along one of Canberra's most unique streets.

Visitors to Woolley Street will see a temporary gate among other installations to celebrate everything that is special and quirky about Dickson. With artwork by local Canberra artist Jodie Cunningham, the gate is a demonstration of the vibrancy of Dickson and its people. The Woolley Street gate is already a highlight on social media, and I am sure many Canberrans will enjoy it as we spend more time outdoors in the warmer months.

Finally, I acknowledge the hard work of Jason Mann and the My Dickson Town team. The town team is made up of locals and business owners with strong connections to



Dickson and it helps to organise improvements in the group centre and stage events and activations. The Dickson First Friday Community Celebration Markets have been a great drawcard to the group centre, and I look forward to seeing how these grow and evolve into the future. Whether it is proximity to light rail, great schools and unique shops and businesses, Dickson's future is bright. The addition of Common Ground Dickson and the improved pool forecourt will only make this important pocket of Canberra and Kurrajong even better.

With a minute to go, I want to say a few brief words about the apparent proposal to remake the film *The Princess Bride*. Can I just say no, just no. Do not do it. It will end in tears. A perfect film is a rare thing. Leave it there.

**MADAM DEPUTY SPEAKER:** I gather that you are considering, Ms Stephen-Smith, that the whole thing is inconceivable.

Question resolved in the affirmative.

**The Assembly adjourned at 4.24 pm until Tuesday, 24 September 2019, at 10 am.**

## Schedule of amendments

### Schedule 1

#### Energy Efficiency (Cost of Living) Improvement Amendment Bill 2019

Amendment moved by the Minister for Climate Change and Sustainability

1

Clause 4 (1)

Page 3, line 5—

*omit clause 4 (1), substitute*

(1) The following legislation is repealed:

- *Energy Efficiency (Cost of Living) Improvement (Eligible Activities) Code of Practice 2019* (DI2019-194)
  - *Energy Efficiency (Cost of Living) Improvement (Eligible Activities) Determination 2019* (NI2019-501)
  - *Energy Efficiency (Cost of Living) Improvement (Record Keeping and Reporting) Code of Practice 2019* (DI2019-195).
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## Answers to questions

### Hospitals—fracture clinics (Question No 2577)

**Mrs Dunne** asked the Minister for Health, upon notice, on 2 August 2019:

- (1) For each of Canberra's public hospitals, how many fracture clinics are held each week.
- (2) For each of Canberra's public hospitals, on average, how many (a) adult and (b) paediatric, patients attend the fracture clinics each week.
- (3) For each of Canberra's public hospitals, is there a separate fracture clinic for paediatric patients; if not, (a) why, (b) how are the needs of paediatric fracture patients met and (c) to what extent are adult patients separated from paediatric patients.
- (4) For each of Canberra's public hospitals, has there, at any time in the past, been a separate paediatric fracture clinic; if yes (a) when did it start, (b) when did it close, (c) what metrics were used to determine whether it should close and (d) what were the bases for the metrics used.

**Ms Stephen-Smith:** The answer to the member's question is as follows:

- (1) Fracture clinics are only held at Canberra Hospital. Clinics operate one full day a week from the paediatric outpatient department, running three rooms. In the adult outpatient clinic, fracture clinics operate three half days each week, with an additional two half days each month. The adult clinic runs up to 10 rooms per session.
- (2) On average, there are 900 appointments per month in the adult clinics and 300 appointments in the paediatric clinic per month.
- (3) The paediatric fracture clinic is held once per week. Any paediatric patient needing to be seen in the intervening time will be seen in the adult clinic. Additional paediatric clinics have been funded in the 2019-20 budget and recruitment has commenced for the staff for these additional clinics.
- (4) The paediatric clinic commenced in November 2017 and has operated weekly since that time.

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### ACT Health—SPIRE project (Question No 2578)

**Mrs Dunne** asked the Minister for Health, upon notice, on 2 August 2019:

- (1) What are the workforce strategies for the (a) Surgical Procedures, Interventional Radiology and Emergency (SPIRE) building and (b) extensions to the Centenary Hospital for Women and Children (CHWC).
- (2) What are the strategies to transition existing staff to their new facilities.
- (3) What are the strategies to transition (a) existing and (b) incoming patients and presentations to the new facilities.

- (4) What were the workforce strategies for the University of Canberra Public Hospital (UCPH) and (a) did they work and (b) by what measure.
- (5) What was learned from the UCPH experience and to what extent has this learning informed the workforce strategies for the new SPIRE and CHWC facilities.

**Ms Stephen-Smith:** The answer to the member's question is as follows:

- (1) Workforce strategies for the Surgical Procedures, Interventional Radiology and Emergency (SPIRE) building and extensions to the Centenary Hospital for Women and Children (CHWC) will be developed in consultation with relevant stakeholders comprising staff, their representatives and consumer groups. Project funding has been allocated for workforce planning to ensure appropriate staffing needs can be met prior to commissioning.
  - (2) Strategies will be developed in consultation with relevant stakeholders comprising staff, their representatives and consumer groups to align with the project construction program. A Commissioning team is yet to be established for these projects who will identify workforce strategies to meet the construction commissioning timeframe.
  - (3) Refer to the response to question 2 above.
  - (4) A number of workforce strategies were used to support the successful opening of University of Canberra Hospital (UCH), including:
    - the development of an appropriate workforce profile to support the UCH's model of care and model of service;
    - The recruitment to positions at UCH occurred in three ways including:
      - 1) The direct transfer of staff that were in services transferring in their entirety to UCH;
      - 2) Where there were more staff in areas than positions available, positions were advertised and recruited to internally; and
      - 3) Where there were additional positions that could not be recruited to internally, these were advertised externally.
    - establishment of a Joint Consultative Committee (JCC) to consult with staff and their representatives on the proposed staffing profile and recruitment processes to support the establishment of UCH;
    - ensuring targeted recruitment occurred in a timely manner; and
    - participation of staff in a range of education and engagement activities including 'Change Management' training for Managers; workshops to develop UCH's Cultural Charter.
- 4(a) Yes.
- 4(b) Overall the strategies were highly successful as measured by the successful delivery of health services from the opening date of UCH. There was also agreement with members of the Joint Consultative Committee (JCC), including Unions, to reduce the frequency meetings given there were minimal issues being reported. There were high levels of staff engagement and positive feedback from staff in the development of the UCH Culture Charter.

- (5) A key lesson was the value of commencing workforce planning early in the project in consultation with relevant stakeholders. Workforce strategies for the new SPIRE building and extensions to CHWC will commence in accordance with the relevant project delivery program.
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**Light rail—stage 2  
(Question No 2579)**

**Ms Lawder** asked the Minister for Transport and City Services, upon notice, on 2 August 2019 (*redirected to the Minister for Transport*):

- (1) What are the locations of golden sun moth habitats along the indicative Light Rail Stage 2 route.
- (2) How will the golden sun moths be threatened by construction and operation of Light Rail Stage 2.
- (3) What will be done to ensure the protection of these habitats during (a) construction and (b) operation, of Light Rail Stage 2.
- (4) What is the anticipated cost of these protection measures.
- (5) If these habitats cannot be protected during construction and operation of light rail, what will the Government do to ensure the population levels of this endangered moth do not decrease.
- (6) Can the Minister provide a copy of the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation referral documents.

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

- (1)- (3) and (5) – (6) This information is provided in the documentation for the two referrals under the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999*. This information is publicly available through the Australian Government Department of Environment and Energy online at <http://epbnotices.environment.gov.au/referralslist/>
  - (4) As the protection measures are not yet determined, a cost for these measures is not available. As part of their determination process, the Commonwealth Department of Environment and Energy is expected to define necessary protection measures and further measures would be determined through ongoing design of the project.
- 

**Health—hydrotherapy  
(Question No 2581)**

**Mrs Dunne** asked the Minister for Health, upon notice, on 2 August 2019 (*redirected to the Minister for Education and Early Childhood Development*):

- (1) What are the specifications of each of the hydrotherapy pools at (a) Malkara Special School, (b) Black Mountain Special School, (c) Turner School and (d) Cranleigh

School, including, but not limited to (i) length, (ii) width, (iii) depth, (iv) water chemistry, (v) water temperature, (vi) pool access/egress, (vii) pool equipment, (viii) changing and bathroom facilities and (ix) any other relevant specifications.

- (2) Have any impediments to the use of these pools by third party users, such as Arthritis ACT, been identified; if yes, what are they.

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

- 1) The specifications of each of the hydrotherapy pools are listed below:

a. Malkara Special School

- (i) Length - 14m, (ii) width - 4m, (iii) depth - 0.95m to 1.45m, (iv) water chemistry - calcium hypochlorite and Sodium Bisulphate dosing system, (v) water temperature - 32.9 degrees C, (vi) pool access/egress via ramp or steps, (vii) pool equipment includes a 200kg-rated hoist and rail connecting the change room with the pool, (viii) changing and bathroom facilities available and (ix) any other relevant specifications - parking located approximately 70m from facility.

b. Black Mountain Special School

- (i) Length - 8m, (ii) width - 6m, (iii) depth - 0.85m to 1.5m, (iv) water chemistry - chlorine and sulphuric acid dosing system, (v) water temperature - 32 degrees C, (vi) pool access/egress via ramp or steps, (vii) pool equipment includes a 200kg-rated hoist at the pool's edge, (viii) changing and bathroom facilities available and (ix) any other relevant specifications - parking available within 50m, however access is via steep path.

c. Turner School

- (i) Length - 9.2m, (ii) width - 4.55m, (iii) depth - 0.65m to 1.2m, (iv) water chemistry- chlorine and acid dosing system, (v) water temperature - 32-34 degrees C, (vi) pool access/egress via ramp or steps, (vii) pool equipment includes a 150kg-rated hoist at the pool's edge, (viii) changing and bathroom facilities available and (ix) any other relevant specifications - parking available within 40m.

d. Cranleigh School

- (i) Length - 11.9m, (ii) width - 4.3m, (iii) depth - 0.8m to 1.15m, (iv) water chemistry- chlorine and acid dosing system, (v) water temperature - 35 degrees C, (vi) pool access/egress via ramp or stairs, (vii) pool equipment, there is no specialised equipment available, (viii) changing and bathroom facilities available and (ix) any other relevant specifications - parking available within 30 metres.

- 2) These facilities are generally available to other users outside of school hours and terms. Additional access within school hours is dependent on the hydrotherapy treatment needs of the current student cohort and can be negotiated with the individual schools. Due to the relatively shallow pool depths, these facilities may not be ideal for upper body treatments.

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**Health—vaccines  
(Question No 2582)**

**Mrs Dunne** asked the Minister for Health, upon notice, on 2 August 2019:

- (1) In relation to the answers provided to question on notice No E19-340, for each year (a) 2017-18 and (b) 2018-19, how many (i) urgent orders for vaccines were made, (ii) were delivered on the same day, (iii) were delivered in two-three days, (iv) were delivered in four-seven days and (v) were delivered in more than seven days.
- (2) On what basis is it determined that a one-week turnaround for delivery of urgent vaccine orders is acceptable.
- (3) What are the potential consequences for patients when delivery of an urgent order takes one week.
- (4) What is being done to reduce the turnaround delivery time for urgent orders.
- (5) For each year (a) 2017-18 and (b) 2018-19, (i) how many cold chain breaches were identified on delivery of vaccines, (ii) what were the locations of the breaches, (iii) what was done to rectify the breaches and (iv) what measures were put in place to prevent/minimise future breaches at those locations.
- (6) For each year (a) 2017-18 and (b) 2018-19, (i) how many instances of incorrect storage of vaccines were identified on delivery, (ii) what were the locations and (iii) what measures were put in place to improve storage practices at the locations.
- (7) For each year (a) 2017-18 and (b) 2018-19, (i) how many vaccines that were returned, either from delivery or storage, were destroyed, (ii) what was the cost of the destroyed vaccines and (iii) what did it cost to destroy them.

**Ms Stephen-Smith:** The answer to the member's question is as follows:

- (1) (i)
  - (a) 2017-18 – 114
  - (b) 2018-19 – 172

The ACT Health Directorate Vaccine Management Unit (VMU) has, in recent years, implemented the Vaccine Inventory Management System (VIMS) database. Data provided above includes orders recorded as urgent in VIMS.

- (ii–v) Currently, data is not available on delivery turnaround times. VMU is exploring with the VIMS software vendor the feasibility of expanding reporting capability to capture delivery turnaround times.

- (2) The VMU, comprising four staff, routinely delivers vaccines to over 200 immunisation providers in the ACT. Each provider has a scheduled monthly delivery date, except for some providers who regularly use large numbers of vaccine, including hospitals and larger general practices; these providers receive scheduled deliveries on a fortnightly basis.

Regular correspondence is sent from VMU to all immunisation providers with updates on demand for vaccines; education on monitoring vaccine supplies in preparation for scheduled vaccine clinics; and advice on the need for appropriately sized fridges to store required stock to effectively meet demand at individual practices.

All correspondence includes advice that urgent deliveries may take up to a week to receive from date of receipt. In addition to regular deliveries, urgent delivery days are scheduled twice a week based on location:

- Monday and Wednesday – Southside
- Tuesday and Thursday – Northside

- (3) As there may be several reasons that an immunisation provider does not have adequate stocks of influenza vaccine in their fridge to meet demand, it is difficult to ascertain the consequences of an urgent delivery taking one week. As discussed above, to alleviate the risk of delay in receiving vaccines, VMU communicates regularly with immunisation providers to appropriately manage vaccine stock and ensure adequate supply of vaccine in preparation for immunisation clinics. Ordering and receiving of stock for scheduled immunisation clinics should be planned well in advance.
- (4) VMU employs two additional temporary staff for six months each year to assist in managing vaccine demand during the height of the influenza vaccination campaign. As discussed above, in order to meet demand, VMU schedule urgent deliveries twice a week to Southside and Northside providers. This urgent delivery schedule is in addition to daily deliveries by two staff to an average of 5-6 providers. VMU currently have four permanent staff managing this workload. Data available from VIMS is used to predict future stock needs for a provider, reliant on fridges being adequate in size to safely hold larger volumes of stock.
- (5) (i)
- (a) 2017-18
- Identified on delivery: 7
  - Identified by provider phoning in: 13
- (b) 2018-19
- Identified on delivery: 21
  - Identified by provider phoning in: 47
- (ii) ACT Health Directorate has advised that respect for commercial confidentiality means it is unable to provide details of the locations of cold chain breaches. All instances of a cold chain breach are managed by the Immunisation Unit in accordance with national and local Guidelines to minimise the risk of a member of the public receiving a non-viable vaccine.
- (iii) When a cold chain breach is detected by delivery staff or notified to the Immunisation Unit, the provider is advised not to use the stock and a quarantined sign is placed on the identified fridge until an assessment can be made as to the viability of the vaccines. Education is provided to the vaccine provider based on the *National Vaccine Storage Guideline: "Strive for 5"*. Recommendations are made to the provider on how to meet the requirements of the guidelines.
- (iv) VMU has recently trialled newer dataloggers with immunisation providers who have had previous temperature control issues in their vaccine fridges. This trial has identified that this newer technology is more accurate than the dataloggers currently in use. The ACT Immunisation Unit will shortly commence a procurement process to purchase more of the new dataloggers to distribute to all providers' fridges in the ACT community. The Immunisation Unit anticipates this will further reduce the number of cold chain breaches and minimise vaccine wastage. Where a cold chain breach has been detected, education based on the *National Vaccine Storage Guideline: "Strive for 5"* is provided to the vaccine provider including the importance of regularly monitoring fridge temperature.



Vaccine providers are also required to sign the vaccine order form declaring that they will agree to meet the *National Storage Guidelines* “*Strive for 5*” recommendations.

- (6) (i) It is the responsibility of the Immunisation Unit to ensure that cold chain is adhered to in the transport and storage of government-funded vaccines. The Unit provides guidance and education about safe vaccine storage and collects data on cold chain breaches arising from inappropriate storage. This data is provided in the response to question (5). Data is not collected on ‘incorrect storage’ that does not result in a cold chain breach. However, when this is detected, guidance is provided, as discussed in the response to question (6) (iii).

(ii) See response to question (6) (i) above.

- (iii) VMU staff address any identified issues with storage practices at the time of delivery. A discussion with practice staff about storage concerns, including information on storing too many vaccines based on the size of the fridge; keeping the fridge tidy and organised; and ensuring vaccines remain in their original packaging in the fridge. In instances where vaccines are not stored in their original packaging, VMU staff will remove vaccines for destruction.

(7) (i)

- (a) 2017-18 – 1049  
(b) 2018-19 – 5613

(ii)

- (a) 2017-18 – \$33,839.72  
(b) 2018-19 – \$149,850.50

- (iii) Vaccines identified for wastage due to poor storage or a cold chain breach are collected, assessed and destroyed by various Immunisation Unit staff as part of their day-to-day duties. Detailed costs of resources used to undertake destruction are therefore difficult to ascertain. Removal of waste bin for destruction of vaccines is at a cost of \$50 per removal on an as required basis.

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### **Environment—energy efficiency improvement scheme (Question No 2583)**

**Ms Lawder** asked the Minister for Climate Change and Sustainability, upon notice, on 2 August 2019:

- (1) What is the criteria for a product to be approved as part of the Energy Efficiency Improvement Scheme (EEIS).
- (2) Does the retailer or the Government decide which products fall under the EEIS.
- (3) What is done to ensure both value for money and range of choice for consumers for products under the EEIS.
- (4) Can a supplier of appliances become an authorised retailer under the EEIS.

- (5) Why are there restrictions on tier 2 retailers.
- (6) What business consultation occurred during the development of the EEIS.
- (7) When did tenders for the EEIS open and (a) how long were they open for and (b) how were the tenders advertised.

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

- (1) Products used in the EEIS must meet the installed product requirements and be registered on one of the following schemes' product registers: NSW Energy Saving Scheme, Victorian Energy Upgrades Program or Greenhouse and Energy Minimum Standards.
- (2) Electricity retailers select the activities and products to meet their energy savings obligation by choosing between any that meet the EEIS installed product requirements.
- (3) Electricity retailers run open tender processes to encourage new suppliers and ensure both value for money and range of choice for consumers. The Independent Competition and Regulatory Commission undertakes a prudence and efficiency assessment of the costs incurred by ActewAGL in complying with its obligation to deliver EEIS activities, including the tender processes it runs.
- (4) Suppliers of appliances must be contracted by an electricity retailer to offer services under the EEIS. Suppliers can contact the ActewAGL Energy Efficiency Team to discuss ActewAGL's installer requirements as well as eligibility to the Energy Efficiency Improvement Scheme.
- (5) There are no restrictions placed on tier 2 retailers by the ACT Government. ActewAGL is the only tier 1 retailer in the ACT which is obligated to deliver energy efficient activities under the scheme. Smaller tier 2 retailers can opt to pay an energy savings contribution instead of delivering activities.
- (6) The ACT Government regularly consults with stakeholders on the development of the scheme, including publishing consultation papers on the website, distributing surveys and hosting an annual stakeholder forum at the beginning of each year. Various businesses and peak industry bodies have been involved in these consultation processes over the last seven years.
- (7) The ACT Government does not run procurement processes to deliver EEIS activities. This is performed by electricity retailers.

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**Crime—Lanyon valley  
(Question No 2584)**

**Mr Wall** asked the Minister for Police and Emergency Services, upon notice, on 2 August 2019:

- (1) How many arrests for anti-social behaviour were made in the Lanyon valley area in (a) 2016-17, (b) 2017-18 and (c) 2018-19.

- (2) What was the nature of that anti-social behaviour for each year listed in part (1).
- (3) How many infringement notices for anti-social behaviour were issued in the Lanyon valley area in (a) 2016-17, (b) 2017-18 and (c) 2018-19.
- (4) What was the nature of that anti-social behaviour for each year listed in part (3).
- (5) How many warnings for anti-social behaviour were given in the Lanyon valley area in (a) 2016-17, (b) 2017-18 and (c) 2018-19.
- (6) What was the nature of that anti-social behaviour for each year listed in part (5).
- (7) How many infringement notices were issued to drivers for speeding in (a) Gordon, (b) Banks and (c) Conder in (i) 2016-17, (ii) 2017-18 and (iii) 2018-19.
- (8) What was the average speed recorded for each year listed in part (7).
- (9) How many warnings were given to drivers for speeding in (a) Gordon, (b) Banks and (c) Conder in (i) 2016-17, (ii) 2017-18 and (iii) 2018-19.
- (10) What was the average speed recorded for each year listed in part (9).
- (11) On how many occasions were mobile speed cameras deployed in (a) Gordon, (b) Banks and (c) Conder in (i) 2016-17, (ii) 2017-18 and (iii) 2018-19.
- (12) What was the average speed recorded for each year listed in part (11).
- (13) What action has the Government taken to reduce (a) anti-social behaviour and (b) speeding in the Lanyon valley, given the answers to parts (1) to (12).

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

Please note that for the responses below, ACT Policing defines the Lanyon Valley area as consisting of the suburbs Banks, Conder and Gordon.

1. I am advised that ACT Policing's incident recording database records instances of criminal offending and allegations of criminal offending. As anti-social behaviour is not a definable criminal offence, ACT Policing's recording database is unable to quantify incidents of anti-social behaviour or arrests, infringement notices or warnings relating to anti-social behaviour.
2. The member is referred to the answer to Question 1.  
To provide an accurate response to this question, I am advised it would require a manual review of all reports made to ACT Policing that refer to anti-social behaviour – an onerous task that would unreasonably divert police resources.
3. The member is referred to the answer to Question 1.
4. The member is referred to the answer to Question 1.  
To provide an accurate response to this question, I am advised it would require a manual review of all reports made to ACT Policing that refer to anti-social behaviour – an onerous task that would unreasonably divert police resources.

5. The member is referred to the answer to Question 1.

6. The member is referred to the answer to Question 1.

To provide an accurate response to this question, I am advised it would require a manual review of all reports made to ACT Policing that refer to anti-social behaviour – an onerous task that would unreasonably divert police resources.

7. The table below presents the number of Traffic Infringement Notices (TINs) issued by ACT Policing for speeding related offences.

<b>Speeding related TINs</b>			
	<b>2016-17</b>	<b>2017-18</b>	<b>2018-19</b>
Gordon	25	21	23
Banks	3	2	1
Conder	8	6	6

8. The table below presents the average speed recorded for each financial year.

<b>Average Speed (km/hr)</b>			
	<b>2016-17</b>	<b>2017-18</b>	<b>2018-19</b>
Gordon	83	80	69
Banks	110	103	118
Conder	99	94	87

9. The table below provides the number of cautions issued by ACT Policing for speeding related offences.

<b>Cautions</b>			
	<b>2016-17</b>	<b>2017-18</b>	<b>2018-19</b>
Gordon	16	11	9
Banks	2	2	0
Conder	6	2	3

10. I am informed the device used by ACT Policing to issue cautions is unable to record the estimated speed in the same manner in which it does for the issue of TINs. For this reason, ACT Policing is unable to calculate the average speed for cautions issued for each financial year.

11. Mobile speed cameras fall under the remit of Access Canberra.

12. Mobile speed cameras fall under the remit of Access Canberra.

13. This Government and ACT Policing are committed to ensuring the safety of Canberra. ACT Policing continues collaborative efforts with the ACT Government, liquor licensing authorities, business owners and the community to target and prevent anti-social behaviour.

Through specialist and dedicated resources, such as the Regional Targeting Team and the Community Safety Team, ACT Policing continues to work closely with our community and business to build a strong, resilient community and to identify developing trends of anti-social or criminal behaviour.

Anti-social behaviour in youth is a complex area of behaviour and requires well considered responses and intervention to prevent criminal offending. ACT Policing work directly with our community to prevent anti-social behaviours and improve outcomes for those coming into contact with the legal system. Early intervention, education and diversion strategies are key to disrupting the life-cycle of criminal offending and ACT Policing will continue efforts to engage with and divert youth away from harmful and anti-social behaviours.

In collaboration with the Roads Transport Authority, Justice and Community Safety Directorate and community partners, the ACT Government and ACT Policing also undertake numerous strategies to improve road safety and reduce anti-social driving behaviours, including speeding. These strategies include the 'Fatal Five' media campaigns and joint education campaigns in line with the Road Safety Calendar, which are largely focused on improving road culture and enforcement.

The ACT Government has also developed the ACT Road Safety Strategy 2011-2020 and the ACT Road Safety Action Plan 2016-2020. These policies ensure ACT Government agencies and stakeholders work collaboratively to improve road safety. These policies, together with the Ministerial Direction to ACT Policing to combat dangerous driving behaviours, provide a framework to ensure resources are directed towards issues nominated by the community warranting intervention by police and/or treatments by other ACT road and road safety agencies.

ACT Policing specifically undertake targeted traffic operations to target dangerous driving behaviours, including speeding and ACT Policing actively enforce road transport and safety legislation, to improve our road use culture and reduce trauma on our roads.

This government has given ACT Policing a record investment of over \$33 million in the 2019-20 budget that will deliver 69 more frontline, operational and support staff to keep our city safe as it grows.

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### **Government—invoices (Question No 2587)**

**Mrs Dunne** asked the Minister for Health, upon notice, on 2 August 2019:

- (1) In relation to the answer given at part (3) of question on notice No 2508, why (a) do staff changes and staff leave delay payments to creditors and (b) are there not staff backfill arrangements in place to ensure business continuity in management of payments to creditors.
- (2) In relation to the answer given at part (5) of question on notice No 2508, why did agency staff not scan the hard copy invoice and feed it into the electronic system to enable more efficiency in the management of payments to creditors.

**Ms Stephen-Smith:** The answer to the member's question is as follows:

- (1) The process for paying invoices has been amended so that multiple staff members have visibility of paid and unpaid invoices, enabling payment coding and approvals to be redirected to an alternative staff member when required.

- (2) As previously stated in the answer given to part (5) of question on notice No 2508, the invoice was originally received at the time agency staff were transitioning to, and learning about, the new payment system processes.

**ACT Health and Canberra Health Services—audits  
(Question No 2588)**

**Mrs Dunne** asked the Minister for Health, upon notice, on 2 August 2019:

- (1) How many internal audits were undertaken in 2018-19 on (a) ACT Health and b) Canberra Health Services.
- (2) In relation to each audit in part (1), (a) what was the subject matter, (b) who performed the audit, (c) what was the value of the contract, (d) what were the, (i) findings and (ii) recommendations, (e) what was the relevant agency's response, (f) what is the status of implementation of each accepted recommendation and (g) for any recommendations not accepted, why.
- (3) In relation to each audit in part (1), (a) what briefings were given to the (i) relevant minister, (ii) ACT Health Director-General and (iii) Canberra Health Services CEO and (b) what follow-up action did the (i) relevant minister, (ii) ACT Health Director-General and (iii) Canberra Health Services CEO, take.

**Ms Stephen-Smith:** The answer to the member's question is as follows:

- (1)
  - (a) One internal audit was undertaken in 2018-19 in the ACT Health Directorate.
  - (b) Prior to the separation of the two health entities, there was a planned internal audit, which became the responsibility of Canberra Health Services following the separation.
- (2)
 

ACT Health Directorate

  - (a) Engagement of Consultants and Contractors.
  - (b) Synergy Group Australia Pty Ltd.
  - (c) Total value of the contract was \$24,337.50 (GST Inclusive).
  - (d) (i) The following findings and recommendations are an extract from the final audit report provided by the consultant.

**Finding 1** – Internal Audit noted that the *ACT Health Procurement Guidelines* (November 2009) is outdated and is in the process of being superseded by the *ACT Health Procurement and Contract Management Governance* document (March 2018). However, at the completion of audit fieldwork, the latter had not been finalised or made readily accessible on the intranet. Internal Audit was advised that it is currently being considered by the Policy Advisory Committee (Health) for review and approval. In addition, there is a lack of documented guidance on pursuing value for money in relation to the procurement activities for the engagement of consultants and contractors. Internal Audit notes that the *ACT Health Procurement Guidelines* provide an overall statement on risk and value for money under contract management. The *ACT Health Procurement and Contract Management Governance* document also makes a reference under section Value

for Money to the requirement of section 22A of the *ACT Procurement Act 2001*. Internal Audit also notes that the Buying Goods and Services Evaluation Form used by all ACT Government staff provides high level explanation regarding the requirement to assess for value for money. The form is available to all ACT Government staff via the Procurement ACT intranet. It was not evident that these two documents provide adequate coverage or guidance on achieving value for money in relation to procurement activities including the engagement of consultants and contractors.

**Finding 2** – At the time of audit fieldwork, there was no risk assessment register in place to document the procurement risks specifically relating to the engagement of consultants and contractors. That said, Internal Audit noted that Procurement ACT ensure a risk plan is completed for all high value procurements (greater than \$200k). Internal Audit was advised that risk evaluation tools would be incorporated into ACT Health's governance document and procurement packages.

**Finding 3** – Sample testing results identified that 1/12 (8%) procurement activities had a signed declaration of conflict of interest in place. However, for 11/12 (92%) procurement activities sampled, Internal Audit could not evidence the signed conflict of interest/confidentiality declarations. Of the four interviews held with procurement officers, no one was aware that any conflict of interest declarations was needed. Internal Audit notes that the Quotation Evaluation Team Responsibilities document provides guidance on conflict of interest and probity. It is available to all ACT Government staff via Procurement ACT intranet.

**Finding 4** – The review found that the monthly and end of financial year procurement reports do not provide any information on various types of procurement activities such as the engagement of consultants and contractors, nor any information on the key performance indicators. The review also found that these procurement reports are not distributed to the Divisions for their information and/or action.

(ii)

#### **Recommendation 1**

- a) Finalise, and seek endorsement by the PAC, the *ACT Health Procurement and Contract Management Governance document* (March 2018) and publish it on the intranet.
- b) Provide focused guidance on achieving value for money for ACT Health staff involved in the procurement activities, including the engagement of consultants and contractors.
- c) Once endorsed and finalised, ensure a regular review and update of the *ACT Health Procurement and Contract Management Governance document* and include a *cover page* to outline the frequency of the review and the responsible officer /area.

#### **Recommendation 2**

- a) Develop dedicated ACT Health procurement risk assessment registers for the different categories/types of procurement activities, including the engagement of consultants and contractors.
- b) Ensure the dedicated ACT Health procurement risk assessment registers are aligned with the ACT Health risk management framework.

**Recommendation 3**

- a) Incorporate a requirement in the procurement procedures and guidelines to ensure that all persons involved in the procurement processes complete and sign a declaration of conflict of interest form on an annual basis to either:
- b) disclose where an actual or perceived conflict of interest exists; or
- c) declare there are no actual or perceived conflicts of interest, however he/she will advise ACT Health immediately when an actual or perceived conflict interest arise.

**Recommendation 4**

- a) Provide reporting on the various types of procurement activities and key performance indicators in monthly and end of financial year procurement reports, including reports relating to the engagement of consultants and contractors.
  - b) Develop and maintain a complete, accurate and reliable list of consultants and contractors engaged for the period to ensure the robustness of the monthly and end of financial year procurement reporting.
  - c) Distribute the monthly and end of financial year procurement reports to key stakeholders from each Division for their information and/or action.
- (e)

**Recommendation 1**

- a) Accepted – Process underway.
- b) Accepted – Governance document to better reflect achieving value for money.
- c) Accepted – Governance document to be updated to reflect annual review.

**Recommendation 2**

Accepted.

A risk matrix and Information on undertaking a risk assessment will be updated in the health governance document. Common procurement type risks will be incorporated into the risk matrix for consideration by the procurement officer responsible for the procurement activity. Business units will be responsible to mitigate and manage risks including escalating risks identified through their own internal process where applicable. Risks ratings will be recorded through the procurement process for all risks identified as high so there can be governance and reporting on how the risk and related procurement activity is tracking.

**Recommendation 3**

Accepted.

The governance document will be updated to reflect all staff undertaking or involved in a procurement activity are to declare any actual or perceived conflict of interest. A conflict of interest form will be incorporated as part of all procurement packages. Financial delegates will be provided with an annual conflict of interest form.

**Recommendation 4**

- a) Accepted – Reporting to be amended to reflect this recommendation.



- b) Accepted – On completion of the approval of the governance through PAC, all procurement activities are to be notified to Health Procurement where this recommendation can be met.
- c) Accepted.

(f) All four recommendations are complete.

(g) All recommendations were accepted.

Canberra Health Services

- (a) Senior Medical Officer Attendance Management.
- (b) Protiviti Pty Ltd.
- (c) The work is ongoing therefore is yet to be fully costed.
- (d) (i) The audit report is still in draft and therefore findings are not finalised.  
(ii) The audit report is still in draft and therefore recommendations are not finalised.
- (e) Canberra Health Services management has provided advice to Executive.  
Executive will be considering the advice shortly.
- (f) Refer to the response to (2) (d) (i).
- (g) Refer to the response to (2) (d) (i).

(3)

ACT Health Directorate

- (a) (i), (ii) & (iii) No briefings have been provided to the relevant minister, ACT Health Directorate Director-General or the Canberra Health Services CEO.
- (b) Not applicable. Refer to the response to (3) (a) (i), (ii) & (iii).

Canberra Health Services

- (a) (i), (ii) & (iii) Internal Audits are part of a directorate's business as usual, and resulting recommendations are managed by the directorate as part of overall governance. As the current Internal Audit has yet to be finalised there are no recommendations or advice to progress.
- (b) Not applicable. Refer to the response to (3) (a) (i), (ii) & (iii).

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**Health—infectious diseases project  
(Question No 2590)**

**Mrs Dunne** asked the Minister for Health, upon notice, on 2 August 2019:

- (1) In relation to Estimates question on notice No E19-265, which budget year originally allocated \$398 000 for the Protecting Canberrans from Infectious Diseases project (“the project”).
- (2) What was the (a) original scope and (b) anticipated outcomes, of the project.
- (3) Why did the ACT Pathology Laboratory Information System, due for completion by June 2021, defer the tendering process for the project until the latter half of 2018-19.
- (4) To what extent and in what ways has the deferred completion date changed the (a) scope and (b) anticipated outcomes, of the project.

- (5) To what extent will the project's deferral for three years impact on the economic value of the budget allocation for the project.
- (6) What improvements will this proposed expenditure fund in public healthcare.
- (7) What impact will the three years delay in its delivery cause to the implementation of those improvements.

**Ms Stephen-Smith:** The answer to the member's question is as follows:

- (1) The 2017-18 Budget originally allocated \$398,000 for Protecting Canberrans from Infectious Diseases project.
  - (2) (a) The scope of the project was to procure and implement a new ACT Notifiable Diseases Solution (the Solution). The Solution will support the surveillance, investigation and public health management of notifiable diseases. Communicable disease surveillance is an ACT and Commonwealth legislative requirement.
  - (b) The objectives of the Solution are to enable the collection of high-quality notifiable disease surveillance data in a flexible and secure environment to:
    - support the immediate requirements of public health management of notifiable communicable diseases in the ACT;
    - inform targeted disease prevention and control programs in the ACT;
    - facilitate the provision of timely information to government and the community on outbreaks programs; and
    - enable ACT to comply with Commonwealth reporting requirements.
  - (3) The ACT Digital Health Strategy provides a set of guiding principles to ensure a consistent and structured approach to the delivery of digital health capabilities. Such principles include using integrated solution suites, leveraging existing investments and supporting integrated workflows.
- Due to the significant interactions between the pathology service and the notification of infectious and notifiable diseases, it was important to understand the future state of the pathology laboratory information system procured prior to committing to a separate Solution for notifiable diseases.
- This approach was also necessary as no recurrent funding was provided for the notifiable diseases Solution under the Protecting Canberrans from Infectious Diseases initiative.
- (4) There has been no change to the expected scope and outcomes.
  - (5) The delay has not had an impact on the economic value of the budget allocation. Benefits were not financial, and no offsets or savings were associated with the business case.
  - (6) The expenditure will achieve the following benefits:
    - it will make available good quality and reliable surveillance data that will inform disease control measures and ultimately benefit the health of the ACT population. This will in turn, reduce the burden on essential health services in the ACT, including reducing health associated costs; and

- it will ensure ability to continue to comply with the requirements of local legislation as well as national reporting requirements. The new Solution will provide an opportunity for innovation and for the ACT to become leaders in disease surveillance data management technology.

(7) Having an integrated Solution with the pathology laboratory information system will realise greater benefits and efficiencies.

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### **Hospitals—bottled water (Question No 2591)**

**Mrs Dunne** asked the Minister for Health, upon notice, on 2 August 2019:

- (1) For each of Canberra's public hospitals (a) how many units of bottled water were purchased for consumption by patients during 2018-19, (b) what was the total cost and (c) what was the method of disposal of used containers.
- (2) In the period since the answer given to question on notice No 1031, has the ACT Government reviewed the policy relating to the method used to provide water to patients at Canberra's public hospitals; if no, why; if yes, what was the outcome of the review.
- (3) Has any analysis been made of the cost-benefit of purchasing bottled water for consumption by patients compared to the provision of water in re-usable containers; if no, why; if yes, what were the results of that analysis.
- (4) For each of Canberra's public hospitals (a) what drinking vessels (apart from bottles of water) are provided to patients for the consumption of water, (b) how many drinking vessels were purchased during 2018-19, (c) what was the cost of drinking vessels purchased during 2018-19 and (d) what was the method of disposal of used vessels.

**Ms Stephen-Smith:** The answer to the member's question is as follows:

- 1) At Canberra Hospital:
  - a. 419,316.
  - b. \$145,650.
  - c. Water bottles are recycled.

At University of Canberra Hospital:

- a. 26.
- b. This information is commercial in confidence under the BGIS University of Canberra Hospital Facilities Management contract.
- c. Water bottles are recycled.

At Calvary Public Hospital Bruce (Calvary) bottled water is only provided to patients on Low Microbial (Neutropenic) Diets. The usage is sufficiently small that specific records of quantity and cost are not recorded. Bottles are disposed of via Calvary's waste recycling stream.

- 2) Yes, refer to Question 3 response below.

- 3) Yes. The decision to provide bottled water to patients at Canberra Hospital, in place of jugs filled with potable water, was not undertaken lightly nor without significant research into the impact it would have both clinically and environmentally.

The use of water jugs requires considerable human and financial resources to ensure their integrity, taking into account how they are used. They require significant resources to:

- refill on a regular basis;
- transport;
- monitor their serviceability; and
- sanitise.

In addition to this, in the past at Canberra Hospital, a considerable number of water jugs and tumblers were misappropriated from the hospital, again at a significant expense to the hospital on top of those vessels having to be destroyed due to contamination and misuse.

The methods used to provide water to patients at Canberra's public hospitals are aligned to the applicable clinical circumstances.

As of 2018-19, identified savings using bottled water as opposed to using potable water in water jugs was estimated at \$141,000 per annum for Canberra Health Services, excluding overheads (vessel purchase and replacement costs).

Canberra Health Services is continuously reviewing water bottle consumption based on patient safety, economics and sustainable environmental practices.

- 4) At Canberra Hospital:

- a. Nil.
- b. Nil.
- c. Not applicable.
- d. Not applicable.

At University of Canberra Hospital:

- a. Water jugs and drinking glasses.
- b. Not applicable, food services, including water, is delivered by the facilities management contractor, BGIS.
- c. Not applicable, food services, including water, is delivered by the facilities management contractor, BGIS.
- e. All waste is disposed of via the appropriate waste stream.

Drinking vessels used at Calvary include paper cups, multi-use plastic vessels and water jugs. It is estimated about 1,200 vessels are purchased each year at a cost around \$8 per vessel, meaning an annual cost around \$9600. Used vessels are recycled when they reach the end of their useable life. Calvary operates 31 waste management streams to ensure waste to landfill is minimised.

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### **Municipal services—playgrounds (Question No 2592)**

**Ms Lawder** asked the Minister for Transport and City Services, upon notice, on 2 August 2019 (*redirected to the Minister for City Services*):

- (1) What is the status of the request for a shade sail at Mortimer Lewis Drive playground.
- (2) Has a shade sail at Mortimer Lewis Drive playground been budgeted for; if so, when will the shade sail at Mortimer Lewis Drive playground be completed; if not, why not.
- (3) How many ACT playgrounds (a) have and (b) do not have, shade sails.

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

- 1) The request for a shade sail to the Mortimer Lewis Drive playground has been considered.
- 2) The shade sail is budgeted for and will be installed by June 2020.
- 3) Of the 509 playgrounds managed by Transport Canberra and City Services in the ACT:
  - a) 48 have shade sails: and
  - b) 461 do not have shade sails.

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**Transport Canberra—Jacka bus services  
(Question No 2593)**

**Mr Milligan** asked the Minister for Transport and City Services, upon notice, on 2 August 2019 (*redirected to the Minister for Transport*):

- (1) Does the Government have any plans to provide a public bus service for Jacka residents; if not, what are the reasons behind the decision.
- (2) Can the Minister explain how the disabled and elderly can access public transport services, when the nearest bus stop for Jacka residents is approximately a kilometre away.

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

- (1) All dwellings in Jacka are within a 500m radial distance of a bus stop on either Horse Park Drive or Bernard Heinze Avenue, consistent with service planning guidelines for local bus services set out in Transport for Canberra: Transport for a Sustainable City 2012-2031.
- (2) See response above. Canberrans who are unable to walk to their local bus stop may also be able to use Transport Canberra's flexible bus service, which provides a specialised service for eligible customers to get from their home to local community destinations.

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**Light rail—Mitchell  
(Question No 2594)**

**Mr Milligan** asked the Minister for Transport and City Services, upon notice, on 2 August 2019 (*redirected to the Minister for Transport*):

- (1) What work was done at Sandford Street to "future-proof" this area for a light rail stop in the future.

- (2) What work will need to be carried out to construct the light rail stop at Sandford Street.
- (3) When is it expected that construction will begin on the Sandford Street stop.
- (4) When is it expected that commuters will be able to use the light rail stop at Sandford Street.
- (5) Which roads along the light rail corridor has the speed limit for vehicles been changed.
- (6) Will the speed limit along Flemington Road be returned to 70km/h as per the limit pre-light rail.

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

- (1) The arrangement of light rail tracks, intersection works at Flemington Road and Sandford Street-Morriset Road and trunk services works were designed to allow for a future light rail stop on the south of this intersection.
- (2) In addition to detail design and construction of the stop platform, canopy and facilities, the stop requires services connections, signalling and communications infrastructure.
- (3) Negotiations with Canberra Metro for delivery of the Sandford Street light rail stop will determine timing of works.
- (4) Negotiations with Canberra Metro for delivery of the Sandford Street light rail stop will determine timing of works.
- (5) A section of Federal Highway has reduced from 80km/h to 70 km/h. Part of Hibberson Street closed to general traffic and other works around Gungahlin Town Centre have included changes to speed limits.
- (6) Yes. Flemington Road will have a 70km/h speed limit between Randwick Road and Manning Clark Crescent and remaining sections will have a 60km/h speed limit, as was in place prior to light rail.

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### **Municipal services—Gungahlin (Question No 2595)**

**Mr Milligan** asked the Minister for Transport and City Services, upon notice, on 2 August 2019 (*redirected to the Minister for City Services*):

- (1) What is the source of funding for the Government's recent \$1 million commitment to a new playground and green space in the Gungahlin Town Centre.
- (2) If this project has been under consideration for several years, can the Minister explain why no allocation of funding was included in the 2019-20 ACT Budget or previous ACT Budgets.
- (3) Were local businesses consulted about this project;

- (4) Did the Government receive requests from the community and others to undertake this project; if yes, (a) how many requests were received and (b) who submitted the requests.
- (5) What is the reasoning behind the decision to refurbish the playground and provide extra green space at this location, and not at any other location in the Gungahlin Town Centre.
- (6) What is the anticipated usage of the new playground and green space area.

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

- (1) The funding allocation for the new playground was realised through savings from the duplication of Horse Park Drive.
- (2) The Minister approved reallocation of savings from Horse Park Drive.
- (3) In early 2018, signage was in place in and around the Gungahlin Town Centre providing general advice of planned works in the Gungahlin area, this signage was inclusive of the playground which is now under construction. Prior to the commencement of construction in early July 2019, the Marketplace was contacted with regards to the work.
- (4) A gap was identified in play spaces within Gungahlin for children of all ages.
- (5) The Gungahlin Place corridor has been designed in such a way to maximise line of sight to the north and south for people within the Gungahlin Town Centre. The new playground will attract families with children of all ages to the area, improving the amenity and embracing inclusivity. Additionally, the proximity of the light rail provides easy access for patrons of public transport to utilise the new playground.

Through consideration of all these elements coupled with the augmentation of Hibberson Street and the new Gungahlin Bus Station, utilisation of the space next to the existing playground was an optimal location to tie together completed upgrades in the Gungahlin Town Centre.

- (6) It is expected that the usage of the new playground and green space area will largely be by families with young children. Through interactive play equipment, landscaping improvements inclusive of rubber softfall, street furniture, stepping stones/stumps, walking planks and totem poles, children and parents alike will be able to play in and explore the area.

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### **Light rail—project delivery report (Question No 2597)**

**Miss Burch** asked the Minister for Transport and City Services, upon notice, on 2 August 2019 (*redirected to the Minister for Transport*):

In relation to the City to Gungahlin Light Rail Project Delivery Report, Table 11 – Settlement of Construction Claims, can the Minister provide a breakdown of claims

payments by value and description per payment made under subtitles (a) “unanticipated additional resourcing incurred by Canberra Metro as a result of risk events occurring” and (b) “other avoided costs”.

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

As noted in section 7.4 of the City to Gungahlin Light Rail Project Delivery Report, in April 2019 the ACT Government and Canberra Metro reached a commercial agreement on matters relating to outstanding risk claims and modifications. As noted in section 7.3 of that report, Table 11 provides a breakdown of the Territory's internal apportionment of the total payment to Canberra Metro against risks (and associated claims). In this respect:

- (a) “unanticipated additional resourcing incurred by Canberra Metro as a result of risk events occurring” relates to a claim by Canberra Metro that additional costs associated with personnel, equipment and other resources were to be compensated by the Territory under the terms of the Project Agreement.
- (b) “other avoided costs” relate to a portion of costs that the Territory has considered would otherwise have been incurred if the claims that were settled were instead disputed. This included an assessment and apportionment of:
  - legal costs associated with formally defending the claims that were avoided;
  - legal costs of Canberra Metro if Canberra Metro’s claims were successful;
  - costs of expert determination;
  - the costs of technical experts associated with defending the claims that were avoided; and
  - associated agency costs avoided through the dispute resolution process.

### **Animals—control orders (Question No 2598)**

**Ms Lawder** asked the Minister for Transport and City Services, upon notice, on 2 August 2019 (*redirected to the Minister for City Services*):

- (1) How many dogs each year for the past five years, were returned to owners under control orders.
- (2) What were all the different conditions that were included in those control orders.
- (3) Are there different seriousness of control orders issued.
- (4) What is the range of times that a control order is current.
- (5) What is the average length of time a control order lasts.
- (6) How many times in the past five years has a dog/owner breached a control order.
- (7) What is the penalty for breaching a control order (a) has this penalty been applied in the past five years, (b) how many times has this penalty been applied and (c) what action/s were taken in regards to the breach.



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

- (1) The legislation only came into effect in December 2017. Since this time there have been 90 dogs released on Control Orders.
  - (2) Control Order conditions differ on a case by case basis. For example – in the case of a dog escaping repairs to fencing would be required. Conditions may include the following:
    - The dog must be kept in a yard that is enclosed by a secure fence that is in good repair and structurally sound; and has no gaps or holes in or under it that are large enough to allow the dog to escape.
    - Any gate or door to a yard must be spring-latched and self-closing; be padlocked when the keeper is not in the yard; be in good repair and structurally sound and not have any gaps or holes in or under it large enough to allow the dog to escape through.
    - The fencing at the property can be inspected by the Rangers from DAS at any time.
    - If the dog leaves the premises at which it is kept, it must only be in the care of the keeper or carer and must always be restrained by a leash and muzzle and be under the effective control of the keeper.
    - If the dog is left under the care of anyone other than the owner, either at the property, or at any other location, the owner must ensure to make the carer fully aware of all responsibilities and requirements under these conditions.
  - (3) No. There is only one type of Control Order under the Act. However, the Registrar can impose additional conditions specific to the incident and need to control the dog.
  - (4) A Control Order does not expire and must be revoked by the Registrar. Evidence and behavioural assessments are required to consider a revocation of a Control Order.
  - (5) Since Control Orders were implemented, no order has been revoked.
  - (6) DAS has investigated reports of Control Order breaches five times since December 2017.
  - (7) There are multiple penalties for breaching a Control Order, depending on the severity of the breach:
    - infringement Notices may be issued up to \$500;
    - the dog may be seized; or
    - the dog can be declared dangerous/euthanised.
    - (a) Of the five breaches reported one infringement has been issued and two dogs have been euthanised. The other two are currently under investigation
    - (b) See above.
    - (c) See above.
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**Domestic Animal Services—data  
(Question No 2599)**

**Ms Lawder** asked the Minister for Transport and City Services, upon notice, on 2 August 2019 (*redirected to the Minister for City Services*):

Has Domestic Animal Services or any associated parts of its parent Directorate lost all, or part of the data held in the past 10 years on the (a) registration of dogs, (b) the ownership of dogs, (c) the records of micro chipping of dogs, (d) de-sexing of dogs, (e) warnings issued on dog matters, (f) the seizure of dogs, (g) control orders on dogs, (h) records on dangerous dogs, (i) records of dogs euthanised; if yes to any of parts (a) to (i), (i) for which years is data missing, (ii) how much data was lost, (iii) what is the nature of the missing data, (iv) has the loss of data resulted in a security breach, (v) has any personal data been accessed by unauthorised persons, (vi) were investigations conducted in to reasons for the loss, (vii) have investigations into the loss resulted in disciplinary action and (viii) what actions have been taken to ensure that data is now secure.

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

(a) – (i) No

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**Domestic Animal Services—dogs  
(Question No 2600)**

**Ms Lawder** asked the Minister for Transport and City Services, upon notice, on 2 August 2019 (*redirected to the Minister for City Services*):

- (1) In relation to the six-member team announced in media reports on 16 July 2019 that are specifically targeting off-lead dogs, in the first four weeks of operation of the new team for (a) off-leash dogs, how many (i) cautions were issued, (ii) warnings were issued and (iii) fines were issued and (b) for dogs being within 10 metres of playgrounds and public barbecues how many (i) cautions were issued, (ii) warnings were issued and (c) fined have been issued.
- (2) In the four weeks of operation of the new team, how many dog attacks were (a) reported to and (b) investigated by, Domestic Animal Services.

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

- 1) In July 2019, the Compliance Targeting Team undertook 133 engagements related to compliance with dog laws. There was high compliance with dog control and management requirements with three non-compliance issues identified including one relating to off lead dogs and no instances of non-compliance regarding dogs within 10 metres of playgrounds and BBQs.

Consistent with the Licensing and Compliance Accountability Commitment, officers took an 'engage and educate approach and recorded the incidents to inform future action should repeated non-compliance be noted. No formal compliance action was required nor taken and no infringement penalty notices have been issued.

In addition, eight referrals were made to Domestic Animal Services to review and update dog registration details.

- 2) During these four weeks, Domestic Animal Services received 32 reported attacks and have commenced investigations into all 32 reports.

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**Animals—dogs**  
**(Question No 2601)**

**Ms Lawder** asked the Minister for Transport and City Services, upon notice, on 2 August 2019 (*redirected to the Minister for City Services*):

- (1) In relation to the information quoted by the Minister in his speech on 20 March 2019 concerning dog management, in each of the past five years to 30 June 2019 under the Animal Welfare Act, how many separate incidents have been reported under the Act to the Directorate by the Directorate or its agents and of those incidents how many (a) were animal cruelty matters, (b) were animal cruelty matters related to dogs and (c) were not animal cruelty matters.
- (2) How many animal cruelty matters have been referred by the Directorate or its agents to the Director of Public Prosecutions (DPP) and of these how many have resulted in (a) court action and (b) prosecution.
- (3) How many animal cruelty matters concerning dogs have been referred by the Directorate or its agents to DPP, and of these how many have resulted in (a) court action and (b) prosecution.

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

- (1) Please see response to QON 2602.
- (2) (a) 72 matters proceeded to Court.  
(b) 72 prosecutions under the *Animal Welfare Act 1992* were carried out by the Office of the ACT Director of Public Prosecutions.
- (3) (a) Out of the 72 matters listed above, 60 matters dealt with charges relating to (or involving) dogs. It should be noted that some of the 60 matters may have involved charges relating to other types of animals.  
(b) See above.

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**Trees—damage**  
**(Question No 2603)**

**Ms Lawder** asked the Minister for the Environment and Heritage, upon notice, on 2 August 2019 (*redirected to the Minister for City Services*):

In each of the past five financial years how many (a) reports have been made concerning trees damaged, destroyed or ring barked in public places, (b) investigations have been conducted concerning trees damaged, destroyed or ring barked in public places, (c) prosecutions have commenced concerning deliberate tree damage in public places and (d) convictions have been recorded for damaging trees in public places.

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

The table below shows the number of reports received by City Rangers through the Fix My Street platform.

<b>Year</b>	<b>Reported/ Investigated (a, b)</b>	<b>Prosecutions (c)</b>	<b>Convictions (d)</b>
2013-14	25	0	0
2014-15	6	0	0
2015-16	2	0	0
2016-17	3	0	0
2017-18	5	0	0
2018-19	10	0	0

A new six-person team Compliance Team commenced full operation on 1 July 2019, for an initial trial period of six months. The team is targeting compliance on a number of matters including tree damage.

### **Asbestos—property sales (Question No 2605)**

**Mr Coe** asked the Minister for Employment and Workplace Safety, upon notice, on 2 August 2019:

- (1) How many Mr Fluffy blocks were sold for less than the buyback price in the following ranges (a) less than \$10 000, (b) \$10 000 to \$24 999, (c) \$25 000 to \$49 999, (d) \$50 000 to \$74 999, (e) \$75 000 to \$99 999, (f) \$100 000 to \$124 999, (g) \$125 000 to \$149 999, (h) \$150 000 to \$174 999, (i) \$175 000 to \$199 999, (j) \$200 000 to \$249 999, (k) \$250 000 to \$299 999 and (l) \$300 000 and above.
- (2) How many Mr Fluffy blocks were sold above the buyback price in the following ranges (a) less than \$10 000, (b) \$10 000 to \$24 999, (c) \$25 000 to \$49 999, (d) \$50 000 to \$74 999, (e) \$75 000 to \$99 999, (f) \$100 000 to \$124 999, (g) \$125 000 to \$149 999, (h) \$150 000 to \$174 999, (i) \$175 000 to \$199 999, (j) \$200 000 to \$249 999, (k) \$250 000 to \$299 999 and (l) \$300 000 and above.

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

- (1) As at 13 August 2019, Mr Fluffy blocks were sold for less than the buyback price<sup>1</sup>:

<b>Price Range</b>	<b>Sold for Less than Buyback Price</b>
less than \$10 000	28
\$10 000 to \$24 999	42
\$25 000 to \$49 999	78
\$50 000 to \$74 999	76
\$75 000 to \$99 999	73
\$100 000 to \$124 999	70
\$125 000 to \$149 999	61
\$150 000 to \$174 999	49

Price Range	Sold for Less than Buyback Price
\$175 000 to \$199 999	37
\$200 000 to \$249 999	51
\$250 000 to \$299 999	20
\$300 000 and above	29

Note: the total number of properties sold for less than the Buyback price provided in Question Taken on Notice Paper No. E19-374 was incorrectly reported as 613, instead of 612. This was due to the termination of a contract in June 2019 that was still reported as exchanged as at 3 July 2019.

(2) As at 13 August 2019, Mr Fluffy blocks were sold for more than the buyback price<sup>2</sup>

Price Range	Sold for More than Buyback Price
less than \$10 000	23
\$10 000 to \$24 999	28
\$25 000 to \$49 999	38
\$50 000 to \$74 999	33
\$75 000 to \$99 999	24
\$100 000 to \$124 999	23
\$125 000 to \$149 999	8
\$150 000 to \$174 999	13
\$175 000 to \$199 999	13
\$200 000 to \$249 999	11
\$250 000 to \$299 999	6
\$300 000 and above	21

The Territory purchased affected properties at full market value as at 28 October 2014 (or for newly-identified properties, the date added to the Affected Residential Premises Register), ignoring the presence of loose fill asbestos contamination and minor presentation or maintenance issues.

The offer for sale of a remediated block is a second and separate market transaction.

The sale price is based on the market value of the remediated block at the time it is available for resale. Valuers use the 'direct comparison' method of valuation to determine a current market value for residential blocks. Sales of similar properties in the suburb and surrounding areas are analysed and adjustments are made for location, elevation, block shape, potential for dual occupancy and date of sales evidence.

The approach to the sales phase is in line with the stated intention to sell each block at current market value, reflecting its best and highest use in order to offset the cost of the Buyback and Demolition Program, repay the Commonwealth loan and minimise the residual cost of the Scheme to the Territory.

<sup>1</sup> Two blocks have sold since the original response (No. E19-374) bringing the total number of properties sold for less than the Buyback price from 612 to 614.

<sup>2</sup> One block has sold since this the original response (No. E19-374) bringing the total number of properties sold for more than the Buyback price from 240 to 241.

**Health—visiting medical officers  
(Question No 2607)**

**Mr Coe** asked the Minister for Mental Health, upon notice, on 2 August 2019  
(*redirected to the Minister for Health*):

- (1) Further to the Select Committee on Estimates 2019-20 question on notice No 132, what was the total cost of facilitating the visiting medical doctors, broken down by (a) airfares, (b) local transport, (c) accommodation, (d) hospitality costs, (e) remuneration and (f) any other relevant category of cost.

**Ms Stephen-Smith:** The answer to the member's question is as follows:

- (1) I have been advised by my department that the information sought is not in an easily retrievable form, and that to collect and assemble the information sought solely for the purpose of answering the question would require considerable resources.

In this instance, I do not believe that it would be appropriate to divert resources from other priority activities for the purposes of answering the Member's question.

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**Health—visiting medical officers  
(Question No 2608)**

**Mr Coe** asked the Minister for Mental Health, upon notice, on 2 August 2019:

- (1) Further to the Select Committee on Estimates 2019-20 question on notice No 132, what was the total cost of facilitating the visiting medical doctors, broken down by (a) airfares, (b) local transport, (c) accommodation, (d) hospitality costs, (e) remuneration and (f) any other relevant category of cost.

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

- (1) I have been advised by my department that the information sought is not in an easily retrievable form, and that to collect and assemble the information sought solely for the purpose of answering the question would require considerable resources.

In this instance, I do not believe that it would be appropriate to divert resources from other priority activities for the purposes of answering the Member's question.

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**Transport—bus timetable  
(Question No 2618)**

**Ms Le Couteur** asked the Minister for Transport and City Services, upon notice, on 2 August 2019 (*redirected to the Minister for Transport*):

- (1) What is the daily average number of public transport journeys that begin (a) before 9am, (b) between 9am and 5pm, (c) between 5pm and 8pm, (d) between 8pm and 10pm, (e) after 10pm.

- (2) What proportion of scheduled bus trips are cancelled that begin (a) before 9am, (b) between 9am and 5pm, (c) between 5pm and 8pm, (d) between 8pm and 10pm and (e) after 10pm.
- (3) How many weekend bus shifts end so late that the bus driver cannot work again the next morning due to compulsory break time.

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

- (1) Based on patronage data recorded by Transport Canberra through the MyWay ticketing system for the period from 27 May to 11 August 2019, the average daily number of public transport journeys that begin:
  - a. Between 4am and 8.59am is 11,386.
  - b. Between 9am and 4.59pm is 23,371.
  - c. Between 5pm and 7.59pm is 7,270.
  - d. Between 8pm and 9.59pm is 1,148.
  - e. Between 10pm and 3.59am is 463.

These figures are rounded to the nearest whole number.

- (2) The proportion of bus services not delivered that are scheduled to begin:
  - a. From the first service to 8.59am is 0.95%.
  - b. Between 9am and 4.59pm is 1.79%.
  - c. Between 5pm and 7.59pm is 4.44%.
  - d. Between 8pm and 9.59pm is 7.00%.
  - e. Between 10pm and the last service is 11.29%.

These figures are rounded to two decimal places.

- (3) Transport Canberra bus drivers are required to comply with a number of requirements relating to fatigue management under the National Heavy Vehicle Driving Regulations and Transport Canberra policies, which requires each driver has a mandatory rest break of eight-hours.

Transport Canberra ensures that those drivers who work the late shifts on the weekend have their appropriate eight-hour mandatory break prior to starting work on the following morning. There are no weekend shifts that finish so late that a driver cannot work again the following morning due to the mandatory rest break.

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### **Housing—strategy (Question No 2620)**

**Ms Le Couteur** asked the Minister for Housing and Suburban Development, upon notice, on 2 August 2019:

- (1) Will the Housing Strategy be subject to one or more publicly available reviews or evaluations; if yes, can the Minister provide more details, including the (a) number, (b) type and (c) scale of any review/s and/or evaluation/s.

- (2) Will these reviews and/or evaluations be conducted internally by the Community Services Directorate, or will an external person or organisation be commissioned to do this work.
- (3) What consideration has been given to establishing an expert advisory panel to assist the Community Services Directorate and the Minister with the implementation of the Housing Strategy.
- (4) If the existing Ministerial Affordable Housing Consultative Group will be maintained, will its terms of reference be amended to reflect a shift in its role from assisting with the development of the Housing Strategy to its new focus; if yes, can the Minister provide information about the amended terms of reference and remit of the Consultative Group.

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

- (1) Yes. The ACT Housing Strategy (the Strategy) includes a commitment to *'report back to the community annually on the strategy and the progress and status of the actions in the implementation plan'*. The Environment, Planning and Sustainable Development Directorate (EPSDD) is co-ordinating the reporting of actions under the Strategy and the associated Implementation Plan.
- (2) Refer Question 1, noting that the Environment, Planning and Sustainable Development Directorate is the responsible directorate.
- (3) An Affordable Housing Consultative Group informed the development and preparation of the strategy. The future role of this group and any future body to monitor the implementation of the strategy is currently under consideration.
- (4) Refer Question 3.

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### **Health—healthy weight initiative (Question No 2623)**

**Ms Le Couteur** asked the Minister for Health, upon notice, on 2 August 2019:

- (1) Is the Healthy Weight Action Plan still being implemented.
- (2) Will the hyperlink to the Healthy Weight Action Plan on the <https://www.act.gov.au/healthyliving> website be fixed.
- (3) Will the Healthy Weight Initiative Progress Reports for 2017-18 and 2018 19 be released; if so, when; if not, have they been produced and (a) if they have why have they not been published and (b) if they have not, why has production of these report ceased.

**Ms Stephen-Smith:** The answer to the member's question is as follows:

- (1) Activities under the Healthy Weight Action Plan continue to be implemented, including healthy eating and active travel initiatives in schools, workplaces and the



broader community. A new ACT Preventive Health Plan is in development and will provide a framework for the continued implementation and monitoring of Healthy Weight Initiative actions.

- (2) The ACT Government healthy living website has been updated.
- (3) (a) Healthy Weight Initiative Progress Reports for 2017-18 and 2018-19 will be released in the coming months as a final Healthy Weight Initiative scorecard.  
  
(b) Future reporting on Healthy Weight Initiative interventions will be captured under the new ACT Preventive Health Plan which is in development and will be finalised towards the end of 2019.

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### **ACT Health—fax machines (Question No 2624)**

**Ms Le Couteur** asked the Minister for Health, upon notice, on 2 August 2019:

- (1) Is ACT health considering removing fax machines from the hospital and/or other medical facilities; if so, what is the rationale for this.
- (2) Is ACT Health aware that many medical professionals consider fax machines to have a particular utility in medical and health administration, in part because they are considered a more secure form of communication than emailing.
- (3) What consultation has ACT Health and/or Canberra Health Services conducted with the medical community about this issue.

**Ms Stephen-Smith:** The answer to the member's question is as follows:

- (1) ACT Health is investigating the development of a plan to look at the possibility of removing fax machines from the hospital and other public health facilities. The rationale is to investigate if there are secure, more transparent and trackable ways of communicating.
- (2) Yes. As part of the plan ACT Health Directorate will investigate why people are using faxes and if areas can accept faxes electronically through a fax gateway. A fax gateway would mean that a fax is transmitted securely through the fax gateway and into relevant electronic inboxes without the requirement to deal with paper.
- (3) ACT Health has consulted with General Practitioners over multiple years about the use of fax machines and is currently in the process of introducing new technology to improve the current processes for referrals into Canberra Health Services Central Health Intake.

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### **Aboriginals and Torres Strait Islanders—Boomanulla Oval (Question No 2627)**

**Mr Milligan** asked the Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs, upon notice, on 2 August 2019 (*redirected to the Minister for Sport and Recreation*):

- (1) Does the Our Canberra website state “The oval is now available for use by the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community”; if so, (a) which groups and organisations have made use of this facility since it opened on the 25 May 2019, (b) how many bookings have been made for this facility, (c) how many bookings have been rejected for this facility and (d) how many booking are pending for this facility.
- (2) What are the current management arrangements for Boomanulla Oval.
- (3) How are bookings handled in terms of priority for the indigenous community versus sporting groups or other users.
- (4) What is the breakdown of the cost of venue hire, including the oval and meeting room hire.
- (5) Are there any special allowances made in terms of venue hire for non-for-profit groups or Aboriginal community-controlled organisations.
- (6) Can the Minister confirm if there are any ACT Government staff permanently located at Boomanulla oval.
- (7) Does the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elected Body pay any hire fees for the use of this facility.
- (8) When and how will Boomanulla be handed back to community controlled.

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

- (1) Yes.
  - (a) Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elected Body;  
Kara Buai Dance Troupe;  
Boomanulla Raiders;  
Bimberi Youth Justice Centre;  
Private Funeral and Wake;  
Justice and Community Safety Directorate;  
Community Services Directorate; and  
Our Booris, Our way.
  - (b) 44.
  - (c) Nil.
  - (d) 13 (as of 14 August 2019).
- (2) The Boomanulla Oval facility is currently managed by Transport Canberra and City Services.
- (3) The Boomanulla Oval facility is available for anyone to hire. Priority is given to booking requests from the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community and the Boomanulla Raiders rugby league club, given Boomanulla’s significance to the indigenous community and the long history of sporting use by the Boomanulla Raiders.
- (4) The same fees and charges apply for all sporting grounds. As an enclosed oval, sporting use of the facility attracts a fee of \$86.80/hr for senior use and \$43.40/hr for junior use, plus \$21.40/hr for the pavilion. Use of the meeting room and broader venue for non-sporting purposes is currently free of charge, pending future consideration of appropriate fees and charges and conditions of hire for non-sporting use.

- (5) No.
- (6) The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elected Body Secretariat (2 staff members from the Community Services Directorate) is accommodated in the administration building on a temporary basis.
- (7) No.
- (8) The ACT Government is currently investigating governance and management models for Boomanulla and has been liaising with the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elected Body in relation to this issue.
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**Planning—Kippax group centre  
(Question No 2629)**

**Mrs Kikkert** asked the Minister for Planning and Land Management, upon notice, on 2 August 2019:

- (1) What is the anticipated date (or otherwise time frame) for construction to commence, under the Kippax Group Centre Master Plan.
- (2) What is the estimated date (or otherwise time frame) for completion of works for the Kippax Group Centre Master Plan.

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

- (1) Master Plans are a non-statutory document that provide planning guidance for the growth and development of a place over a medium to long term timeframe of 10 -20 years.

A variation to the Territory Plan is required to incorporate the recommendations of a master plan into the Territory Plan to give them statutory effect. Construction of new or additional development on privately leased sites will be a commercial decision for a lessee and therefore it will be up to each building owner or lessee to redevelop their sites over time, after the variation to the Territory Plan takes effect.

- (2) Development under the Kippax Group Centre Master Plan is a medium to long-term time horizon, expected to occur over 5 to 15 years.
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**Children and young people—Young Workers Centre  
(Question No 2630)**

**Mrs Kikkert** asked the Minister for Children, Youth and Families, upon notice, on 2 August 2019 (*redirected to the Minister for Employment and Workplace Safety*):

- (1) What date was the Young Workers Centre launched and what date do services commence operation.
- (2) What services does the Young Workers Centre provide.

- (3) What is the breakdown of the total funding for the operation of the Young Workers Centre and all of its services.
- (4) How much funding was provided by the ACT Government in support of the Centre.
- (5) How much funding was received for the operation of the Young Workers Advice Service.
- (6) In what other ways does the ACT Government support the Young Workers Centre.

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

The ACT Government funded a Young Workers Advice Service in the 2018-19 Budget to provide information and advice about workplace rights to young workers, educators and carers of young workers in the ACT. This includes information about pay rates, conditions of employment, leave entitlements, shift work and overtime information, National Employment Standards and awards, work health and safety and workers' compensation.

The Young Workers Advice Service is being provided through the Young Workers Centre, which is a recent initiative by UnionsACT, but the Centre is a separate initiative.

UnionsACT has been engaged to deliver the Young Worker Advice Service following an open tender process. The relevant contract is published on the ACT Government contracts register at: <https://tenders.act.gov.au/ets/contract/view.do?id=95113>.

The maximum value and term of the contract is \$492,800 (GST inclusive) over four years.

Services provided under the contract include:

- a dedicated website with education materials;
- a telephone advisory service; and
- outreach services at locations and events catered towards young people.

The Service was officially launched on 31 July 2019.

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### **Children and young people—care and protection (Question No 2632)**

**Mrs Kikkert** asked the Minister for Children, Youth and Families, upon notice, on 2 August 2019:

- (1) Are Child and Youth Protection Services (CYPS) able to seek an amendment to a care and protection order; if yes, on what grounds would such an amendment be sought.
- (2) What is the process for seeking an amendment to a care and protection order.
- (3) How many times did CYPS seek to amend a care and protection order in each of the past five years, and for each year how many were successful.
- (4) How many times did parents/carers seek to amend a care and protection order in each of the past five years, and for each year how many were successful.

**Ms Stephen-Smith:** The answer to the member's question is as follows:

1. Yes. An amendment to a Care and Protection Order, or a provision of a Care and Protection Order, may be sought under section 466 of the *Children and Young People Act 2008*. Such an application can be made when a person believes on reasonable grounds that the amendment is in the best interests of the subject child, and the person has the leave of the Childrens Court to file the application. Examples of when an amendment might be sought include:
  - a. Seeking that an enduring parental responsibility provision be substituted for an existing long-term parental responsibility provision.
  - b. Adding a drug use provision for a parent.
  - c. Amending a contact order to include a specific contact provision.
  - d. Amending a parental responsibility provision to share parental responsibility between a parent and the Director-General of the Community Services Directorate.
2. All parties to the original proceeding can, with leave of the court, make an application to amend, extend or revoke a care and protection order as outlined in Section 466 subsection (2) of the *Child and Young People Act 2008*.

The party who seeks to amend a care and protection order will file an originating application and supporting material with the ACT Childrens Court. These documents are served on any other party to the previous proceedings. The parties will be notified of the date and time of the first return of the application. During the first attendance at the Childrens Court, the Court will then determine the manner in which the litigation will be conducted.

3. After careful consideration of the question, and advice provided by my Directorate, I have determined that the information sought is not in an easily retrievable form, and that to collect and assemble the information sought solely for the purpose of answering the question would be a major task, requiring a considerable diversion of resources. In this instance, I do not believe that it would be appropriate to divert resources from the provision of direct services, for the purposes of answering the Member's question.
4. Please see answer to Question 3.

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### **Children and young people—care and protection (Question No 2633)**

**Mrs Kikkert** asked the Minister for Children, Youth and Families, upon notice, on 2 August 2019:

- (1) How many children and young people are currently covered by a voluntary care agreement.
- (2) For each of the past five years, how many voluntary care agreements have been initiated by each of the following (a) the Director-General, (b) the child or young person, (c) the parent/s of the child or young person, and (d) the carer of the child or young person.

- (3) How many of the current voluntary care agreements include an amount for a parent or carer to pay a contribution to the Director-General by way of contribution to the cost of the care of the child or young person.
- (4) What is the average of these contributions.
- (5) On what basis is such a contribution assessed.
- (6) For each of the past five years, what was the total cost to the Government of supporting children and young people in voluntary care agreements.
- (7) For each of the past five years, what was the total dollar amount of contributions from parents or carers for voluntary care agreements.

**Ms Stephen-Smith:** The answer to the member's question is as follows:

1. As at 28 July 2019, six young people were on a Voluntary Care Agreement.
2. Community Services Directorate does not maintain this data in an easily retrievable form and to collect this data requires significant diversion of resources. In this instance, I do not believe that it would be appropriate to divert resources from the provision of direct services to families, for the purposes of answering the Member's question.
3. No Voluntary Care Agreements include the requirement for parents to make a financial contribution to the Director-General.
4. Please refer to the answer to Question 3.
5. There is no assessment to determine who or how much a parent or parents contribute financially to the care of their child. Decisions about any contribution a parent or parents may make for their children on Voluntary Care Agreements is made on an individual basis and through negotiation with the parent.
6. After careful consideration of the question, and advice provided by my Directorate, I have determined that the information sought is not in an easily retrievable form, and that to collect and assemble the information sought solely for the purpose of answering the question would be a major task, requiring a significant diversion of resources. In this instance, I do not believe that it would be appropriate to divert resources from the provision of direct services to clients, for the purposes of answering the Member's question.
7. Please refer to the answer to Question 6.

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### **Transport Canberra—ANU shuttle services (Question No 2634)**

**Mrs Kikkert** asked the Minister for Transport and City Services, upon notice, on 2 August 2019 (*redirected to the Minister for Transport*):

- (1) What is the maximum walking distance from each of the following bus stops to the furthest facility located on the ANU campus (a) City Interchange, (b) Barry Drive, (c) Rimmer Street, (d) Marcus Clarke Street, (e) City West, (f) Boldrewood Street and (g) Liversidge Street.

- (2) What “ANU operated shuttle services within campus” are currently in operation, including (a) route, (b) frequency, (c) hours of operation, and (d) maximum capacity.
- (3) What is the level of patronage of the ANU operated shuttle services within the campus.
- (4) What steps are being taken “to make sure that students know what services are available to them”, both public and provided by the university.
- (5) Has the ANU asked for assistance from Transport Canberra and City Services to expand shuttle services; if so, (a) what has been the response and (b) what would those expansions include (number of routes, number of shuttles, increased frequency, etc.).
- (6) Is the ANU shuttle service free; if so, will it continue to be.

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

- (1) The information requested can be found on the following link:  
<https://www.transport.act.gov.au/getting-around/journey-planner>
- (2) The shuttle services within the campus are operated by the ANU.
- (3) The shuttle services within the campus are operated by the ANU.
- (4) Transport Canberra have published information for services to the ANU on the Transport Canberra website. The ANU would need to provide information on what services they provide to students internally.
- (5) No.
- (6) This is a matter for the ANU.

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**Crime—ram raids  
(Question No 2635)**

**Mrs Jones** asked the Minister for Police and Emergency Services, upon notice, on 2 August 2019:

- (1) Has there been a recent increase in ram raids across Canberra.
- (2) Can the Minister provide statistics about ram raids over each year for the past 5 years.
- (3) What specific actions are being undertaken to prevent ram raids, and to address the issue.
- (4) What actions are being taken to reassure the 23 local businesses recently affected that the Minister is doing everything he can to prevent these ram raids and capture those responsible.
- (5) Has the Minister met with owners of local businesses that have been targeted by ram raids.

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

1. A "ram raid" is not a definable criminal offence, however I understand the term is a commonly used phrase which refers to the criminal offence of aggravated burglary when occasioned with a vehicle.

I am informed by ACT Policing, over the short-term the ACT has experienced an increase in this form of aggravated burglary. ACT Policing are taking this seriously and in recent months have been successful in finding some of those responsible and placing them before the Courts.

It is important to recognise that all crime types are subject to short term variances and that long-term trend analysis provides a more accurate picture of crime affecting our community. It is pleasing to see reported shop burglaries decreased 23.3% in 2018-19, when compared to 10 years prior.

The Member will find further details about crime statistics in the *ACT Policing Annual Report 2017-18*, (available at [www.police.act.gov.au/about-us/publications](http://www.police.act.gov.au/about-us/publications)) and in the upcoming ACT Policing Annual Report 2018-19.

2. ACT Policing's incident recording database is unable to differentiate between an aggravated burglary when occasioned with a vehicle, as opposed to an aggravated burglary when occasioned without. Any effort to quantify this form of aggravated burglary using a vehicle would require the manual review of all incidents by ACT Policing – an unreasonable diversion of policing resources.

The member can find details of the incidence of aggravated burglary in the *ACT Policing Annual Report 2017-18* (available at [www.police.act.gov.au/about-us/publications](http://www.police.act.gov.au/about-us/publications)), or at ACT Policing's online crime statistics website (accessible at <https://policenews.act.gov.au/crime-statistics-and-data/crime-statistics>). Please note these statistics do not differentiate an aggravated robbery or an aggravated burglary when occasioned with a vehicle.

ACT Policing are currently examining opportunities to refine their incident recording database to distinguish "ram raids" from other forms of aggravated burglary.

3. ACT Policing established the Crime Disruption Team (CDT) in November 2017 whose primary focus is targeting recidivist offending and emerging crime trends across the ACT. The CDT are an agile team of experienced investigators, readily deployable to address crime trends, including "ram raids" and recidivist offenders.

This flexible ACT Policing resource has demonstrated success in addressing emerging trends and priority issues for the Canberra community over the past two years. Our community can be satisfied that through this team of experienced investigators, and all other resources available to ACT Policing, that this Government and ACT Policing are committed to detecting, deterring and preventing "ram raids".

4. Through the flexible and intelligence deployment of specialist resources, the operationalisation of intelligence, and continued engagement with partner law enforcement, ACT Government agencies and the community, ACT Policing is working to identify and prosecute offenders responsible for those "ram raids" that have affected our local businesses.



ACT Policing continues to engage with our community and businesses to raise awareness about crime types and provide advice on common-sense mechanisms of protecting our businesses from criminality. In March 2019, ACT Policing launched its Aggravated Robbery Prevention Booklet. The booklet advises on strategies to minimise the incidence and impact of an aggravated robbery, with a key focus on building security, cash handling and staff training.

The member can access the booklet online at  
[https://police.act.gov.au/sites/default/files/PDF/ACT%20Policing\\_Aggravated%20Robbery%20Prevention%20Booklet.pdf](https://police.act.gov.au/sites/default/files/PDF/ACT%20Policing_Aggravated%20Robbery%20Prevention%20Booklet.pdf).

5. I refer to my answer in the Assembly of 31 July 2019.

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### **Health—health central provision (Question No 2636)**

**Mrs Dunne** asked the Minister for Health, upon notice, on 16 August 2019:

- (1) What is the purpose of the Health Central Provision (the Provision).
- (2) Does the Minister for Health have ministerial responsibility for the Provision; if no, which minister has responsibility.
- (3) What documentation exists that establishes the Provision and sets out its parameters, terms of reference or modus operandi.
- (4) Will the Minister make copies of all relevant documentation available; if no, why.
- (5) What is the accounting treatment for the funds held in the Provision.
- (6) How is the Provision financed.
- (7) From where are funds withheld to finance the Provision.
- (8) If funding for the Provision is not included in funding for the three health entities, where in the ACT Budget is it disclosed; if it is not disclosed, why.
- (9) Where in the ACT Budget is there discussion on the Provision's purpose, funding and expenditure; if there is no discussion, why.
- (10) For each of 2019-20, 2020-21 and 2021-22, how will the funds in the Provision be expended.
- (11) Why is the provision being built at a rate of 129 per cent in 2020-21 and by a further 75 per cent in 2021-22.
- (12) How much will be withheld for the Provision in 2023-24.
- (13) Who is responsible for administrative management of the Provision.
- (14) What are the governance and auditing arrangements for the Provision.

**Ms Stephen-Smith:** The answer to the member's question is as follows:

- (1) The Health Central Provision is an allocation of funding set aside in the Territory's forward estimates to fund future growth in Health services.
  - (2) No. Funding is released from the Health Central Provision by the Government through the budget process.
  - (3) The Health Central Provision was established by a decision of the Government during the 2015-16 Budget to commence from 2017-18.
  - (4) No. This decision is Cabinet in Confidence.
  - (5) The Health Central Provision is recorded as a Budgeted Expense in the Territory's forward estimates.
  - (6) The Provision is financed by the Territory's consolidated revenue.
  - (7) The Provision is not financed by withholding funds from any other portfolio/entity. Please see answer to question (6) above.
  - (8) Funding for the Provision is centrally held and included in the Territory's Budget consolidated financial statements.
  - (9) The Health Central Provision is a sub-component of the 'Health Funding Envelope'. The Health Funding Envelope and the Health Central Provision is explained in the 2016-17 Budget Paper 3, page 105. Similar explanations are provided in 2017-18, Budget Paper 3, page 102, 2018-19, Budget Paper 3, page 114 and 2019-20, Budget Paper 3, page 107.
  - (10) In 2019-20, the Health Central Provision will fund the initiatives listed on the Appropriation tables (Controlled Recurrent Payments) contained in Budget Statements C under the sections '2019-20 Budget Policy Decisions', with the exception of 'Implementing the Independent Review into the Workplace Culture within ACT Public Health Services' which is mostly funded from outside the Health Central Provision. The allocation of the 2020-21 and 2021-22 Health Central Provision will be a decision for future Budget processes.
  - (11) The question is unclear. Additional information, including the source of the percentages referenced in the question, is required to provide an informed response.
  - (12) Setting of the 2023-24 Health Central Provision will be a decision for the Government during the 2020-21 Budget process.
  - (13) Once the Health Central Provision is allocated to the Health Portfolio during each financial year's Budget process, it is the responsibility of the ACT Health Directorate and Canberra Health Services to administer the funds.
  - (14) The governance and auditing arrangements are the same of all other funds allocated to the Health Portfolio.
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**Environment—golden sun moth habitat  
(Question No 2637)**

**Ms Lawder** asked the Minister for the Environment and Heritage, upon notice, on 16 August 2019 (*redirected to the Minister for City Services*):

- (1) What is the anticipated cost of the translocation of golden sun moth from Yarralumla grasslands.
- (2) What advice did the Government receive that the translocation programme was a safe and cost-effective method of conserving the Yarralumla Grassland moth population.
- (3) Was any contrary advice received.
- (4) What other translocation and mitigating methods were considered.

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

- (1) The cost of translocation will become known when construction tender costs are received.
- (2) Translocation has been used on other construction projects. The program will be accompanied by approved safe work method statements and its cost effectiveness will be assessed as part of the value for money assessment that will be undertaken for the tenders received.
- (3) No.
- (4) There is only one translocation method known. There were extensive mitigation measures undertaken as part of the road design, subsequent review by ecologists and modifying the road alignment to minimise environmental impacts. Further mitigation will occur by fencing off environmentally sensitive areas as 'no go' zones and carefully monitoring work zones.

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**Environment—noise complaints  
(Question No 2638)**

**Ms Lawder** asked the Minister for Business and Regulatory Services, upon notice, on 16 August 2019 (*redirected to the Minister for the Environment and Heritage*):

- (1) How many general noise infringements have been issued by the ACT Environment Protection Authority from 30 October 2016.
- (2) How many of these were on the basis of building and construction noise.
- (3) Can the Minister list the locations of the complaints as referred to in part (2).
- (4) How many of the infringements as referred to in part (2) have been withdrawn or otherwise cancelled in that time and what was the basis of each withdrawal.

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

- (1) 13.
  - (2) 2.
  - (3) Kingston and Lyneham.
  - (4) Both infringement notices remain active as the deadline for payment has not expired.
- 

**Trees—planting  
(Question No 2640)**

**Ms Lawder** asked the Minister for the Environment and Heritage, upon notice, on 16 August 2019:

- (1) What is the time frame for planting 500 000 trees at Ingledene Forest and will this project go to tender; if so, when will the tender be available.
- (2) Will the tender include limits on the tree species planted at Ingledene.
- (3) What other limitations will be placed on the tender for Ingledene Forest.
- (4) How is the \$3.40 per tree cost, from Estimates 2019-2020, calculated and what specifically is included within this \$3.40 figure.

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

- (1) The 500,000 trees at Ingledene will be planted over two winter planting seasons commencing in June 2020 and concluding in August 2021. The project does not need to go to tender because existing panel contracts for forestry site preparation, nursery and silvicultural services provide value for money and expedience.
  - (2) The best Radiata Pine breeding stock is specified for use in the project. Other tree species will be planted for amenity, habitat corridors and buffers. These species will not be limited, but local provenance native species will be preferred.
  - (3) Standard and established conditions for commercial forest planting apply to the project.
  - (4) The estimate of \$3.40 per tree includes site preparation, seedling purchase, planting, weed control and fertilising. All costs associated with commercial tree planting and establishment are calculated on a cost per hectare basis with an average of 1000 trees planted per hectare.
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**Schools—healthcare access review  
(Question No 2642)**

**Mr Wall** asked the Minister for Education and Early Childhood Development, upon notice, on 16 August 2019:

- (1) Has the Health care Access at School (HAAS) Review been finalized.
- (2) Will the report be made available; if so, when; if not, why not.

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

- 1) The evaluation of the Healthcare Access at School Program has been completed. A final report is expected to be provided to the Education Directorate in the coming weeks.
- 2) The evaluation report will be published on the Directorate's website once it has been finalised and considered by Government.

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**Schools—safety  
(Question No 2643)**

**Mr Wall** asked the Minister for Education and Early Childhood Development, upon notice, on 16 August 2019:

- (1) How many schools have Safe and Supportive Schools (SAS) contact officers.
- (2) What training was provided to them before taking on this position.
- (3) How were contact officers chosen.
- (4) Are all contact officers members of that school's teacher workforce; if not what other people are eligible to be contact officers.
- (5) Is there a loading for a teacher to take on this additional responsibility.
- (6) Do all schools have the required one male, one female contact officer; if not, what schools do not.

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

- (1) The Safe and Supportive Schools policy requires all ACT public schools to have Safe and Supportive School Contact Officers (SASSCOs).
- (2) A one-day training package is available for all SASSCOs. This package is offered regularly to accommodate new SASSCOs and as a refresher.
- (3) SASSCOs are identified by the school principal.
- (4) Yes, all SASSCOs are members of the school's teacher workforce.
- (5) No
- (6) While the Safe and Supportive Schools policy requires all ACT public schools to have a male and female SASSCO, details of SASSCOs are not recorded centrally. Depending on their workforce profile, schools may not have a male SASSCO. For

example, Lyons Early Childhood School has two female SASSCOs as at the beginning of 2019 there were no male teachers at the school.

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### **Roads—traffic management (Question No 2645)**

**Ms Le Couteur** asked the Minister for Transport and City Services, upon notice, on 16 August 2019 (*redirected to the Minister for Roads and Active Travel*):

- (1) In relation to the initiative to deliver individual traffic management plans for every school (a) what is the current status of this initiative, (b) how many schools have been completed, (c) how many schools remain to be completed, (d) what is the timeline for completion of this initiative and (e) what are the typical deliverables of this initiative for the schools completed to date.
- (2) In relation to the adoption of the World Health Organisation's HEAT tool for assessing active travel projects (a) what is the current status of this initiative, (b) when will the tool start to be used for assessing projects and (c) how much of the budget funding for this initiative has been spent, and on what activities.

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

- (1) (a) Transport Canberra and City Services (TCCS) has undertaken research to see how similar plans are delivered in other jurisdictions and consulted key stakeholders about the best approach to developing traffic management plans for all schools.  
(b) No traffic management plans have been finalised yet. TCCS is continuing to work with key stakeholders to ensure the proposed approach meets the needs of schools and their communities.  
(c) As noted above, TCCS is yet to finalise any traffic management plans.  
(d) TCCS will finalise the first tranche of traffic management plans this financial year.  
(e) Each school and local environment is different, thus the information included in each plan will vary depending on the school's unique requirements based on the school size, location and travel patterns.
  - (2) (a) TCCS is currently finalising an investigation into the use of the World Health Organisation's HEAT Tool (the Tool).  
(b) TCCS intends to use the Tool in the upcoming 2020/21 budget process.  
(c) Funding for this initiative has been spent. The key activities undertaken were the collection and synthesis of data, research and analysis, and the development of a new business protocol to guide use of the Tool.
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### **Planning—leases (Question No 2646)**

**Ms Le Couteur** asked the Minister for Planning and Land Management, upon notice, on 16 August 2019:

In relation to the statement of leases granted for the period 1 April 2019 to 30 June 2019, why were the leases (a) Greenway section 81 block 1 and (b) Taylor section 37 block 1, granted as direct sales.

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

The leases for both these blocks were granted by Direct Sale under S130 (1) (a) of the *Planning and Development Regulation 2008* being a lease previously offered at auction but not sold. They were sold "Over the Counter" post auction.

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**Energy—power grid  
(Question No 2656)**

**Mrs Kikkert** asked the Minister for Business and Regulatory Services, upon notice, on 16 August 2019 (*redirected to the Minister for Planning and Land Management*):

- (1) When was the power grid infrastructure near Lionel Rose Street in Holt constructed.
- (2) Why was this location chosen for construction of the infrastructure.
- (3) What consultation processes took place prior to the construction of the infrastructure.
- (4) What health/risk assessments were conducted in relation to the infrastructure and were there any health risks to nearby residents; if so, what were these risks.
- (5) Were there any other risks identified that would affect nearby residents – what were these risks.
- (6) What measures will the Government take to address the resident concerns.

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

- (1) The existing 132 kV transmission line in the electrical easement adjacent to Lionel Rose Street, currently owned by Evoenergy, was constructed around 1967.

The new transmission lines, which are currently under construction by TransGrid, are within the same electrical easement and adjacent to the existing Evoenergy transmission lines. The new infrastructure, currently under construction, is related to the ACT Second Electricity Supply project and started construction in July 2019. The construction of the project is currently being undertaken by both TransGrid and Evoenergy to supply a second secure connection to the ACT. Work within this easement is expected to be completed by September 2019 with the whole project scheduled for completion by December 2020.

- (2) The location of the new transmission lines associated with the ACT Second Electricity Supply project are identified as there was an existing electrical easement in place accommodating the existing 132kV transmission lines. This avoided the need to create new easements for the new transmission lines in this area and minimised the land required for the project overall. The alignment of the transmission lines was decided after consideration of limited alternatives that also considered their technical viability and environmental impacts. These alternatives were documented within the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) which was conducted for the project where the impacts to biodiversity, heritage, social amenity, traffic and access, visual amenity, adjacent and future land uses and other planning implications were considered.

- (3) The project has undergone an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) process and an Impact Track Development Application (DA) under the *Planning and Development Act 2007*. The proponents and/or ACT Government undertook consultation prior to, during and following this statutory assessment process.

Consultation commenced in September 2014 where the proponent consulted with adjoining/adjacent land holders, relevant ACT Government agencies, community groups and owners of blocks where the development was to take place. Consultation was undertaken with the lessees of the land at the time.

The EIS and DA were also publicly notified for 35 working days between 5 March 2018 and 26 April 2018. This included letters sent to adjacent land holders and other stakeholders, advertisement on the EPSDD community consultation webpage and erection of several signs along the proposed corridor.

- (4) The EIS and supporting studies have considered all potential health impacts in relation to the electric and magnetic fields from the powerlines. The investigations concluded that, due to the height of the lines and distance from dwellings, the electric and magnetic fields (EMF) would be well within the acceptable levels set by Commonwealth and international guidelines. The EIS also concluded that the operation of the project is not expected to change the existing EMF conditions on surrounding properties or pose a significant risk to the community.
- (5) This EIS considered a range of risks and environmental matters that could impact on surrounding land uses. The key matters addressed by the EIS included protection of ACT and Commonwealth protected matters, visual amenity, impact on existing and future land use, noise, vibration and air quality. On completion of the EIS process, mitigation measures were proposed to minimise the impacts during the construction and operation stages for the project.
- (6) The concerns raised by residents were considered as issues as part of the EIS and DA process and suitable mitigation measures were proposed. The mitigation measures included a commitment to plant screening vegetation up to a height of 4 m along the easement boundary to soften the visual outlook from surrounding residential blocks. The ACT Government will ensure that all EIS commitments are met before the completion of the project.

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### **Roads—upgrades (Question No 2657)**

**Mrs Kikkert** asked the Minister for Transport and City Services, upon notice, on 16 August 2019 (*redirected to the Minister for Roads and Active Travel*):

What is the timeline of the tender process for the Belconnen Way and Springvale Drive intersection upgrades and what is the (a) deadline for tender confirmation and (b) estimated commencement date for works.

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

Funding for the Better Intersections program has been allocated across the 2019-2022 financial years.



- a) At this stage, only preliminary designs have been completed. It is envisaged the design tender release for the Belconnen Way and Springvale Drive intersection upgrade will be released in October and awarded in December 2019.
  - b) Construction works will be programmed following the receipt of the detailed design.
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**Roads—upgrades  
(Question No 2658)**

**Mrs Kikkert** asked the Minister for Transport and City Services, upon notice, on 16 August 2019 (*redirected to the Minister for Roads and Active Travel*):

What is the timeline of the tender process for the Starke Street and Southern Cross Drive intersection upgrades and what is the (a) deadline for tender confirmation and (b) estimated commencement date for works.

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

Funding for the Better Intersections program has been allocated across the 2019-2022 financial years.

- a) At this stage, only preliminary designs have been completed. It is envisaged the design tender release for the Southern Cross Drive and Starke Street upgrade will be released in October and awarded in December 2019.
  - b) Construction works will be programmed following the receipt of the detailed design.
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**Roads—traffic management  
(Question No 2659)**

**Mrs Kikkert** asked the Minister for Transport and City Services, upon notice, on 16 August 2019 (*redirected to the Minister for Roads and Active Travel*):

- (1) Were there any traffic studies conducted for Shakespeare Crescent in the past five years; if so, (a) when and (b) what were the findings and recommendations related to speeding on this road.
- (2) If there has been a traffic study in relation to part (1), can the Minister provide a copy of the report as an attachment to the answer of this question on notice.
- (3) If there has been no traffic study in relation to part (1), will the ACT Government undertake a traffic study or assessment of this road to monitor speed and traffic.
- (4) Will the ACT Government consider the installation of speed humps along Shakespeare Crescent as a measure to prevent speeding on this road; if not, what steps will the ACT Government take to address this issue.

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

- (1) A traffic study was completed in 2017, covering Charnwood, Flynn and Fraser. (a) the study included Shakespeare Crescent, and included a speed and volume survey dated December 2014. (b) The speed survey reported 85<sup>th</sup> percentile speeds of 63km/h within the posted 50km/h speed limit.
- (2) A copy of this traffic study is attached.
- (3) See response at (1).
- (4) The traffic study recommended the installation of traffic calming measures along Shakespeare Crescent as part of a wider Local Area Traffic Management (LATM) project. The installation of these measures on Shakespeare Crescent will be delivered as part of a capital works project in 2019-20.

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

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### **Planning—McKellar shops (Question No 2661)**

**Mrs Kikkert** asked the Minister for Transport and City Services, upon notice, on 16 August 2019 (*redirected to the Minister for City Services*):

- (1) Are there any current plans to develop and upgrade McKellar shops.
- (2) What is the current status of the fenced construction site at McKellar shops, and what plans are in place for this space.

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

- (1) No.
- (2) DA201628902 was approved on 29 August 2016. The proponent did not start development within the required timeframe and the approval has now ended. The ACT Government is not aware of the lessee's plans for the site.

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### **Children and young people—reportable conduct scheme (Question No 2663)**

**Mrs Kikkert** asked the Chief Minister, upon notice, on 16 August 2019:

What is the breakdown of 2019-20 funding (\$293 000 total) used in relation to the Reportable conduct scheme for employees.

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

This funding is provided directly in its entirety by the Chief Minister, Treasury and Economic Development Directorate to the ACT Ombudsman to meet the costs of operating the Reportable Conduct Scheme.

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**Arts—funding  
(Question No 2665—revised)**

**Mrs Dunne:** asked the Minister for the Arts and Cultural Events, upon notice, on 23 August 2019 (*redirected to the Minister for the Arts, Creative Industries and Cultural Events*):

For each year (a) 2012-13, (b) 2013-14, (c) 2014-15, (d) 2015-16, (e) 2016-17, (f) 2017-18 and (g) 2018-19, what was the aggregate of the number of attendees at programs delivered by artsACT funded organisations, as disclosed in grant acquittals; if figures are not available, why.

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

The number of attendees through Key Arts and Program funded organisations as provided in acquittal information are:

- (a) 2012-13 – Not available, previous grants management system did not collect this information.
  - (b) 2013-14 – 348,000
  - (c) 2014-15 – 414,000
  - (d) 2015-16 – 402,680
  - (e) 2016-17 – 403,000
  - (f) 2017-18 – 459,000
  - (g) 2018-19 – 492,767
- 

**Mitchell—business precinct  
(Question No 2674)**

**Mr Milligan** asked the Treasurer, upon notice, on 23 August 2019:

- (1) In relation to the economic worth of the Mitchell business precinct and a PricewaterhouseCoopers analysis in June 2019, reported in the Canberra Times article titled “Canberra city economy booms, other centres slide in rankings: PricewaterhouseCoopers analysis” on 7 June 2019, does the Government possess data on the estimated economic worth of business precincts across Canberra; if yes, can the Minister detail the estimated economic worth of the Mitchell business precinct.
- (2) Can the Minister explain what factors are taken into account when analysing the estimated economic worth of the Mitchell business precinct.
- (3) If the Government does not possess the data referred to in part (1), can the Minister detail any data related to the economic worth of the Mitchell business precinct.

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

- (1) No, the Government does not possess data on the estimated economic worth of business precincts in the ACT apart from that published in the PricewaterhouseCoopers analysis ‘A granular look at Canberra's economy’. This analysis did not contain data in relation to the estimated economic worth of the Mitchell business precinct.

(2) Please see response to question (1).

(3) No, the Government does not possess any data related to the economic worth of the Mitchell business precinct.

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**Trees—Manuka  
(Question No 2678)**

**Ms Le Couteur** asked the Minister for the Environment and Heritage, upon notice, on 23 August 2019:

On what grounds did the Conservator reverse, during the Appeal mediation, their previous decision that the previously-registered plane tree on Franklin Street in Manuka Shops, which was recently de-registered following an ACAT appeal, should remain on the register.

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

Decisions are made on the basis of all available evidence and advice at the time. Through the mediation process, further information became available supporting the decision made. The mediation process is a confidential process between the parties.

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**Trees—scar  
(Question No 2679)**

**Ms Le Couteur** asked the Minister for Education and Early Childhood Development, upon notice, on 23 August 2019:

Why is it necessary for the Education Directorate to maintain its own database, rather than relying on existing heritage registers, in relation to the removal of heritage-listed scarred tree MSYB1 (Spook tree) and the response to Select Committee on Estimates 2019-2020 Recommendation Number 134, where the Government stated "The Education Directorate is currently exploring a range of additional protection measures including; developing a heritage identification database for contractors to enhance the protection of heritage assets located on school sites".

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

1) The Education Directorate is committed to protecting the cultural heritage of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community. In response to the incident where a scarred tree was accidentally removed from Wanniasa Hills Primary School, the Directorate is developing a data base to improve the protection of registered and non-registered culturally scarred trees which will include a link to the Heritage register [https://www.environment.act.gov.au/heritage/heritage\\_register](https://www.environment.act.gov.au/heritage/heritage_register). The database will be used to raise awareness at ACT public schools, link with curriculum and target maintenance to support the longevity of these living artefacts.

Where appropriate and in consultation with stakeholders the database will be used to link locations and stories with the Directorate's website via mobile phone applications.

This work aligns with the Directorate's Strategic Plan for 2018 - 21 and the Reconciliation Action Plan – Keeping it Alive providing information to specific schools to support the development of cultural understanding.

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**Trees—scar  
(Question No 2680)**

**Ms Le Couteur** asked the Minister for the Environment and Heritage, upon notice, on 23 August 2019:

Which Representative Aboriginal Organisations (RAOs) were consulted, and when, in relation to the removal of heritage-listed scarred trees MSYB1 (Spook tree) and MST4 and in response to Select Committee on Estimates 2019-2020 Recommendation Number 134, where the Government stated “Consultation with (RAOs) has occurred since ACT Heritage was notified about the removal of the scarred trees. The salvaged tree trunk from MST4 has been moved to a secure location with the consent of the RAOs”.

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

Under Section 14 of the *Heritage Act 2004*, four Representative Aboriginal Organisations (RAOs) have been declared, being:

- Buru Ngunawal Aboriginal Corporation (*Ngunawal*);
- Consultative Body Aboriginal Corporation on Indigenous Land and Artefacts in the Ngunnawal Area (now King Brown Tribal Group) (*Ngunnawal*);
- Little Gudgenby River Tribal Council (now Mirabee) (*Ngambri*); and
- Ngarigu Currawong Clan (*Ngarigu*).

All four RAOs were notified about removal of the ‘Spook Tree’ (MSYB1) and MST4, and their views on the ongoing management of MST4 have been sought.

ACT Heritage was notified of the removal of the Spook Tree on 6 April 2017. Attempts to contact all RAOs were subsequently made on 7 April and 13 April 2017. As a result, the matter was discussed with Buru Ngunawal Aboriginal Corporation on 7 April 2017, and with King Brown Tribal Group, Mirabee and Ngarigu Currawong Clan on 13 April 2017.

ACT Heritage was notified of the removal of MST4 on 24 July 2018. Attempts to contact all four RAOs were subsequently made on 30 and 31 July 2018. As a result, the matter was discussed with Buru Ngunawal Aboriginal Corporation on 30 July 2018.

To inform the continued management of MST4, attempts to contact all four RAOs were also made on 9, 10, 16, 17, 25 and 29 October 2018, and on 2, 5, 6 and 24 November 2018. As a result, the matter was discussed with Buru Ngunawal Aboriginal Corporation (on 2, 5 and 24 November 2018) and King Brown Tribal Group (on 24 November 2018).

Consultation with all four RAOs on the continued management of MST4 is ongoing.

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## Questions without notice taken on notice

### ACT Health—flu strategy

**Ms Stephen-Smith** (*in reply to a supplementary question by Mr Hanson on Tuesday, 30 July 2019*):

Canberra Hospital and Calvary Public Hospital Bruce (CPHB) have documented clinical procedures in place that guide the assessment and management of patients presenting to the Emergency Department (ED) with influenza like symptoms.

The procedures outline detailed influenza management pathway and infection control risk assessment guidelines, as well as guides and standardises the care provided to patients presenting with influenza like illnesses relating to screening, admission and infection control principles.

Infection control measures in place, specifically whilst in the ED, include:

- Patient to immediately be provided with, and wear, a surgical mask and perform hand hygiene;
- Patient is to be asked to wear the mask at all times while in the hospital (this may change if the patient is admitted and isolated);
- Patient is to be encouraged to use cough and sneeze etiquette, including hand hygiene to help prevent the droplet transmission of infectious diseases;
- Staff involved in the clinical assessment or care of a suspected influenza patient must don a surgical mask and eye protection (face mask preferable) before attending to the patient. Droplet precautions must be applied; and
- Where possible the patient is to be assessed and tested for respiratory illness in a bedspace with curtains pulled to prevent transmission between other patients ensuring appropriate monitoring continues. The front curtain may need to remain open when the patient is resting to ensure appropriate monitoring.

Canberra Health Services and Calvary Healthcare participate in a national surveillance program for flu called FLUCAN which runs from 1 April until 30 October each year.

### ACT Health—workplace culture

**Ms Stephen-Smith** (*in reply to a question by Mrs Jones on Tuesday, 30 July 2019*):

The ACT Health Directorate Workplace Climate Survey is planned for October 2019. A report on the high level survey findings will be released at the conclusion of the survey process.

### Health—maternity services

**Ms Stephen-Smith** (*in reply to a question and a supplementary question by Mr Coe on Wednesday, 31 July 2019*):

- (1) Women's length of stay is reflective of the models of care offered at Centenary Hospital for Women and Children that promote community and home-based care with a short acute hospital stay. Women and babies who are well and have had a normal birth without complications, may choose to go home soon after the birth. All postnatal women are referred to the Maternal and Child Health Services.
- (2) Capacity pressure will at times impact on management of health facilities. However, women and babies have to be medically safe for discharge before being sent home. Women who are eligible upon discharge from hospital will have follow-up home care by the hospital's Midcall service, including:
  - Assessment of the mother, and ongoing management of physical and psychological concerns.
  - Assessment of the baby, including weighing and assessing the physical wellbeing of the baby.
  - Ongoing education and support for feeding and parenting.

### **Hospitals—oncology treatment waiting times**

**Ms Stephen-Smith** *(in reply to a question and a supplementary question by Mr Parton on Tuesday, 13 August 2019):*

ICON Cancer Centre has provided Canberra Health Services (CHS) with a proposal to 'buy' treatments. At this point of time, it has not been considered necessary. However, should there be an unreasonable deterioration in wait times I am advised CHS would be willing to engage in further discussion with ICON Cancer Centre.

In the meantime, all suitable patients on referral to CHS Radiation Oncology are provided information regarding the option of using ICON and where this is agreed to by the patient, CHS facilitate the transfer of these patient's referrals.

### **ACT Health—SPIRE project**

**Ms Stephen-Smith** *(in reply to a question and a supplementary question by Miss C Burch on Tuesday, 13 August 2019):*

No further staff will be transferred from ACT Health or Canberra Health Services to Major Projects Canberra in 2019-20 as part of the Machinery of Government changes. However, staff in both organisations will continue to work closely with Major Projects Canberra throughout the duration of the project.

The Project Director position is a new position that commenced on 1 July 2019.

### **ACT Health—SPIRE project**

**Ms Stephen-Smith** *(in reply to a question by Mr Coe on Tuesday, 13 August 2019):*

ACT Health's infrastructure team and executives, including facility and service planners all worked on the SPIRE project. This team consisted of up to 12 people at

any given time. These staff were also working on other projects simultaneously, including the centenary hospital project.

It was always intended to establish a project team focused on the delivery of SPIRE once the business case was successful. This team had not yet been established when Major Projects Canberra was announced - meaning there were few people to transfer to a new agency focused solely on delivery of SPIRE.

A team of five health planners and clinical liaison officers transferred into the SPIRE project team under Major Projects Canberra from the ACT Health Directorate.

### **Health—inter-agency communication**

**Ms Stephen-Smith** (*in reply to a question by Mrs Dunne on Tuesday, 13 August 2019*):

The decision to create Major Projects Canberra (MPC) and the projects that would transfer, was made by the Chief Minister. The communication with stakeholders regarding the creation of MPC and the transfer of projects was coordinated by the Chief Minister, Treasury and Economic Development Directorate. There were discussions between the Head of Service, the then Minister for Health and Wellbeing, Ms Meegan Fitzharris, Canberra Health Services Chief Executive Officer, and the Director-General of the ACT Health Directorate and relevant Executives regarding the transfer of SPIRE prior to and following the Government announcement.

### **Children and young people—care and protection**

**Ms Stephen-Smith** (*in reply to a question and a supplementary question by Mrs Kikkert on Wednesday, 14 August 2019*):

As children come into care, they receive an initial health and wellbeing assessment with an approved health care provider. This information is shared with those caring for the child. Subsequent referrals and appointments are documented in the Health Passport. In addition, when children come into care carers can access information that is uploaded on *MyHealth* Record. Carers can discuss health issues through information sharing that occurs during declared care team meetings.

Carers continue to address a child's health concerns with a medical practitioner, preferably the child's own doctor who will know their medical history, or as referred by the health care provider conducting the initial health and wellbeing assessment.

The purpose of the Health Passport is to assist carers to document relevant medical appointments and therapies for a child while they are in their care. Carers do not require a health passport to seek medical attention for a child, and a health passport does not provide the medical history for a child.

As I stated in my response to the Assembly, the Community Services Directorate is reviewing the use of the Health Passport with the introduction of *My Health Record*.



## **Budget—Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander services**

**Ms Stephen-Smith** (*in reply to a supplementary question by Mr Coe on Wednesday, 14 August 2019*):

In response to Mr Coe's question, I can inform the Assembly:

A contractor has been engaged to provide expert assessment and reporting of requirements, including costings of physical work to accommodate Gugan Gulwan's needs. The project is expected to be 19 weeks in duration, with a progress report at the six-week point.

The Feasibility Study Report provided at the conclusion of the project will cover feasibility of extension options for Gugan Gulwan to remain at the current site (including outdoor space into indoor covered space, vacant space around the site used for extension, second storey); two options for relocation at another site; and three sketch plans for future works at the site.

The project is on track to be completed by October 2019 with the final report to be provided to the Community Services Directorate.

## **Planning—Molonglo Valley**

**Mr Gentleman** (*in reply to a supplementary question by Ms Le Couteur on Thursday, 15 August 2019*):

The first release of land in the Molonglo commercial precinct is programmed for 2021-22. By this time, it is estimated the population of Molonglo Valley would have grown to support a full line supermarket in this location.

## **Asbestos—government information**

**Ms Stephen-Smith** (*in reply to a question and a supplementary question by Mr Parton on Thursday, 15 August 2019*):

The response to QON E19-375 was accurate – no homeowners were required to sign non-disclosure agreements.

Whilst the sales process was still being developed, a handful of owners were issued with a non-disclosure agreement alongside their First Right of Refusal (FROR) offer, including the owners mentioned in *The Canberra Times* article of 19 July 2017.

It was quickly identified that non-disclosure agreements were not required as part of the process, and no further documents were issued, nor were those that received them asked to return them.

## **Canberra Hospital—emergency department**

**Ms Stephen-Smith** (*in reply to a supplementary question by Mrs Dunne on Thursday, 15 August 2019*):

In 2019, Canberra Hospital Emergency Department has been on ambulance bypass on three occasions:

- 20 May 2019 (2 hours only);
- 1 July 2019 (30 minutes only); and
- 14-15 August 2019 (4 hours only).

It is important to note that only stable patients that meet clinically appropriate criteria are diverted. Paediatric patients, those with life threatening emergencies, and trauma patients are always taken directly to Canberra Hospital. ACT Ambulance Service never bypass a hospital during a life-threatening emergency.

### **Canberra Hospital—emergency department bypass**

**Ms Stephen-Smith** (*in reply to a question and a supplementary question by Mrs Dunne and Mr Coe on Tuesday, 20 August 2019*):

- (1) There was no obvious cause for the surge in admissions other than usual seasonal fluctuations. It is not uncommon for health systems across the nation to face periods of increased demand, which is why Canberra Health Services (CHS) has clear processes in place to ensure the best possible ongoing care for all consumers.
- (2) The number of beds that may need to be placed in the ED corridor is variable and is dependent on ED presentations and patient flow across the system. Canberra Health Services does everything it can to avoid the use of corridors in the ED and is actively working to cease this occurring at all.

If there is a necessity for patients in the Canberra Hospital Emergency Department (ED) to be placed in the corridor due to excessive demand, the ED staffs over and above the core staffing level to ensure the safety of all patients.

### **Canberra Hospital—emergency department bypass**

**Ms Stephen-Smith** (*in reply to a supplementary question by Mrs Dunne on Tuesday, 20 August 2019*):

- (1) There were 88 patients discharged from the Canberra Hospital Emergency Department (ED) following treatment between 10pm on 14 August 2019 and 6am on 15 August 2019. This is a usual number for this time period.

No patients were discharged from inpatient wards during these hours.

### **Canberra Hospital—emergency department bypass**

**Ms Stephen-Smith** (*in reply to a supplementary question by Mrs Dunne on Tuesday, 20 August 2019*):

- (1) Canberra Health Services is unable to provide the data at this time as it has not yet been invoiced for patients transferred to National Capital Private Hospital on 14 August 2019.

### **Health—adult mental health unit**

**Mr Rattenbury** (*in reply to a question by Miss C Burch on Wednesday, 21 August 2019*):

There is no national capacity benchmark for adult mental health units.

### **Planning—Ginninderra Estate**

**Mr Gentleman** (*in reply to supplementary questions by Mrs Kikkert and Mr Parton on Thursday, 22 August 2019*):

1. No, the tower closest to residential properties is approved to be constructed at a distance of 20.7 metres from the base of the tower to the nearest boundary fence of the easement.

The Ginninderra Estate is being developed by a private land developer, not the ACT Government.

The infrastructure in question is being constructed for the ACT Second Electricity Supply Project. This project was subject to extensive consultation through the environmental impact and development assessment processes of the *Planning and Development Act 2007*.

The Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) and Development Applications were lodged in January 2018 and underwent public consultation in March and April 2018.

The ACT Government consulted with the lessees of impacted blocks at the time as required under the legislation.

The EIS and supporting studies have considered all potential health impacts in relation to the electric and magnetic fields from the powerlines. The investigations concluded that, due to the height of the lines and distance from dwellings, the electric and magnetic fields (EMF) would be well within the acceptable levels set by Commonwealth and international guidelines. The EIS also concluded that the operation of the project is not expected to change the existing EMF conditions on surrounding properties or pose a significant risk to the community.

2. The Ginninderra Estate is being developed by a private land developer, not the ACT Government.

The EIS considered the visual impact of the project on the future residents of the Ginninderra Estate. Mitigation measures for visual impacts were identified and vegetated screening was required where towers were in close proximity of the Ginninderra estate. It was highlighted in the assessment of the EIS that, due to the layout of the adjacent estate and utility requirements relating to vegetation within the electrical easement, limited planting options were available. On completion of the EIS, the proponent, TransGrid, committed to providing 4 m high vegetation screening in the electrical easement between towers and the estate.