



QUESTION TIME
OF THE
LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
FOR THE
AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY

HANSARD

Edited proof transcript

Thursday, 25 November 2021

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Questions without notice ACT government—data security

MRS JONES: My question is to the Treasurer. I refer to the story in the *Canberra Times* today about the major ACT government privacy breach that involves almost 30,000 ACT government workers compensation claims made since the commencement of self-government in 1989. This data was apparently uploaded to the public-facing Tenders ACT website by your directorate in 2018. Treasurer, were you informed at the time that this data was being made public, and if not, when did you become aware of the breach?

MR STEEL: Madam Speaker, I will take the question as the responsible minister for procurement as Special Minister of State.

I can confirm that the tender in question was seeking quotations for the administration of past and future ACT public service workers compensation claims for the period since 1989. The tender documents were placed on the Tenders ACT website in May 2018.

The tender was part of the ACT government's move to become a self-insurer and move away from Comcare as an assessor of workers compensation claims for ACT government employees. The tenderers estimate that the cost to provide accurate quotes was necessary to provide tenderers with information about the number, nature and duration of the claims that would require management.

The spreadsheet in question was provided for that purpose and includes redacted de-identified information about ACT government workers compensation claims. The spreadsheet was heavily redacted prior to release so that the identity of workers compensation claimants could not be determined. This included removal of data fields such as claimant name, day and month of birth, address and contact details.

I only became aware of any concern in relation to this particular procurement yesterday, Madam Speaker, when I was contacted by the media.

MRS JONES: Given that the identity of the claimants has been identified, have you taken responsibility for this breach by reporting it to the Office of the Australian Information Commissioner as required under your government's *CMTEDD information privacy policy*, on page 21?

MR STEEL: At this stage, we are not aware of a particular breach. That is why this has been referred to a review by the privacy officer in CMTEDD, who will be looking at whether this has met all ACT government policy requirements and obligations under the privacy acts, both in the ACT and federally. We look forward to that review being undertaken and any recommendations that may come out of that review about whether there has in fact been a breach of privacy in this particular case and whether there are any further measures we can put in place to protect the privacy of individuals in procurements going forward.

MR HANSON: Minister, will you be notifying as many of the 30,000 people as possible about how you will compensate them for this breach of privacy?

MR STEEL: The actions that will be undertaken will be performed by the review that will be undertaken by CMTEDD into this matter. As I have stated before, there was a range of de-identified data that provided, where information that would have provided the claimant's name, date and month of birth, address and contact details was not part of the spreadsheet as part of that procurement. The fields that were listed in the spreadsheet included information like Comcare ID, gender, the directorate each individual was employed by, the duration of the claim, the dollar value associated with it, and the mechanism and location of the injury.

Once we have undertaken that review, there will be, no doubt, recommendations and findings about whether there has been a breach and any actions that may be required in order to address that. That may include potentially reaching out to anyone who may have been involved.

ACT government—data security

MR HANSON: My question is to the Special Minister of State. When releasing report No 3 in 2020 on data security the Auditor-General said:

ACT Government agencies have not clearly understood the risks and requirements of securing sensitive data, and are not well placed to respond to a data breach.

Knowing that the Auditor-General raised these significant concerns over cyber security in 2020, today's story in the *Canberra Times*, where it was revealed the government has deliberately released the personal information of 30,000 ACT public servants online, makes it clear that this government has totally failed to mitigate the data breach risks. As the minister responsible for cyber security, how have you allowed this data breach to persist for three years, including for over a year on your watch?

MR STEEL: I thank the member for his question. We have only just become aware in relation to this particular procurement. While typically the information on tender documents for procurements goes up on Tenders ACT and is removed after a period of time, it just so happens that a system change in 2020 resulted in these documents becoming visible again without the knowledge of Procurement ACT. That will no doubt be part of the review.

Of course, led by the Chief Digital Officer there is a significant program of engagement with directorates around cyber security, and we have outlined measures in recent budget to improve cyber security in the territory. We are consistently as part of a continuous improvement approach looking at how we can improve cyber security both in terms of hardware but also the knowledge and capability of directorates. We will continue to work centrally to support directorates to do that. If there has been a breach the findings will no doubt be used in that continuous improvement process in the future, but we have yet to determine whether there has been a breach.

MR HANSON: Minister, will you be taking responsibility for this breach of Canberrans' privacy? If not, who is responsible?

MR STEEL: I refer the member to the answer to the last question, which is that we

have not determined whether there has been a breach in this particular case. We will be undertaking a review of this matter. I take responsibility for implementing any recommendations and actions that come out of that review.

MR CAIN: Minister, why would you expect the ACT community to trust you with their private information given this severe breach?

MR STEEL: Because we take any issues raised with us seriously. We are looking into that matter through a review by the privacy officer in CMTEEDD to make sure we have met all ACT government policies and protocols in relation to privacy and information. It is necessary—as in this particular case—to be able to go out to the market in order to procure services, and from time to time that may involve the release of government information. An attempt was made to ensure that information was redacted so it could not identify people involved, and we will look to see whether those protocols have been met in this case and whether any actions and measures may be required in the future to improve our processes.

Health Records (Privacy and Access) Act—data security

MR PARTON: My question is to the Minister for Health. Minister, in 2018 you were the minister for industrial relations and presided over the establishment of the ACT's workers compensation self-insurance arrangements. Now, as health minister, you administer the Health Records (Privacy and Access) Act 1997. When this Assembly debated amendments to the COVID-19 Emergency Response Act 2020 a couple of months ago, you did not support opposition proposals intended to ensure that COVID-19 check-in data could not be accessed by law enforcement agencies or misused by public servants. After the massive data breach involving nearly 30,000 workers compensation claims by ACT public servants, reported in the *Canberra Times* today, how can anyone trust you or the directorates that you administer with their personal health data?

MS STEPHEN-SMITH: I thank Mr Parton for the question. I think he is drawing multiple long bows there. I think the fundamental answer to the question is that the amendments that were put forward by the opposition did not actually achieve what Mr Parton has claimed they would have achieved. The amendments the government was putting forward were precisely to protect the personal check-in information of individuals. What the opposition was seeking to do was to limit the use of business information and take the bill in a completely different direction. The amendments actually failed to do what the opposition thought they were going to do. That is why they were not supported. Our bill was entirely about ensuring that we protected the personal information of individuals who were checking in. That is what it was about and that is what it did.

MADAM SPEAKER: A supplementary.

MR PARTON: Minister, will you ensure that this massive data breach will also be investigated as a potential health records privacy breach?

MS STEPHEN-SMITH: I have not had an opportunity to catch up with Minister Steel about this matter, but I am very happy to have a conversation with him about how this

review is going to work. I have confidence that the review will consider all matters in relation to the privacy of this information and whether or not there was, in fact, a data breach associated with this.

MRS JONES: A supplementary.

MADAM SPEAKER: Mrs Jones.

MRS JONES: Minister, why have you not had a conversation yet with the minister involved, given that it broke this morning and that this is 30,000 people's private health information about conditions they have been paid out for, some of whom have contacted me because they know that they are listed on that site?

MS STEPHEN-SMITH: Minister Steel and I are both busy people. I have had multiple meetings this morning and multiple pieces of work to do. I am obviously familiar with the procurement that was undertaken in 2018. As Minister Steel has indicated, that data would have been taken down immediately after that procurement. It would have been provided in a way, I understand, that would have protected that information at the time. I am very happy to have a conversation with Minister Steel when both of us are available to do that.

Domestic and family violence—16 days of activism

DR PATERSON: My question is to in the Minister for the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence: how are you and the ACT community marking the 16 days of activism against gender-based violence this year?

MS BERRY: I thank Dr Paterson for her interest in and support of eliminating domestic and family violence in the ACT and more broadly across the country. I want to acknowledge that the United Nations theme for this year's International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women is Orange the World: End Violence Against Women Now.

During these 16 days I want to firstly pay my respects to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women, whose struggle is also bound up with continued injustice of colonisation and dispossession. I also want to acknowledge the work of generations before us who have fought in the campaign for gender equality that continues today.

This year for the 16 days I have written to Senator Michaelia Cash as Minister for Industrial Relations, with support from the domestic and family violence sector, women's support services and other advocates, including unions, calling once again for 10 days of paid domestic and family violence leave to be included in the national employment standards. Domestic and family violence can affect anyone and it can happen anywhere. It impacts all aspects of our society and it needs to be publicly acknowledged rather than continuing to be kept hidden.

The ACT government has already acknowledged this and has introduced 20 days of paid domestic and family violence leave, which is a formal entitlement in the ACT government's enterprise bargaining agreements. We have also implemented training for ACT government public service employees to ensure they understand their role in

supporting people in their community around domestic and family violence. These are just a few examples of some of the activities the ACT government is engaged in in the next 16 days.

DR PATERSON: Minister, what other activities and events will community organisations hold during these 16 days?

MS BERRY: There is a calendar of events and online campaigns are being held during these 16 days. Today I was lucky enough to be on a panel with the Domestic Violence Crisis Service with the question asked: whose job is it to eliminate domestic and family violence? The answer is it is all our jobs. Governments can lead the way by implementing gendered policies to ensure domestic and family violence is front and centre of our decisions we make to ensure our community remains safe, but members of our community can also get involved in the 16 days of action.

On 30 November an online education session is being held by the Domestic Violence Crisis Service. You do not need to pay but you do need to register for that one. That is a really important initiative by DVCS for people who want to know what they can do in their community, their neighbourhoods and their homes to support people who might be experiencing domestic and family violence.

On 7 December there will be a conversation entitled “Ending domestic and family violence—what role do men’s behaviour-change programs play,” again, a really important subject for people to be involved in. And also do not forget to keep a close eye on social media posts from organisations like the YWCA, who will also be publishing different content focusing on the 16 days.

The 16 days is a great opportunity for Canberrans to get involved, to understand and to listen with kindness and empathy and understanding to the experiences of people to learn what we can all do together to eliminate domestic and family violence and violence against women.

Importantly, I ask that members of the ACT government and all MLAs engage in the conversation over the next 16 days, wear orange to show your support for the elimination of violence against women and share all those important messages across your own social media channels.

MS ORR: Minister, why are the 16 days of activism against gender-based violence so important?

MS BERRY: Creating change includes unpacking ideas that have forever been normalised around gendered violence. It is a challenge, that is for sure, that has been happening for decades before we were here. But what I hear in women’s stories that I listen to when talking to my community, it is not impossible. In fact, it is unavoidable. Change is already happening and we are seeing that across our workplaces, across the country and across the world. We need to continue the momentum.

I know everybody is tired after the last couple of years responding to an international health pandemic, but we cannot take our eye off a gendered violence pandemic that has

been facing women and girls for years in this country. We need to make sure we take every step we can as a community to eliminate violence against women.

ACT Public Service—data security

MR MILLIGAN: My question is to the Minister for Industrial Relations and Workplace Safety. This data breach, according to the *Canberra Times*, shows people's birth year, where they work, what their job is, what their injury is and how much compensation they received. Many of the affected workers will have incurred psychological injuries whilst at work in the ACT government. Will you apologise for the additional distress this data breach has no doubt caused them?

MR STEEL: I will take the question, Madam Speaker. I really want to clarify, because that is not quite right what Mr Milligan said in the prelude to his question, what was listed in the spreadsheet included information on the Comcare ID, gender, the directorate which the individual was employed by, not their job or role, the duration of the claim and dollar value associated with it, the mechanism and location of the injuries. That what was provided.

The tender with its associated information was approved for release by the head of the ACT Treasury then, on advice from the workers' compensation procurement officials and the Government Procurement Board. They made a determination then that the redacted information could be provided on to Tenders ACT. Now we are undertaking a review to see whether that was appropriate in the circumstances and in accordance with privacy legislation, including the Health Records Act and other pieces of legislation. We will let that review run its course to understand the matter and any recommendations that come out of it.

MR MILLIGAN: Minister, how will the ACT government be contacting each of these workers, some going back to 1989, as is required under the CMTEEDD information privacy policy requirements relating to privacy data breaches?

MR STEEL: The opposition has already asked that question. I refer them to the answer to the previous question.

MR CAIN: Minister, what support services and compensation will you be providing for people, some of whom will no doubt have had their mental health affected adversely by learning of this data breach?

MR STEEL: I am not intending to pre-empt the review. That may provide findings and recommendations. We do not know that yet. We have to go through that process before we look any further.

Children and young people—National Youth Week

MR DAVIS: My question is to the minister for youth affairs. Minister, I have been contacted by a number of young Canberrans who are excited for Youth Week in April next year, but are concerned, given the news about the Multicultural Festival, that plans might not go ahead. Could you provide an update on National Youth Week?

MS BERRY: Of course, after the years that we have been through, young people want to be able to celebrate, and to have the opportunity to express their ideas and views and act on issues which impact on them and their peers. At this stage Youth Week will be going ahead, and decisions about whether or not that goes ahead will be made by the Chief Health Officer at the time. At the moment it is something that we can have hope for, and young people can have hope that it will continue. It will occur next year, from 4 April to 14 April.

We have already announced the 2021 Youth Week grants, which fund 14 events and activities across the ACT. These will include chill-out spaces and outreach, Belco's Got Talent finalist performance, Sport in the Street, and the GreenLaw GreenTea Wellness Program, a guided on-country walk.

Importantly, the 2022 ACT Youth Week grant program closed on 22 November. All of the applications are being assessed, and we will be notifying successful applicants soon.

MR DAVIS: Minister, are there any specific ACT government sponsored programs in my electorate of Brindabella to coincide with Youth Week?

MS BERRY: I can double-check exactly what events are happening across the territory. I encourage Mr Davis as well as everybody else in this place to spread the word about Youth Week to young people that they might be engaging with, and to contact the office for youth in the ACT government, who will be able to provide more details. Of course, keep a close eye on social media pages, because the Youth Week activities will be advertised broadly across social media, including with the Youth Advisory Council.

MR BRADDOCK: Minister, what kind of planning has been undertaken by the government to ensure Youth Week events can go ahead, in light of COVID?

MS BERRY: Like everyone else, the office for youth and the Youth Advisory Council have had to move very quickly online, to make sure that they engage around what sort of activities will occur during Youth Week and, importantly, making sure that we engage with all of the ACT's youth services, to understand from them what kinds of activities young people want to be engaged in to celebrate Youth Week in 2022. Again, I encourage people to keep an eye on their social media accounts, share on their various social media accounts and talk with young people in their lives about all of the activities that will be up for them to enjoy. They should understand that ACT Youth Week is about giving young people the chance to express their ideas and views on issues that impact on them.

Information Privacy Act—data security

MRS KIKKERT: My question is to the Attorney-General. Minister, I refer to the massive data breach reported in the *Canberra Times* involving the release by the ACT Treasury of private details of every workers compensation claim by every ACT public servant since self-government in 1989. The Information Privacy Act 2014 creates an offence related to the reckless or intentional release of protected private information about someone else. Minister, what steps are you intending to take to refer any potential offences under the Information Privacy Act to an appropriate independent investigative

authority, such as the police?

MR RATTENBURY: I thank Mrs Kikkert for the question, but as the Special Minister of State has indicated there is a review currently underway. I think it is most appropriate that that review be finalised, at which point I will speak with the Special Minister of State about what the findings of that review are and whether it is appropriate to take further steps, either in the ways Mrs Kikkert has asked about or through any other matters that may be relevant in the light of the findings of that review.

Mrs Jones interjecting—

MADAM SPEAKER: Mrs Jones, your colleague has the floor.

MRS KIKKERT: Minister, do you believe that this is a serious breach of these almost 30,000 people's privacy, given that people can actually be identified, and do you expect to receive a report from the Australian Information Commissioner?

MR RATTENBURY: I think people were concerned to read that report in the paper today. That is why it is appropriate that the Special Minister of State has sought this review. Mrs Jones is interjecting. I think it is fair to say that this is a first step. It is about gathering information at this point and better understanding the circumstances of the situation. Then the government can assess what further steps may or may not need to be taken.

MRS JONES: Minister, will the review that is being undertaken internally be given to you, and will you consider that that is all the investigation that is required on something that could be a law breach being internally investigated by the government itself?

MR STEEL: I am happy to take that question. As the Attorney-General has noted, this will be a first step forward. We will make that available through the government to be able to consider those findings, recommendations and steps that need to be taken further, legally or otherwise, to make sure that any issues are addressed in the review.

At this point in time, it has not been determined that there has been a breach of privacy or health records legislation. We will look at the findings of the review to determine if there has been any breach and the steps that we need to take to remedy that breach and make sure that any issues do not occur in the future, if that may be the case.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders—children and families advocate

MS ORR: My question is to the Minister for Human Rights. The 2021-22 budget commits \$311,000 to appoint a temporary Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families advocate. Can you update the Assembly on the work underway to appoint the advocate?

MS CHEYNE: I thank Ms Orr for the question. The ACT government is fully implementing the recommendations of the Our Booris, Our Way review, including the recommendation to establish an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children's commissioner. We have heard clearly that the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community wants the commissioner established as soon as possible and, as minister responsible for this forum, I do too.

The commissioner's policy and legislative framework is currently being developed through a genuine co-design process so that the commissioner has the confidence of the community. That process is well underway. In the meantime, the community has asked for an interim role to be appointed. We have listened, and the 2021-22 budget commits \$311,000 for a temporary Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and families advocate and a support staff member.

While the advocate will not have the full powers of the permanent commissioner, it is important that this role meets the needs, expectations and requirements of the community. We are currently working with community leaders, including the Our Booris, Our Way implementation oversight committee and the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elected Body to finalise the position description for the advocate. The role will be advertised in the coming weeks and I expect it will be filled early next year.

MS ORR: Minister, how is the co-design process for the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children's commissioner progressing?

MS CHEYNE: As I mentioned, the commissioner role will be co-designed with the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community in Canberra. While we have had to pivot and rethink how to run this process in a Covid-safe way, the co-design has been ramping up over the past few weeks. A discussion paper has recently been released by the facilitators, the Jumbunna Institute for Indigenous Education and Research at the University of Technology Sydney.

The community is being asked to consider the commissioner's functions, powers, governance structures, physical location and a culturally appropriate process for recruitment. Jumbunna has been holding one-on-one and small-group conversations with community members, and online community dialogues are also occurring this week. These discussions will continue over the next few weeks to develop and refine the commissioner role. I expect to introduce legislation to establish the permanent commissioner next year so that the commissioner can begin operating as soon as possible in 2022.

I encourage the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community to consider participating in the co-design process. If anyone has not yet, they can go to Jumbunna's website, which can be found by googling "Jumbunna", and within the UTS domain there are contact details on the page and people can get in touch with Jumbunna to discuss participating in the process.

MRS KIKKERT: Minister, will the commissioner have the authority to intervene in child protection decisions, as the community wants?

MS CHEYNE: I am not going to pre-empt the consultation that is occurring currently.

COVID-19—testing centre fees

MS CASTLEY: My question is to the Minister for Health. Minister, yesterday in the first correction you provided to this Assembly you said that the \$112 fee comprised a \$50 testing fee, plus \$5 GST, a \$50 handling fee, plus \$5 GST, and an "initiation fee"

of \$2.40. In your second correction to this Assembly you said that you would be refunding the testing fee. Does this mean that a person who has paid the fee will get the whole \$112 back?

MS STEPHEN-SMITH: Yes, it does.

MS CASTLEY: A supplementary.

MADAM SPEAKER: Ms Castley.

MS CASTLEY: Minister, why are you are charging GST on COVID-19 tests when the GST act makes health services, including pathology services, GST free?

MS STEPHEN-SMITH: I will take that question on notice.

MRS JONES: Minister, how many people have paid this fee and how many will receive a refund?

MS STEPHEN-SMITH: Since 23 October 2021, ACT Pathology has identified a total of 314 consumers who have been billed or who have been queued to be billed. Since 14 November, ACT Pathology has seen a number of requests to support domestic travel. While the analysis was incomplete yesterday, at that stage it had identified 85 domestic travellers, with 79 of those having received an invoice, and a further group of 28 individuals that ACT Pathology was still reviewing, some of whom may have been domestic travellers. As I indicated yesterday, ACT Pathology is continuing to undertake this assessment. It will be reversing all invoices for testing if it related to domestic travel and issuing refunds to those who have already paid. That process was already underway yesterday.

Information Privacy Act—data security

MR CAIN: My question is for the Attorney-General: the Information Privacy Act 2014 defines “personal information” to include information about an identified individual or an individual who is reasonably identifiable—I emphasise that last phrase. The Australian Information Commissioner who is also the ACT Privacy Commissioner has issued Australian privacy principles guidelines that make it clear that “reasonably identifiable” includes situations where the information is publicly released, a reasonable member of the public who accesses that information would be able to identify the individual.

In the *Canberra Times* story today an ACT government spokesperson is quoted as saying that this information was de-identified, but the *Canberra Times* stated that people familiar with the workers compensation system in the ACT have said they could also easily link information to individuals they knew or had worked with. Minister, isn't this information personal information given that the *Canberra Times* was able to identify individuals, and is it not correct that it has not been de-identified?

MR RATTENBURY: I welcome Mr Cain's detailed knowledge of the privacy principles. I think his recollection of them is quite accurate—certainly from my recall. As the Special Minister of State has indicated, the government is taking this very

seriously. Mr Cain is asking for legal advice—I do not think I can answer it on the spot. But I can say that the government is looking at this. This is why there is now a review process going on. We need to clearly determine whether the principles Mr Cain has cited have been breached. That is what the government is currently working on, as has been outlined by the minister in his previous answers to questions today.

MR CAIN: Minister, if the government does not even know what personal information is and does not know itself what is reasonably identifiable personal information, why should the community trust this government with its confidential and private information?

MR RATTENBURY: I reject the premise of the question. The government does know, and the government is now comparing the circumstances of this matter to privacy principles to make that assessment. That is what is occurring.

Mrs Jones interjecting—

MR RATTENBURY: Mr Cain and Mrs Jones obviously have their opinions, but we need to work through this in a carefully considered way because the government takes personal privacy very seriously. We have a range of both legislative and policy requirements, and that is why this matter is being taken very seriously, as the Special Minister of State has outlined.

MR HANSON: Minister, when will the review be completed, and will the findings of that review be tabled in the Assembly or provided to the opposition?

MR STEEL: I will take that question, Madam Speaker. The review has only just been commissioned. Once we understand the scope of the work that is needed to undertake this review we will have a better understanding of the time frames. We also do not know what the findings will be and what will be the information contained in the review. The government will determine whether it is appropriate for it to be released. But it will certainly be available—

Mrs Jones: Are you hiding it?

MR STEEL: You are talking to us about releasing information inappropriately and then claiming that we should release information without knowing what is going to be in the document. We will make an assessment about whether it is appropriate to release that review once it is completed. It is an internal review and it will inform the work of the government going forward.

Lawson—stage 2 development

MS CLAY: My question is to the Minister for Housing and Suburban Development, and relates to Lawson stage 2. Minister, Lawson stage 2 was intended to have a community hub, including a village centre, neighbourhood playground and community garden. I have also heard some great suggestions about community sporting facilities and the need for a supermarket. The government has run two tender processes that did not return a result, due to the proximity of the electricity substation. The Suburban Land Agency has just released a build-to-rent market sounding. Can you tell me what type of

development this might lead to, and whether we will get affordable housing and the community facilities previously anticipated.

MS BERRY: I thank Ms Clay for the question and for her interest in Lawson stage 2, particularly the build-to-rent that we are investigating as part of that market sounding. The Suburban Land Agency today held a briefing with builders and community housing providers, which gave them the opportunity to ask questions about, and seek information about, bringing that build-to-rent model into the ACT, as part of the Lawson development. It also gives people in the community a chance to ask questions about that work. The ACT government has a long-term commitment to support people on low incomes with housing opportunities, and build-to-rent offers another opportunity for homes that are designed to meet the needs of renters, and offering a great place to live with longer rental periods as well as greater security of tenure. A market sounding process which has been underway, as I have talked about today, is underway at the moment, and that will be used to develop options for the government on that work at Lawson.

MS CLAY: When will infrastructure like the roads connecting Lawson stage 1 to Aikman and Ginninderra drives be constructed?

MS BERRY: I guess this part of the process that the Suburban Land Agency is conducting is a gathering-of-information process, and once we have the information around the build-to-rent model, and a decision by the ACT government on a way forward, we will be able to provide information to the community about those other facilities that the Lawson community so dearly needs.

MR DAVIS: Minister, how is the government assessing the environmental values of the site, given its proximity to the critically endangered golden sun moth habitat?

MS BERRY: As with any project that the ACT government embarks on through the Suburban Land Agency along with the Planning Directorate, due diligence is conducted on that site, including environmental and cultural impacts of any developments, understanding the nature of the site. So, all of that will occur, and will continue to occur, as the development continues.

Alexander Maconochie Centre—COVID-19

MR BRADDOCK: My question is to the Minister for Corrections. Minister, can you please provide an update on the status of COVID within the AMC, and how this has been managed to protect detainees' and guards' health?

MR GENTLEMAN: I thank Mr Braddock for his question and his continued interest in the welfare of staff and detainees at AMC. COVID-19 has posed an unprecedented challenge across our entire community. Of course, AMC is no exception. There is no textbook or formula on how to respond to COVID-19 or, indeed, the pervasive Delta variant. It is an excellent outcome to have so far contained the spread of this highly infectious virus within AMC.

To date, a total of 10 detainees have tested positive to COVID-19 at AMC. Thankfully, they have all recovered. Each of these detainees was a new admission, and they have

been isolated since admission. The current quarantine arrangements for new admissions will continue as is, for the foreseeable future.

As of 8 November 2021, 83 per cent of detainees have received their first vaccination, with 71 per cent fully vaccinated. So there has been a good uptake, and we will continue to encourage detainees to receive their vaccination if they have not already done so.

I want to thank staff for their professional work in responding to COVID-19. Staff have worked incredibly hard to keep AMC safe. Their success to date is a testament to the skill and expertise of ACT Corrective Services and ACT Health staff.

As you would be aware, COVID-19 restrictions in the ACT eased significantly several weeks ago, bringing us closer to a new normal. I understand that the Acting Commissioner of Corrective Services, Ray Johnson, has been working hard to translate these changes and determine their impact on the Corrective Services workplace at AMC. For example, while requirements on the use of face masks have eased in the community, staff at the CTU and AMC have been asked to continue wearing masks while at the workplace, in line with the high-risk setting. *(Time expired.)*

MR BRADDOCK: Minister, how is the transitional release centre being used as part of the AMC's response to COVID?

MR GENTLEMAN: We have been using every opportunity in different spaces across the AMC to ensure that detainees can remain safe. We have been using that opportunity as well as other accommodation opportunities within the AMC.

MRS KIKKERT: Minister, why is the rollout of CORIS delayed until April 2022?

MR GENTLEMAN: I am sorry; I missed the key part of the question.

MRS KIKKERT: Why has the rollout of the CORIS software that is currently being implemented at AMC been delayed until April 2022?

MR GENTLEMAN: Madam Speaker, I do not know how that relates to the COVID-19 situation.

MADAM SPEAKER: It is out of order.

Industrial relations—job security

MR PETTERSSON: My question is to the Minister for Industrial Relations and Workplace Safety. Minister, how is the ACT government ensuring secure employment within the ACT public service?

MR GENTLEMAN: I thank Mr Pettersson for the question and for his interest in employment matters and workplace rights across the ACT. This government knows that secure jobs are good jobs. That is why we are introducing our secure employment bill. The bill delivers on our commitments in the parliamentary and governing agreement to legislate to prevent the outsourcing or privatisation of public sector jobs and to implement a whole-of-government policy that government services will not be

contracted out where they could be performed by our public servants.

The legislation will make it absolutely clear that all public sector entities must consider the benefits of insourcing and secure employment when making procurement decisions. ACT Labor made a commitment to working Canberrans at the last election that it would protect job security and working conditions. I am extremely proud that we will be delivering on this commitment. But the work does not stop there. Over the next few months we will be developing the framework that sits under this legislation, which will guide the decision-making process for hiring within our public service.

I want to sincerely thank officials at CMTEDD who have been working on this. They have been doing a great job. Together, we are achieving this great thing for the government and for Canberrans.

MR PETTERSSON: Minister, in what other ways is the ACT government protecting job security?

MR GENTLEMAN: The ACT government is using its significant buying power to support businesses that treat their workers properly, through the secure local jobs code. I talk about the secure local jobs code a lot in this place. That is because the government is very proud of the code. When we introduced it in 2019, it was a nation-leading suite of measures designed to ensure that our contractors are providing safe workplaces and secure jobs.

As you are aware, Madam Speaker, we have recently secured extra funding for the code to strengthen the powers of the registrar and further improve procurement processes. I hope that the Canberra Liberals will be voting to support these measures in the budget, but I doubt they will, because secure employment is not on their books.

The ACT government also has a union encouragement policy across all directorates. This policy is not the whim of government but a recognition of the importance of unions in the workplace. For many decades, unions have fought continuously for secure employment and the benefits it provides. The government knows this and recognises the ongoing importance of worker representation on the right to secure employment.

DR PATERSON: Minister, why is secure employment so important?

MR GENTLEMAN: I thank Dr Paterson for her interest in looking after our workers. Unlike the Liberals, we know that secure employment does matter. We all like to live comfortably without the stress of an unstable income. We all want to be safe at work and we want to know that secure jobs are safe jobs.

Despite this, the Liberals are doing everything they can to cut entitlements, to benefit big business and to make working families worse off. Their changes to the Fair Work Act earlier this year have entrenched casualisation in the workforce. There are more Australians than ever working multiple jobs just to get by.

For over 100 years in this country, pay and working conditions have been seen as important to good life. Since the Harvester judgement, Australians have had the right to a job with wages that support a family and allow for a balanced lifestyle. That is

being destroyed by the Liberals. Wages have fallen under the Liberal government.

Under the Morrison government, the gender pay gap in Australia has increased. This is unacceptable. It is a direct result of his government's policies that have contributed to job insecurity and poor working conditions. The inaction from the federal government on policies that help women—better superannuation, wages and benefit increases, affordable child care and secure jobs—is appalling. And it is deliberately harmful. Their policies are hurting working Australians and leaving women worse off.

Mr Barr: Further questions can be placed on the notice paper.