Legislative Assembly of the Northern Territory

15th Assembly



Parliamentary Record
Debates and Questions



Thursday 23 Month 2026

CONTENTS

VISITOR....5107
Marylou O'Gallagher....5107
LEAVE OF ABSENCE....5107
Member for Arnhem....5107
SPEAKER'S STATEMENT....5107
Photographers in Chamber....5107
RIGHTS OF THE TERMINALLY ILL BILL....5107
Serial 70....5107
DISTINGUISHED VISITORS....5112
Kezia Purick and Willem Westra van Holthe....5112
LIQUOR AMENDMENT BILL....5112
Serial 71....5112
CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND ESSENTIAL GOODS AND SERVICES legislation AMENDMENT BILL....5114
Serial 68....5114
ATTORNEY-GENERAL LEGISLATION AMENDMENT....5124
(BOARDS, COMMITTEES AND STATUTORY OFFICES) BILL....5124
Serial 65....5124
PETITION....5127
Petition No 25 – Urgently Address the Deterioration of NT Public Housing....5127
SPEAKER'S STATEMENT....5128
Question Time Conduct....5128
QUESTION TIME....5128
Nightcliff Police Station – Closure....5128
Rights of the Terminally Ill Bill 2026....5129
Flood Recovery Fund....5130
Livestock and Agriculture Industries....5131
Gunbalanya Health Clinic....5131
Cost-of-living Relief – Vehicles....5132
Water Resources – Data Centres....5133
Water Resources – Data Centres – Supplementary Question....5134
Test Cricket....5134
Housing Construction – Remote Communities....5135
Exercise Pitch Black 2026....5135
Data Centre Proposal – Finn Road....5136
Sports Oval Upgrades....5137
YiSSA Crisis Accommodation....5138
NAIDOC Week Events....5139
Road Upgrades – Melville Island....5140
Alice Springs Correctional Centre – Prisoner Barbering Program....5140
STATEMENT BY MINISTER FOR EDUCATION AND TRAINING....5141
Charles Darwin University – Electrotechnology Training....5141
ATTORNEY-GENERAL LEGISLATION AMENDMENT....5141

(BOARDS, COMMITTEES AND STATUTORY OFFICES) BILL 5141
Serial 65 5141
PAPER TABLED 5154
Members' Quarterly Fuel Transaction Report – April to June 2026 5154
ADJOURNMENT 5154

The CLERK: Honourable members, pursuant to Standing Order 216, I advise that in the absence of the Speaker, the Deputy Speaker will take the Chair.

Mr Deputy Speaker O'Gallagher took the Chair at 10 am.

VISITOR
Marylou O'Gallagher

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Good morning, honourable members, and welcome to everyone in the gallery. It is a significant occasion. On a personal note, I acknowledge my darling wife, Marylou.

Members: Hear, hear!

LEAVE OF ABSENCE
Member for Arnhem

Mr PAECH (Gwoja): Mr Deputy Speaker, I move a leave of absence for the Member for Arnhem for today.

Leave granted.

SPEAKER'S STATEMENT
Photographers in Chamber

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable members, I have given permission for a photographer to be on the Chamber floor this morning for the introduction of the Rights of the Terminally Ill Bill.

RIGHTS OF THE TERMINALLY ILL BILL
Serial 70

Ms BOOTHBY (Attorney-General): Mr Deputy Speaker, I present a Bill titled Rights of the Terminally Ill Bill 2026, Serial 70, and table the explanatory statement.

I move that the Bill be now read a first time.

This is a defining moment for the Northern Territory. It has taken three decades to get here—three decades of advocacy and debate, and of Territorians fighting for their right to choose and legislate on crucial matters through self-government. To those in the gallery this morning, this is your moment. This is your achievement. As a government and the Country Liberal Party, we are proud to stand alongside you.

We are introducing these laws as a united CLP. When it is debated in August we will not need to rely on votes from non-government members; our CLP team has the numbers to pass this Bill because it goes to the heart of our party's values of compassion and individual choice.

This is a hard-fought achievement. It is important that we remember how we got here.

In 1995 the Northern Territory became the first jurisdiction in the world to legislate the rights of the terminally ill. The original Bill was introduced by former CLP Chief Minister Marshall Perron, who stood down to introduce the law as a private member's Bill. The message was direct; the Bill was about personal choice. The Territory led the world. The legislation caused an international uproar.

Then in 1997 the Commonwealth stepped in. They quashed the law, and in the years that followed we saw little to no action on the issue from successive governments. Two decades of that was a Territory Labor government.

We have come a long way as a Territory since then. In 2022 the federal parliament legislated to restore our right to decide these matters for ourselves. We saw all kinds of reviews, reports and consultations in the years that followed, yet still no legislation was passed by Territory Labor. After once leading the world, we are now the only jurisdiction in Australia where the terminally ill do not have the right to choose how and when they die. That changes now.

For many years, other devoted Country Liberal members have fought to restore the rights of the terminally ill; some are in the gallery today. Our CLP committed to bringing forward the legislation, but we had to get it right. We set up an inquiry led by the bipartisan Legal and Constitutional Affairs Committee. Through that

process we heard from those who strongly support this reform and those who sincerely oppose it, and we have carefully developed legislation which suits the Territory's unique context.

Importantly, we put forward laws with strong safeguards and protections to give confidence to those who are unsure. We put forward reforms that will pass in the parliament. The laws we put forward today are centred on one thing, choice—the freedom to choose how and when you die as you stare down terminal illness.

In their submissions and letters Territorians gave their opinions loud and clear.

Carol Doyle has lived in Darwin since 1976. Her children live here, and this has been their home for 50 years. In her submission to the inquiry she said, 'This is what it is all about—choice, one's personal choice. This is where I would choose to die, surrounded by my family in the comfort of my house, with my favourite view out of the window.'

As Katrina from Darwin said, 'It is a right for every Territorian should they choose to use it'.

The Palmerston and Litchfield Seniors Association said that it was time we allow Territorians a chance to finalise their departure on their own terms, providing dignity, comfort and choice. They said that it is time for the Northern Territory Government to provide Territorians with a choice again.

Sue Shearer, the CEO of the Council on the Ageing NT is up in the gallery today—welcome, Sue and your members. Sue said it well:

> *Older Territorians have waited for years as people across Australia gained the right to choose how they die when facing a terminal illness.*
>
> *…*
>
> *… people deserve the chance to shape that last chapter on their own terms.*

We have listened to those Territorians.

We cannot forget the loved ones who stand alongside the terminally ill, and we heard from many of them during this process. One Territorian wrote to me about her loved one saying, 'It was shocking to learn she had taken her own life with no family around her. No-one should have to be in that situation.'

Nannette Helder wrote about dying with choice as she faced an aggressive form of cancer. Her daughter, Zoe shared her thoughts with the committee. One line particularly stuck with me:

> *What is a good death anyway? I think it is one where you still feel somewhat in charge, relatively pain free, and relatively short, with maximum dignity and minimal suffering.*

It is an important reminder of the gravity of these issues and the emotional nature of end-of-life reforms. That is why I reiterate how important it is that we debate this issue with sensitivity, respect and the warm Territory kindness that we all know and love.

I understand that this is a Bill where reasonable minds and compassionate people might have different views. It is a complex and deeply personal issue for many, particularly for those of us who have watched our loved ones battle with terminal illness.

This Bill affords eligible Territorians the freedom to choose how and when they die. It is a voluntary choice, an informed choice and, importantly, their choice—a decision made with some of the strongest safeguards possible.

Let us be clear about what the Bill does not do. This Bill will not compel any terminally ill person to access assisted dying. It will not compel every Territorian to agree with it, and it will not require health professionals who conscientiously object to participate.

We have accepted almost all recommendations from the final report of the inquiry into voluntary assisted dying published in September last year. I thank the members of the parliament's Legal and Constitutional Affairs Committee for their work in preparing that report. It was chaired by the Member for Fong Lim, Dr Tanzil Rahman, and joined by my colleagues, the Member for Blain, Mr Matthew Kerle; the Member for Wanguri, Mrs Oly Carlson; the Member for Daly, Mr Dheran Young; and the former Member for Nightcliff, Kat McNamara. I also

thank the more than 400 Territorians who made submissions to the parliamentary inquiry, participated in the 13 public hearings across 11 different regions and contributed to other consultation processes over many years.

There are some areas in which we differ from that report, and that is squarely focused on the strong safeguards we are introducing. Territorians facing terminal illness should be able to consider all options without coercion or influence. As the Australian Psychological Society said in their submission:

> *Robust provisions need to be in place to ensure protection from coercion from family members, carers, health professionals and/or others.*

And as the Royal Australasian College of Physicians said:

> *Safeguards against coercion must be central to any VAD legislation and supported by appropriate policies and procedures.*

These safeguards protect vulnerable Territorians, but they also give families and practitioners confidence in the system at a time when there might be more questions than answers.

The process we are putting forward is fundamentally patient led. This is outlined in Part 1 of the Bill and is similar to legislation introduced in South Australia. There is a simple reason for that; it is about the patient's right to decide how and when they leave this life. It makes sense that the conversation is initiated by them, not by their family, their doctor or any other agent or representative. This is about the patient's decision, rights and individual choice. A patient should never feel pressure from their loved ones or representatives, no matter how well meaning.

But let us be clear, patient-led does not mean patient alone. Once a person raises the issue, their medical practitioner can discuss every available option. I acknowledge that not everyone will agree with this approach. Some have already called this a gag clause, and I fundamentally reject that. This safeguard has nothing to do with gagging people. It has everything to do with the one voice that matters: the patient's. It is the patient whose voice will shake when they are told they will die. It is the patient who feels small and will hear other voices growing louder. The patient's voice is the only voice we should be listening to.

That voice has guided the provisions of this legislation, and I will now go through them in detail.

In addition to the patient-led provisions, Part 1 of the Bill sets out preliminary matters, including the purposes and a series of principles that underpin the legislation, including conscientious objections, which I will talk more about shortly.

Part 2 of the Bill sets out the requirements for access to this end-of-life choice, including strict eligibility criteria. These criteria will operate as a key safeguard to ensure access is only possible under certain circumstances, and vulnerable people are protected against undue influence or coercion.

They include:

- that the person must be an adult
- that the person must be an Australian citizen or permanent resident, or have ordinarily resided in Australia for two years before requesting to access this process
- that the person must have also been ordinarily a resident in the NT for at least 12 months before making a request.

The Bill will also allow the Chief Health Officer to grant an exemption to a person who does not meet the residency criteria if the person has a substantial connection to the Territory, or if the person lives in a place close to the Northern Territory border and works or receives medical treatment in the Territory and they apply for an exemption.

The eligibility criteria require the person to have been diagnosed with a disease, illness or medical condition that is advanced, progressive and expected to cause death within 12 months and is causing suffering considered intolerable by the person. As recognised by the committee, in all Australian jurisdictions the existence of and level of suffering is subjectively determined by the person. Suffering is defined in this part to include physical or mental suffering; suffering caused by treatment provided for the disease, illness or

medical condition; and the anticipation or expectation of suffering based on medical advice that will or might be caused by the disease, illness or medical condition or treatment provided for it.

The inclusion of a 12-month timeframe diverges from the committee's recommendations, however, aligns with a number of other Australian jurisdictions. The prognosis timeframe will help to ensure access is restricted to those who are approaching the end of their life.

Additional criteria require the person to be acting voluntarily without coercion and to have decision-making capacity. These are included as essential protections for vulnerable patients against exploitation. A comprehensive definition of decision-making capacity is included in the Bill and is designed to ensure decision-making capacity is assessed holistically.

Part 3 of the Bill sets out the process for making a request and being assessed as eligible.

Under Part 3 a person must make two separate requests. The first request must be communicated clearly and unambiguously by the person themselves to a medical practitioner, including orally or in writing. The coordinating practitioner must undertake the initial assessment while the person is physically present. After making a first request, the person will be assessed by two separate medical practitioners to determine their eligibility. The mandate for two independent eligibility assessments will provide a safeguard by ensuring eligibility is verified without imposing excessive barriers to access.

If on assessment the medical practitioner is unable to determine certain matters, the Bill requires the practitioner to refer the patient to someone else with appropriate skills and training to make that decision. The referral provisions are consistent with standard medical practice and will help to streamline and quality assure the assessment process.

Where a person meets the requirements of both assessments they will then need to make a second formal request. This will usually be done in writing but can be made by video recording. The ability to make a recorded request was a specific recommendation of the committee which arose from community consultation indicating some cultural preferences for requests to be both seen and heard. Provisions allowing for recorded requests will provide flexibility for those who cannot write.

In line with the committee's recommendations the Bill requires a minimum timeframe of nine days between the first request and the formal request. This minimum period will operate as an additional safeguard, ensuring a decision to proceed has endured adequate consideration and is not coerced. The Bill permits an earlier formal request where, in the opinion of the person's medical practitioners, the person may die or lose capacity before the nine-day timeframe.

At no point during the request and assessment process is a person obligated to continue, and a person can opt out at any stage of the process.

Part 4 of the Bill follows the completion of the request and assessment stage and allows the person to decide, in consultation with their coordinating medical practitioner, on the administration of the substance.

The person may choose between self-administration or practitioner administration, ensuring their autonomy over the manner and timing of their death. The decision can be revoked at any time should their preferences change.

Where a person has made a self-administration decision, the Bill will require the appointment of a contact person who will have specific responsibilities in relation to the substance. In accordance with committee recommendations, the Bill allows a contact person to prepare the substance, reducing barriers to self-administration, but does not authorise a contact person to administer the substance to the person.

Part 4 also contains the requirements for the prescription, supply, storage and disposal of the approved substance which will be further supported by future regulations. To respect the autonomy of the person, decision-making is to occur between the person and their coordinating practitioner.

Part 5 of the Bill sets out eligibility requirements for health practitioners to perform the specific roles of coordinating, consulting or administering practitioner under the Act. Practitioners will need to be appropriately qualified, complete mandatory training and meet any further approved practitioner requirements of the Chief Health Officer. These provisions allow for an administrative application and verification process and ensure practitioners operating under the legislation are suitable and specifically approved to do so.

Part 6 of the Bill provides certain protections for those involved in this process; it operates to insulate practitioners and others from liability where they act in good faith in accordance with the Act.

Part 7 of the Bill provides the Northern Territory Civil and Administrative Tribunal (NTCAT) with jurisdiction to review particular decisions made under this Act. This part of the Bill should be read in conjunction with Schedule 1 of the Bill which lists the reviewable decisions. The decisions include determinations in relation to residency, including eligibility for an exemption; whether a person has decision-making capacity; and whether the person is acting voluntarily without coercion.

When a review application is made, the person's request will effectively be suspended, and no further steps may be taken in the process until the review application is finalised.

Applications for review may only be made by affected persons, ensuring they can only be brought by genuinely interested parties as determined by the tribunal to prevent unrelated third parties acting to inhibit access to the process.

Due to the sensitive nature of these matters, explicit provisions are also included to ensure privacy is protected in the publication of NTCAT decisions.

Part 8 of the Bill provides for the establishment of an independent Review Board. This will play an important role in monitoring the operation of the Act, ensuring compliance with the Act by reviewing completed requests, referring any issues identified to relevant bodies and collecting key data. The Review Board will be chaired by the Chief Health Officer and made up of members with a range of relevant clinical, legal, ethical and cultural expertise.

The Review Board's monitoring function will be enabled by mandatory practitioner notification requirements at key stages of a person's request. The Review Board will provide an annual report to the minister on the performance of its functions which will be tabled in the Legislative Assembly. To support the effective functioning of the Review Board, the Bill incorporates specific offences for the provision of misleading information and failure to provide documents within prescribed timeframes.

In line with other jurisdictions and to promote compliance, Part 9 of the Bill includes a range of offences and penalties. The most serious offences, with a prescribed maximum penalty of seven years' imprisonment, relate to inducing a person to make a request and the unauthorised administration of an approved substance. Penalties also apply to unauthorised disclosure of confidential information and acting as a coordinating, consulting or administering practitioner when ineligible.

These provisions ensure the integrity of the process and protect vulnerable Territorians. The inclusion of these offences does not preclude the application of existing regulatory frameworks such as the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency and codes of conduct.

The Bill will also extend the existing entry, inspection and seizure functions of authorised officers under the *Medicines, Poisons and Therapeutic Goods Act 2012* to this framework to provide a mechanism for managing compliance.

We are committed to individual choice, which is why we have established a protocol for conscientious objection by individuals and entities. This is a crucial protection that ensures the Bill recognises and respects freedom of thought, conscience, religion and belief.

To uphold the right of conscientious objection, the Bill provides that a registered health practitioner or relevant person can refuse to participate in or provide information or services about this process. This right to refuse extends to allied health service providers, interpreters and Aboriginal liaison officers who may also be involved in the person's care. However, to ensure access to the process is not impeded, conscientious objectors will be obligated to provide certain information that will be prescribed in the regulations.

The legislation also contains a provision to require an entity that has a policy not to provide information about voluntary assisted dying at a facility to provide a resident of that facility with certain information upon request. The clause is designed to ensure a resident's access to information about voluntary assisted dying is not impeded by the entity that provides their key services.

This Bill provides that the Act will be fully implemented within 18 months. Implementation of this legislation will be managed by the Department of Health, which will establish necessary systems, processes and training prior to commencement, as well as the development of necessary clinical guidelines and regulations.

The Chief Health Officer is empowered to issue clinical guidelines under Part 10 of the Bill. It is anticipated these guidelines will be key to supporting the safe delivery by healthcare professionals of this end-of-life choice, providing operational support and guidance, including the delivery of these services.

Consistent with the committee's recommendation, the Bill provides an overarching framework and does not legislate for a specific model of delivery. However, the Department of Health will implement a decentralised model.

In line with most Australian jurisdictions, the Bill will not generally prevent the use of telehealth in this context, except that a person's first assessment must be conducted face to face, with a formal request that must be made in the physical presence of a person's coordinating practitioner. The use of telehealth will also be subject to the limitations imposed by the existing Commonwealth laws, and further detail about the use of telehealth is expected to be contained in those clinical guidelines.

I respect that good people might disagree on this legislation. These reforms are personal and complex. That is why we are legislating a mandatory review three years after commencement. This allows us to understand how to improve the process for patients and practitioners. It would be a chance to ensure that these reforms achieve what we want them to achieve—to give certainty, show compassion and protect the freedom to choose when a Territorian faces the end of their life.

But let me be clear: the CLP is introducing this Bill, and in August the CLP will pass this Bill. After 30 long years, the Territory will not be left waiting any longer. With courage and compassion, the Territory led the world on these critical reforms. Now, under a CLP government, we are getting the job done and we are bringing the government, the parliament and the Territory together, as we do.

Thank you to all of you who have fought for these changes, and thank you to those who are present here today.

With that, I commend the Bill to the Assembly.

Motion agreed to; Bill read a first time.

DISTINGUISHED VISITORS
Kezia Purick and Willem Westra van Holthe

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable members, I acknowledge the presence in the gallery of Hon Kezia Purick, former Speaker of the Legislative Assembly, and Hon Willem Westra van Holthe, former Member for Katherine.

Members: Hear, hear!

LIQUOR AMENDMENT BILL
Serial 71

Ms BOOTHBY (Tourism and Hospitality): Mr Deputy Speaker, I present a Bill titled the Liquor Amendment Bill 2026, Serial 71, and table the explanatory statement.

I move that the Bill be now read a first time.

This Bill makes Territory liquor laws work better in practice. It focuses on three things: reducing unnecessary red tape; improving how the system works; and strengthening alcohol harm minimisation for Territorians.

These reforms sit within our government's broader plan to reduce crime, rebuild the economy and restore the Territory lifestyle. Territorians expect safer communities and that confidence gives people a reason to stay, businesses a reason to invest and our regions a stronger foundation to grow.

For too long, under a previous Labor government, alcohol-fuelled violence and antisocial behaviour had driven crime across the Territory. Territorians felt that in their homes, businesses and communities. Our government has taken a different approach; we are strengthening laws.

This Bill is part of that work. It ensures our liquor framework is modern, practical and responds to risk while continuing to support responsible hardworking businesses within the Territory.

The Bill modernises the way licensing is administered. It streamlines processes around inspector appointments, licence surrender, licence transfers, annual fees and electronic licensing. It reflects the reality

that licensing is no longer paper based. It removes outdated processes and focuses effort where it matters most, which is on compliance, risk and community safety.

For businesses this means a system that is easier to navigate. It reduces duplication where a proposed transferee is already known to the regulator. It provides greater flexibility in annual licence fee arrangements, and it extends periods before a non-operating licence is treated as abandoned from six months to 12 months. The Bill also clarifies BYO service arrangements and wholesale liquor sales.

These are practical changes. They reduce unnecessary burden while maintaining the integrity of the system.

The Bill improves procedural fairness and transparency. Liquor Commission-initiated variations to licence or authority conditions must be connected to harm minimisation or the public interest. Licensees must be given written notice, reasons and an opportunity to respond before a decision is made. This is both fair and reasonable.

The Bill also allows the commission to make administrative amendments to licence or authority conditions, such as correcting clerical mistakes, removing duplicated or conflicting material and clarifying matters without altering the substance of the conditions.

The Bill strengthens public safety. It expands the offences that support banning notices and exclusion orders in high-risk areas. It clarifies the Commissioner of Police's power to suspend a licence or use authority where alcohol-related violence, riotous conduct or a breach of the peace is occurring on or near the licensed premises. It increases the maximum duration of a banning notice from 14 days to 90 days. It strengthens responses to conduct that puts community safety at risk. At the same time, it preserves access to high-risk areas for essential purposes, including work, healthcare or medical treatment and government services. These are important tools; they allow police to act earlier, intervene sooner and prevent escalation.

The changes also introduce natural justice and due process protections, consistent with our government's 2024 election commitment to the hospitality industry.

The Bill provides clarity on alcohol restriction settings. It updates how general restricted areas are published, clarifies how prohibited liquor is defined and establishes clearer processes for varying or revoking restrictions. This ensures decisions are transparent, consistent and better understood by the community.

A key reform is the transition of existing interim alcohol protected areas to general restricted areas. Without change, those protections would lapse in February 2027. This Bill ensures they do not. It provides legal certainty by placing existing restrictions into a clear and ongoing legal framework.

We saw what happened when Labor removed the protections in 2022 and the rivers of grog flowed. Alcohol-related violence increased, and communities felt it immediately. We will not allow this to happen. This reform maintains strong protections and focuses on keeping Territorians safe. Importantly, community choice remains; communities can seek to vary or revoke restrictions, develop community alcohol plans and have a say in how alcohol is managed in their area.

This is a Bill that supports local solutions with appropriate oversight where needed, including from NT Police, Health and other relevant stakeholders.

The Bill also includes transitional arrangements to ensure an orderly implementation. It preserves existing permits and restrictions where appropriate. It allows opportunity to review certain previously converted licences and authorities, and it ensures pending licence transfer applications can continue under the existing process.

This Bill delivers a new liquor framework that is stronger, clearer and more practical. It reduces unnecessary regulatory burden, supports hardworking business operators and strengthens protections for Territorians. It is about balancing focus and practicality where needed. It is always focused on the safety of Territorians.

I commend the Bill to honourable members.

Motion agreed to; Bill read a first time.

Ms BOOTHBY (Tourism and Hospitality): Mr Deputy Speaker, I move that the Bill be referred to the Legislative Scrutiny Committee for report by 20 August 2026.

Motion agreed to.

CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND ESSENTIAL GOODS AND SERVICES LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL
Serial 68

Continued from 13 May 2026.

Ms CAHILL (Trade, Business and Asian Relations): Mr Deputy Speaker, I move that the Bill be now read a second time.

Mr SMELT (Nightcliff): Mr Deputy Speaker, it is no secret that many Territorians are struggling with rising costs, bills, rent and mortgages. This is not unique to the Territory; cost-of-living pressures are being felt everywhere, but when it comes to things like fuel and other essential goods, these issues are particularly challenging for Territory families.

Our remoteness means much higher transport costs, while our small population means we do not reap the benefits of economies of scale like people down south. It is incredibly disappointing that the CLP has failed to understand this reality for Territorians at the most fundamental level, choosing to put up power, water and sewerage bills by 5.3% in this year's budget. The CLP was not even telling Territorians it had done this; the Treasurer admitted it only under questioning at Estimates. This will have a significant impact on household budgets.

Meanwhile, the CLP has kept other cost-of-living measures in the budget at the same level as previous years. This effectively represents a cut, given rising costs across all areas of the economy.

Lack of attention to cost-of-living pressures is important context for this particular Bill, which focuses on fuel prices, fuel supply, essential goods and essential services. It appears to be a case of too little, too late, but I seek to address the specifics of this Bill in good faith. It is at least an acknowledgement that cost-of-living pressures are a real threat to Territorians' lifestyle, peace of mind and living arrangements and the choices they make for themselves and their kids.

This Bill makes changes to laws that deal with fuel retailers and the MyFuel NT scheme. It also makes changes to the *Essential Goods and Services Act 1981*, which is the law used when there is a shortage of important goods or services in the Territory.

The fuel parts of the Bill require fuel retailers to provide more information about their prices. Retailers will need to report the fuel price they plan to charge for the next 24-hour period. If they want to lower the price, they can do that, but they have to report it. If fuel is not available, they have to report this, including why it is not available and when they expect it to be available again.

The Bill also allows information to be published, including through MyFuel NT, so that consumers can see more information about fuel prices and fuel availability. In plain terms, the government is trying to tighten the rules for fuel price and availability reporting.

The Bill gives authorised officers more power to check compliance and investigate possible breaches. These officers can enter premises, inspect documents, take copies, seize items, take photographs and recordings and require people to assist. There are limits on entering homes where consent or a warrant is needed. The Bill also allows authorised officers to enter Aboriginal land without a permit.

These powers may be useful in a genuine crisis, but they must be used carefully, fairly and transparently. People affected by these laws need to know how they will work in practice. Fuel retailers need clear guidance. Small businesses need to know what is expected of them. Remote operators need to know what happens if internet access is poor or systems fail. Land councils and Aboriginal communities need to understand how the entry powers will operate. Territorians need to know that these powers will not be used more broadly than necessary.

That is why consultation matters. The government should be able to clearly explain who was consulted before this Bill was introduced. Were fuel retailers, small independent operators, regional and remote suppliers and our land councils consulted? Was there a proper review of what happened during the most recent disruption? Was there an assessment of the costs and burden on businesses that will have to comply with these new laws? These are basic questions, and Territorians deserve clear answers.

The timing of this Bill is also important, as it was brought forward after the Territory had already gone through an episode regarding fuel supply and price shocks. Territorians were worried about fuel availability, families were worried about paying the bill at the bowser and businesses were worried about what rising fuel costs

would mean for them. Regional communities were worried because fuel is not a luxury in the Territory; it is essential.

When that was happening, Territorians needed clear leadership. That has been sorely lacking in this CLP government. We have heard from the Treasurer and the Attorney-General during the fuel crisis peak, but rarely from the minister for consumer affairs. The community needed to hear from the minister responsible for Consumer Affairs and fuel price monitoring. People needed to know what the government was doing, whether prices and supply were being monitored and whether fuel retailers were being held to account.

The minister had responsibility of the very systems that are now being changed by this Bill. She should have been front and centre explaining what was happening with fuel prices and what was being done to protect consumers. The Treasurer and the Attorney-General appeared to fill the space that the responsible minister left open. That matters because laws do not work by themselves. A Bill does not manage a crisis. A regulation does not reassure Territorians. A reporting system does not mean much if the minister responsible is not visible, engaged and responding during a crisis.

This Bill may improve the tools available for government. It may make the fuel reporting system clearer and help the government to access information during a shortage. It may also give regulators stronger powers to act when there is a problem, but it is also fair to say that this is a modest reform being presented as something much bigger. Much of this Bill is about reporting, information gathering, enforcement and administration. It may help governments to see what is happening next time, but it alone does not lower fuel prices or guarantee fuel supply. It does not by itself make up for the lack of clarity of responsibility that Territorians saw during the recent fuel crisis.

This is a real issue. The government was caught on the hop. The responsible minister was missing when she should have been present. Now, months later, we have a Bill that tidies up the system after the crisis has already exposed the gaps.

We hope that this Bill means the government will be better prepared next time. We hope the minister uses these powers properly. We hope she communicates clearly with all Territorians because when fuel supply is uncertain and prices are under pressure, Territorians do not want silence and buck passing; they want clear information and practical action. They want a government that is prepared before the crisis and not one that changes the law months after the fact.

This Bill gives the minister and regulator more tools. The test will be whether the minister uses them appropriately when it matters.

Mr YAN (Treasurer): Mr Deputy Speaker, that was an enlightening contribution from the Member for Nightcliff, and I look forward to responding to it.

I support the minister in bringing to the House the Consumer Affairs and Essential Goods and Services Legislation Amendment Bill 2026, Serial 68, because it is important. I do not think those opposite quite understand what is being done, and I think they have been left flat-footed.

To understand why this Bill matters members only need look at what has been happening at the bowser. The conflict in the Middle East has reached across the globe and is being felt, of course, in the Northern Territory in the price Territorians pay to fill the tank and the uncertainty that has crept into our supply chains. As I have said many times, our supply chains have a few more links than anybody else's. In ordinary times we never think twice about this.

This Bill forms a key plank of the government's considered response to that uncertainty and responds in multiple ways. Again, we have seen that uncertainty pop up in recent events in the Middle East. Just when we think everything is going fine, things change. That is why we are responding quickly and with certainty.

First, this sharpens the everyday tools that keep our fuel market transparent and fair, like the MyFuel NT scheme that Territorians rely on to know what price they will pay. This Bill also modernises the *Essential Goods and Services Act* so that if a genuine shortage of essential goods or services ever emerges, the government can respond actively, which the Member for Nightcliff seems to have forgotten.

Let me be clear that there is no immediate or pending risk to the Territory's fuel supplies. Our stocks are ample and today we are doing what responsible governments do: putting the framework in place well before it is needed, not scrambling to respond once it is too late.

The amendments to the *Consumer Affairs and Fair Trading Act* refine the MyFuel NT scheme. I stress that word—refine. We are not reinventing the wheel; we are refining an existing tool. MyFuel was stood up in 2017 by a former Labor government, then largely left to gather dust while web platforms and consumer expectations moved on around it.

This Bill brings the whole scheme together into the regulations. It means retailers can see their obligations clearly and the scheme can be adjusted more easily as circumstances change. Rather than being scattered throughout the Act, placing it into regulations allows us to be more responsive and flexible in situations when adjustments may need to be made rapidly.

These changes confirm the simple fair principle that a retailer must not sell fuel for more than the price they have reported for the day. It is not a complicated concept, but it is now clearly outlined. The retailer remains free to drop their price whenever they like. This protects competition, which keeps prices honest, while giving motorists and retailers the certainty of the price set the day before based on the retailer's best judgement at the time, rather than the sudden and sometimes inexplicable spikes we saw early in this crisis that did nothing but drive panic buying, and as happened in southern states.

For the first time when a servo runs dry, the retailer will need to say why and when supply is expected back. This adds a new layer of transparency that lets people plan with confidence. This information sharing will benefit the consumer. It will allow a family, a grey nomad or a road train operator to confidently plan a journey across the Territory.

The heart of this Bill lies in the *Essential Goods and Services Act 1981*, which—as the minister noted when she introduced the Bill—that Act was born of an earlier Middle East crisis. There is a certain symmetry with where we find ourselves today.

When this government reviewed the Act against present circumstances, the gaps were clear. This Bill remedies that and allows for modern context. We clarify the definitions of an essential good and an essential service. We base activation on a simple and sensible test: when supply is likely to become insufficient for the reasonable function of a community, a region or the whole of the Territory. It lets responses be tailored to the problem, whether it is one remote community, the Top End or the entire Territory.

With a clearer framework comes the means to make it work. The Bill gives the minister a targeted power to request information from those in a supply chain. If a business genuinely does not hold the information, it simply says so. It also creates authorised officers who can monitor compliance and investigate suspected breaches once a declaration is in train. These powers come wrapped in genuine safeguards. An authorised officer must carry and produce an identity card. They may enter a residence only with the occupier's consent or under a warrant issued by a judicial officer. They must minimise disruption and give receipts for anything seized. There are proper protections against self-incrimination.

This Bill does not arrive in a vacuum. It is the latest step in a considered program of work this government has undertaken since the Middle East conflict began to bite. When prices started lurching at the bowser, we acted decisively to protect Territorians and make sure that they were not price gouged. Retailers and wholesalers did the right thing by Territorians.; they acted responsibly and provided goods and services that we needed. I commend them for that.

In March, for the first time since its inception in 1949, this government enabled the *Price Exploitation Prevention Act.* We contributed nearly $20m to the fuel excise cost and put over $4m into a temporary fuel relief measure for contractors who bore the brunt of these cost increases. We are using pioneering AI technology to monitor and analyse Territory fuel prices to further safeguard against profiteering and sharp practices by retailers.

We also took immediate steps to shore up the Territory's fuel supply, directing Power and Water and Territory Generation to acquire and hold their maximum fuel holdings to ensure electricity generation for regional and remote communities—something the Member for Nightcliff said that we did not do. He said that we left people hanging out to dry. We took immediate steps to make sure our remote communities had the fuel they needed to keep the lights on.

I hope the Assembly can get behind this Bill. It is measured, responsible and exactly the kind of forward planning Territorians expect of their government. I also make the point that the provisions in this Bill may one day apply to a commodity or resource that is not fuel. Our context today demands that is our primary focus, and we have done that work.

I note the Member for Nightcliff took a shot at the Minister for Trade, Business and Asian Relations. I categorically say that all ministers of the Finocchiaro CLP government work together. We work collaboratively to support and help each other. To take a crack at the minister is having a crack at all of us. I take offence at that, as we work together in the best interests of all Territorians. Territorians have yet to see that from the Labor opposition members who seem to be concerned only with their own internal issues and have forgotten what their job is.

I commend the minister for bringing forward this Bill; it is an important Bill that will protect Territorians' interests into the future.

I commend the Bill to the Assembly.

Dr RAHMAN (Fong Lim): Mr Deputy Speaker, as the Middle East conflict continues, the government has a desire to minimise the conflict's impact on fuel supplies. That is what we are doing. There are limitations in the current legislative response mechanisms, and we are trying to identify ways to do something constructive.

It is frustrating to hear the acting Leader of the Opposition, Deputy Leader of the Opposition or whatever he is, misunderstand this legislation. Then, on top of that, he threw in a couple of bombs to make it seem like we are not doing enough in this space.

Let us think a little about the charge that we are concerned about usage of broad powers. You cannot have it both ways, complaining that this Act does not do enough and at the same time be worried about us exceeding powers.

We are introducing a mechanism, essentially in the absence of one …

Mr PAECH: A point of order, Mr Deputy Speaker! Standing Order 9; there is no quorum in the Assembly.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Ring the bells.

A quorum is present.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: I remind members, we need to keep a quorum in the Chamber.

Dr RAHMAN: I thank the Member for Gwoja for alerting us to an absence of quorum. It is great to see the new opposition Whip in the Chamber holding us to a standard in that regard. I look forward to seeing any of his colleagues at any point also in the Chamber to follow his sterling example.

I miss the Leader of the Opposition who is declared to be absent today in the Notice Paper and given leave. Unlike Mr Ed, she can do something other than read off a script. Is he the new attack dog on legislation? If that is the case, Treasurer, respectfully I am not offended at all by the challenge made against the Minister for Trade, Business and Asian Relations. I am sure she can handle herself if that is the best he can come up with. It is absurd.

A series of contradictory things were said which basically pointed out a complete misunderstanding—on the part of the opposition—of what this legislation does and why it has been introduced. This would be a good opportunity to say, 'We think this is a sensible thing. Perhaps you could refine it. Here are some deficiencies in it,' but, no, there were just contradictory arguments.

On the one hand, you claim we will use broad powers and on the other hand, you complain that this is a 'modest reform' that does not go far enough. It is a reform. We are getting on with it. It is the same story of this side of the Chamber getting on with it. We are passing legislation at a rate of knots; I have made it clear before that I do not always love all of it, but you cannot deny that the Finocchiaro CLP government is getting on with the job.

We made it clear that we had a threefold mandate, and we are pursuing legislation consistent with that. This partly relates to current cost-of-living pressures and concerns regarding energy supply and fuel pricing. We are putting a mechanism in place as quickly as possible to do something about that.

You could make the argument, if you were the Deputy Leader of the Opposition and not on training wheels, that it would be preferable to have a standalone Act to cover all these matters, but that is not the argument being made. That would be a complex, difficult, laborious and technical task.

This government is amending existing legislation in an efficient manner to regulate prices and ensure that Territorians are not price gouged. It extends to other aspects of anti-competitive behaviour.

We are doing things consistent with our deregulation plan and program. It is important for people on the other side of the Chamber to understand some of the underlying economics. Once again, call for help from the mothership. It is time to get help if you want to play in the economic space with us because you cannot be prosecuting the argument seriously about power prices again.

Here is the speech from yesterday if you would like it—I printed it out for you—where I explained to you what we were doing and how you have misunderstood it.

I just heard that this Bill, in and of itself, does not lower fuel prices. That is right. It is a small regulatory mechanism to improve consumer affairs and to make sure that we provide a framework for stopping price gouging in its tracks. It is more of a disincentive than an active regulatory mechanism.

It would be useful to articulate what the Bill does because it seems that the opposition has not understood. The Bill refines the operational framework that the Territory has to minimise the impact of exigent circumstances on essential goods and services. The immediate drivers are the war in Iran, which is continuing, and price volatility and fluctuations. As the Treasurer said, there is no reason for alarm or panic. This is a sensible proactive move. There is no immediate or pending risk to the Territory's fuel supplies. This is sensible contingency planning by a government that has a legislative agenda and a defined mandate, and which is constantly thinking about what it needs to do next to stay on target.

The Bill also supports the rollout of the Commonwealth's fuel security plan should that be needed in the future.

We are amending five pieces of legislation rather than trying to put together a complex standalone Act to do the same as the *Consumer Affairs and Fair Trading Act*; the Consumer Affairs and Fair Trading (Fuel Retailers) Regulations; the consumer affairs and fair trading infringement notices; the *Essential Goods and Services Act*; and the Fines and Penalties (Recovery) Regulations. It is a good bit of work. This is what you are supposed to do in government: tidy up existing laws and make sure they are fit for purpose in modern circumstances.

What does it mean in practical terms for things like MyFuel? Retailers must report the price and availability of fuel, the reason fuel is not available and when it is expected to return. Retailers can lower their prices at any time. Price increases are limited to once per day in a reporting period. We are trying to stop this wild volatility where you are driving home thinking, 'Hang on, it was X in the morning and then it was Y. Now two hours later it is Z.' We are trying to make sure that selling above the reported price cannot be done. It remains an offence, but selling below is not; that is the key thing.

The operational provisions, including the offences, have been moved from Part 11 of the Act into the regulations. That has been done to create consistency in this framework.

The *Essential Goods and Services Act* dates from 1981 and has never been activated. We are reviewing it against the current crisis and identifying gaps in its operation.

The trigger for the Administrator's declaration is clarified—again, that tightens how this will work in practice in small but meaningful ways—for when supply is likely to be less than sufficient for the reasonable functioning of a community, a region or the whole Territory. The minister gains the power to request information in writing from suppliers before or after a declaration.

As the Treasurer pointed out, the CEO may appoint authorised officers to monitor compliance and investigate suspected breaches; that is what we want. We want to ensure that retailers are doing the right thing. The Act previously had no monitoring or enforcement provisions, and that was a problem. The penalties are increased, and new offences are created for obstructing an authorised officer. An infringement notice scheme will be established by regulation for some of the less serious infractions.

These are nudges in the literature to change behaviour. These are small signals to retailers to play fair. That is what we are doing; for all this convoluted talk, it is basically encouraging people not to take the piss. That might have been a better way of explaining it to the Deputy Leader of the Opposition.

The government is not setting fuel prices; retailers remain free to set their own prices. Every jurisdiction other than the Territory has a form of standalone fuel regulation reaching across the supply chain. Regarding the concerns about authorised officers entering residential premises, that can happen only with the occupier's permission or under a warrant. Many remote service stations operate as part of a residential complex.

Suppliers who suffer any loss in complying with the ministerial direction will be entitled to compensation on just terms. That is built into this.

There are concerns about consultation, but what would you have us do? Would you have us consult on a complex piece of legislation to be developed over 12 months while everybody gets price gouged? Is that the plan? There was no formal consultation associated with this because this government is being agile to make required changes so that Territorians get a fair go.

Feedback from fuel retailers and the public since the crisis began has informed the Bill, as well as the government's experience of dealing with disaster-driven supply disruption. We have seen plenty of that recently. We know how important fuel is. A bunch of bush members on our side acutely understand how important fuel is. This is about trying to protect them as much as anyone else.

We want this to commence soon. That is the whole idea, which is why this has come through quickly. We are trying to provide laws consistent with certainty and security. I grow weary at times of saying the same things in terms of key messaging, but the truth is we are consistent in our messaging. It is extremely important to point out when we are doing something consistent with our narrative.

This Bill is about certainty and security at the bowser for Territorians, and security of supply for the Territory. That is what we are doing in our year of growth, certainty and security. This is a responsible forward-planning measure from a government getting on with the job. We are not saying that this is the whole picture, but it is a sensible step, considering we do not have anything else to deal with this.

The Territory is the only jurisdiction in the country without the tools to step in across the fuel supply chain when needed, and this Bill essentially closes that gap; it does not slam it shut, but it closes the gap. We are shoring up contingency plans to make sure that day-to-day life can be a little easier for Territorians to navigate. It is better to have these tools and not need to use them. If we do not need to use them, so be it, but we do not want to be caught flat-footed if things escalate in other parts of the world and have a knock-on effect for us. We are the only place unable to manoeuvre to soften the blow of fuel prices rising.

Just for a reality check, the Territory's approach is consistent with schemes already operating in every other jurisdiction and with the steps taken by other governments this year in response to the same conflict. Every jurisdiction has a fuel price reporting scheme. Western Australia has FuelWatch, New South Wales and the ACT have FuelCheck, South Australia and Tasmania have their own FuelCheck, Victoria has Servo Saver and the Territory has MyFuel. We are improving the standard of that.

The closest model to ours is WA's FuelWatch. Under its *Petroleum Products Pricing Act,* retailers report the next day's price and must hold it unchanged for 24 hours. That is the same approach of one price per reporting period that the Territory is adopting, whilst still allowing prices to lower. During the recent conflict, WA increased its FuelWatch noncompliance penalties from $1,000 to $4,000. That is a direct parallel to the penalty increases in this Bill. These are not just things that we have dreamt up out of nowhere; they are consistent with what is happening elsewhere. This should not be controversial.

It is important to make the point and flesh out the details of this because a lot of the time, on anything to do with our economic affairs, there is simply no interrogation of a Bill or its underlying logic by the opposition. It is important for the public to understand that we thought through the details and there is a reason behind the Bill; it is not just a bit of fluff.

The Commonwealth *Liquid Fuel Emergency Act* allows a fuel emergency to be declared after which the responsible minister may direct fuel stocks to be maintained, transferred, allocated or rationed.

It also provides compensation for those who comply with a direction, mirroring the 'just terms' provisions that are in the Territory's Act. Like the Territory's Act, the Commonwealth Act has not been triggered in four decades or so, including through two Gulf wars and the pandemic, underlining the fact that these are contingency powers, not everyday ones. Each state and Territory is still responsible for managing fuel shortages within its own boundaries and has the legislation and responses to do so. There is no reason why we should not as well.

In 2026 you have seen movement in other states on this issue because people are concerned about the cost of living. Here is a hot tip: so are we. We are trying to be more fiscally responsible and create more labour and capital inputs to the system because, as I have said many times, good luck fixing anything in this place without more money and people. We have to deal with the bigger-ticket issues, and to do that we have to stabilise the ship that Labor had been tanking for a decade. This year's budget—it is not glamorous or sexy—

is fiscally responsible and logically consistent with the smallest gap between budgetary rhetoric and budgetary reality that we have had in donkey's years. That is the truth of it.

If you want to spend money on things you care about and have an open conversation to contest what we should spend money on, you have to do the other work. How do we save money? How do we stop the wastage of money? How do we institutionally save money? We cannot do those things without doing a little bit of work everywhere. You cannot just work in one area of the economy; things have to happen across a range of areas, and consumer protection is an important one. We are concerned about the cost of living and fuel prices, so when we make choices to raise power and water prices, we do so advisedly and modestly, knowing that we can only do so much unless we are fiscally responsible.

We are stewards of the future in many regards. I credit you, Member for Johnston, for reminding the Assembly on a regular basis that we should all be thinking about the future. I am always thinking about our economic future; that is all I think about as a macro thinker. I probably should spend more time down in the weeds, but my point is that we must think about structural economic reform, productivity reform and public sector reform—all the big-ticket stuff—if we want the Territory to be a stable growth jurisdiction.

In the short run, on the day to day, in the right now, why is my fuel price so erratic? Why can we not fix that? This government is doing something about it. We are trying to make changes that are small but meaningful.

I freely declare that when I saw the cost-of-living measures associated with motor vehicles at the start of our campaign period and whatnot, I thought, 'What is this? Is this really a thing? Licences, rego—do they really matter?' It turns out I was wrong and it matters to Territorians every day. We need to think about the macro picture, but these small changes add up to significant cost-of-living relief. There is $290m worth of it in the budget. Once again, have a look at Budget and Regional Overview, pages 10 and 11, off the top of my head—I have memorised it at this point. I encourage the opposition to look at it.

What have governments done this year? New South Wales triggered its emergency legislative powers over fuel distribution, and its Energy minister issued a formal information notice compelling major fuel companies to hand over supply and distribution data. That is a direct equivalent of the new power in this Bill for the minister to request information from suppliers. This is to moderate behaviour. The whole point is that retailers need to understand we have a mechanism to bring them into line if they do not play fair.

Victoria similarly passed legislation on 2 April this year to strengthen its power to acquire fuel supply and distribution information. Those measures were accompanied by the same message as ours: there is no immediate shortage, but getting ahead of the problem and being prepared for any scenario is prudent.

In sum, the Bill is bringing the Territory into line with arrangements across the country. We are adopting the same practical measures that other governments have put in place this year.

We care about the cost of living and the everyday win for motorists. This will mean that retailers can lower their price at any time. We are removing red tape so that servos can pass savings on to consumers straightaway. Service stations operate within a competitive market. I probably should not nominate which servo I go to, but the point is that we all keep an eye on it. Local residents know which servo on that road tends to be a few cents cheaper.

I will be honest; I do not pay as much attention as my dad does. My dad gives me more or less a daily report on fuel prices across the Territory. He is one of many people who know that every dollar and cent adds up. You have to be mindful of where fuel prices are cheapest to get the most bang for your buck.

The only pricing offence is charging more than the price reported. This is to protect Territorians from being stung at the pump. Motorists will get more fuel availability information up-front. You will know before you drive to the servo whether fuel is available and if not, why not and for how long. That is particularly relevant to places outside of metropolitan areas. Locking price rises to once per reporting period gives people certainty when budgeting for a trip. There will be no surprise midday hikes.

We are not setting fuel prices; the market still sets the price, competition is still preserved and retailers still make business decisions so their price reflects their intentions. We are stopping them being able to do anything nefarious should a bad retailer choose to do so.

The retailers' obligations are now also all in one place, which makes it clearer to follow and easier to navigate. That is what consumer affairs is about. We are trying to support the system, not necessarily punish anyone. Retailers telling customers that they have fuel helps customers come to them, and that is good for their business.

We want people to understand that the Territory is open for business. That means making choices that are logically consistent and giving our retailers clarity and certainty.

A lot of industries are dependent on—completely beholden to, in fact—fuel prices. Tourism and our freight sectors in particular—grey nomads on the track and the road trains keep our communities stocked—run on confidence that fuel is there. That confidence is good for our whole community.

I acknowledge that the Member for Arafura brought it up yesterday. I do not often speak about what happens out bush. I try to stay in my wheelhouse. For our regional and remote communities, this new test will help make sure any towns which might be cut off from supply can be more ably assisted.

In a genuine shortage, essentials can be prioritised where they matter most. We can prioritise getting fuel, food and supplies to the communities that need them. It is about supporting Territorians in the bush to get on with their lives and business, wherever they live.

Part of certainty and security in our agenda is forward planning and making choices that support contingency. The conflict in the Middle East has pushed up prices and created uncertainty. It is a fool's errand to speculate what will happen in that part of the world. We are conducting a harmonisation with national standards, which I am a big fan of.

In the ordinary course of events, it makes little sense to be too far ahead of the rest of the country. We are catching up. These measures will help us support the rollout of the Commonwealth's fuel security plan if that is needed. A good government has contingency plans in place. This Bill is about shoring up our contingency plans.

The 40-year-old *Essential Goods and Services Act* was written in 1981 after a previous Middle East crisis, and it has never once been activated. It has always been a contingency. It is important that we know it works. Replacing vague references to a community's requirements with the functioning of a community, for example, or a region of the Territory, allows a tailored response should we ever require one.

The minister will gain the power to request information from those in the supply chain so that recommendations to the Administrator are properly informed.

We have authorised officers to monitor compliance and investigate breaches, which is a practical gap that the old Act did not cover. It is important to have some stick to go with the carrot. The penalties have been lifted to reflect the seriousness of exploiting a genuine shortage and hurting Territorians; they are up to $18,900 for an individual and $94,500 for a body corporate for the head offence. An infringement notice scheme gives us a proportionate, lighter-touch option for minor matters rather than going straight to prosecution. These new offences—like obstructing an authorised officer who is protecting the people and doing an important job on behalf of Territorians—are a welcome addition.

This Bill delivers certainty and security for Territorians at the bowser and across the supply chain. It backs retailers, protects motorists and keeps the Territory moving. We are a responsible government in that regard. We need to plan ahead. The real trouble is that for too long we have been—it is not necessarily malice so much as negligence that has resulted in us landing where we are economically in the Northern Territory. We had decades of poorly thought-out economic and social policy choices. There has often been modest tinkering and the occasional snap decision, then suddenly a sharp jerk in the ship again because we have tried to correct course too quickly.

We made a clear statement to the public that our primary goals were to reduce crime, rebuild the economy and restore the Territory lifestyle. Everything that happens on this side of the Chamber fits into that framework. There is work to be done on all three.

My focus as a subject matter expert of some sort, as a local member and based on my professional background is on the rebuilding-the-economy piece of the puzzle. It is extremely important that we do small, non-sexy things like this Bill to make sure that we are …

Ms Boothby: It is sexy.

Dr RAHMAN: I take the interjection, Attorney-General; it is a sexy Bill.

Consumer affairs and marketplace competition are important things to focus on. Too often governments fixate on deregulating without necessarily thinking about all the other things within that ecosystem that interact with one another. I am pleased that the Minister for Trade, Business and Asian Relations is on the

ball with these matters and is making sure all the things that we do work in harmony. We cannot seek private investment without also providing a stable certain framework for people to invest in. We cannot attract business without also prioritising the needs of consumers, making sure that they are strong, robust and well protected.

We all grow weary of slinging mud in this place—I do not enjoy it—yet you are absolutely right, Member for Johnston, that it is necessary to hold the opposition to account when it is lazy on economics. That is fact. I stopped talking about the state of the economy at budget time because I thought we had finally gotten it clear. I thought, 'Let's put the past behind us and move forward and prosecute the current economic argument'. However, if those opposite keep trying to pick apart Bills on the basis of hyperbole and silly arguments, I will have to keep reminding them over and again that they are weak on the economy, consumer affairs and creating stable growth in the north of Australia.

This government is trying to remedy that by being fiscally disciplined; spending in line with our priorities and our core mandate; listening to Territorians; and being flexible and dynamic to account for contemporary circumstances and changes in the narrative.

Circumstances change, and when they change a good government changes with them. We are making small changes to legislation to protect consumers and give ourselves contingency powers which will be utilised if the conflict in the Middle East continues to create price volatility and uncertainty and deleteriously affect the everyday consumer.

I am happy to wave Bills like this through if we all agree that they are sensible. If the opposition challenges them on weak grounds, like it has done today, you can expect that I will get up and tear it down every time.

This Bill is solid; it will make a material difference to improving the lives of Territorians by ensuring that fuel prices are stable. We are trying to create certainty, security and stability.

I commend the Bill to the Assembly.

Mr MACKAY (Goyder): Mr Deputy Speaker, the cost of fuel disproportionately affects rural and remote Territorians. Members who live close to Parliament House and drive to work might fill up once per week or every two weeks. I have to fill up two or three times per week because I am active in my community. Rural residents who drive to town or further to the bush spend a lot of money on fuel.

Let us not forget that the federal government has the power over the fuel excise. The fuel excise is designed to tax people for using roads. The idea was that it would be levied for land transport projects. Over the decade to 2022–23 only 57% of fuel excise was reinvested in land transport projects. The rest of the time, Anthony Albanese and the federal government have taken the money we pay at the bowser and spent it on their projects willy-nilly.

Let us not forget that in another 10 days or thereabouts the fuel excise levy reduction—the federal government reduced it by 50%—will disappear. On 2 August Territorians will pay more money at the bowser because of Anthony Albanese. The federal government holds the keys, policy changes and taxation which costs Territorians 52c for every litre of fuel purchased. Rather than saying that Australians are doing it tough and wanting to help with the cost of living, it will instead keep taxing us over and again. Australians know you just cannot trust Labor.

In 10 days' time, when Territorians are slugged with another 20c increase at the bowser because of Anthony Albanese, they will remember that the federal Labor government does not care about rural and remote Territorians.

Ms CAHILL (Trade, Business and Asian Relations)(in reply): Mr Deputy Speaker, I thank everybody who contributed to the discussion. I especially thank my colleagues, the Treasurer and the Member for Fong Lim, for jumping to my defence when the Member for Nightcliff incorrectly gave me yet another portfolio. I have seven portfolios. It is a lot to wrap your head around, I know, but minister for consumer affairs is not one of them.

I appreciate that he expects the people responsible for various areas of our legislation to speak about it, which is exactly what happened. The Treasurer and the Attorney-General have carriage of much of this legislation and of keeping Territorians informed in times of crisis in relation to fuel, and they did exactly that. I thank them for doing that. I have a very small role to play in this very big topic of fuel security, and I could not do it without the support of my colleagues.

At its core, this Bill is about ensuring the Northern Territory has the right legislative framework so that we can respond effectively to an increasingly uncertain global environment. Recent international events demonstrated that supply chains can be disrupted at the drop of a hat, in an instant, when you least expect it. Placing pressure on fuel availability, essential goods and consumer confidence is often the result of those changes.

We have a responsibility to anticipate risks rather than simply react once they have occurred, and this legislation reflects that responsibility. This Bill modernises laws that, in some cases, have remained largely unchanged for decades. It provides us with practical contemporary tools to respond to emerging challenges while maintaining appropriate safeguards, transparency and, most importantly, accountability. It removes outdated legislative impediments, streamlines administration processes and places operational detail in regulation where it can be updated efficiently as circumstances evolve. As we have seen over the last few months, things can happen quickly, and we need to be a responsive government and have the right framework to do that.

The key element of the Bill, as the Member for Fong Lim noted, is the MyFuel NT scheme, because Territorians rightly expect accurate information when making everyday purchasing decisions. By allowing retailers to reduce fuel prices during a reporting period and preventing increases above the reported price, the amendments create greater flexibility for businesses while preserving confidence in the integrity of the scheme. Consumers will benefit from improved price transparency, and retailers will have a greater capacity to respond to challenging market conditions in a way that delivers savings directly to motorists.

Equally important are the new reporting requirements regarding fuel availability during periods of disruption. It is important we have critical, reliable information so that everybody knows exactly what is happening. It requires retailers to provide reasons for fuel shortages and expected restoration times to help consumers, businesses and freight operators to make informed decisions and reduce uncertainty.

The Bill also strengthens compliance arrangements in a measured and proportionate manner, which is important. Transparent regulatory schemes must be supported by an effective enforcement framework. Relocating offences on the Consumer Affairs and Fair Trading (Fuel Retailers) Regulations 2017, aligning infringement notices with the revised framework and providing clear penalty provisions ensures consistency, certainty and fairness for all participants.

These measures are directed at maintaining confidence in the scheme, not imposing unnecessary burdens on compliant businesses, as was implied by the Member for Nightcliff.

The amendments to the *Essential Goods and Services Act* are equally significant. This Act was passed more than 40 years ago, and the environment in which we live and operate has changed significantly. While its existence demonstrates foresight, the nature of contemporary supply chains, emergency management and critical infrastructure has changed dramatically, and we needed to respond to that.

Rather than focusing solely on the reasonable requirements of a community, the legislation adopts the broader concept of ensuring the reasonable functioning of communities. That seemingly modest change provides government with greater flexibility to respond proportionately to varying circumstances across the Territory when those circumstances affect a remote community, a regional centre or the Territory as a whole.

The new information-gathering powers are also important because effective decisions can happen only when we have accurate and timely information. The ability to obtain information from suppliers, producers and distributors allows government to identify emerging risks much earlier, understand supply constraints and act before shortages escalate into crisis. This proactive approach benefits consumers, businesses and essential service providers alike.

Similarly, the establishment of authorised officers provides an appropriate compliance mechanism where emergency powers are required. These officers will operate within clearly defined legislative parameters and appropriate safeguards while ensuring government directions issued during a declared shortage can be implemented effectively. Their role is to support the orderly management of essential goods and services when exceptional circumstances demand it.

The corresponding amendments to the Fines and Penalties (Recovery) Regulations 2001 ensure that enforcement provisions are practical and, most importantly, workable. An effective regulatory system requires far more than obligation; it requires the mechanisms to enforce those obligations efficiently and consistently.

I acknowledge the work of Attorney-General's Department staff, whose expertise has ensured these amendments are comprehensive, carefully considered and operationally sound. Their work has produced legislation that is practical and balanced.

This Bill strikes an appropriate balance and supports consumers through greater transparency, improved information and stronger protections against unfair pricing. It supports businesses by creating a more flexible and responsive regulatory environment that allows legitimate commercial decisions while maintaining a level playing field. It supports government by providing modern legislative tools to manage risks before they become crisis. Most importantly, it supports the long-term resilience of the Northern Territory by ensuring our legislative framework reflects the realities of today's economic and geopolitical environment.

The test of this legislation is not whether it explains what when wrong last time; it is whether it puts the Territory in a better position next time we face such a situation. Ultimately, these reforms are about protecting Territorians, protecting households from unnecessary uncertainty, protecting businesses through clearer regulatory arrangements and protecting the Territory's economy against increasing risks that originate beyond our borders. This is prudent and sensible legislation focused squarely on the interests of the Northern Territory and its people.

I commend this Bill to the Assembly.

Motion agreed to; Bill read a second time.

Ms CAHILL (Trade, Business and Asian Relations)(by leave): Mr Deputy Speaker, I move that the Bill be now read a third time.

Motion agreed to; Bill read a third time.

ATTORNEY-GENERAL LEGISLATION AMENDMENT (BOARDS, COMMITTEES AND STATUTORY OFFICES) BILL
Serial 65

Continued from 13 May 2026.

Ms BOOTHBY (Attorney-General): Mr Deputy Speaker, I move that the Bill be now read a second time.

Mr PAECH (Gwoja): Mr Deputy Speaker, the Bill before us is another example of the CLP government not only retreating from transparency, accountability and collaboration but also actively dismantling the structures that provide them.

Yesterday the government claimed to care deeply about the safety of children, then rammed through child protection laws that risk causing greater harm to vulnerable children and families. Today it is abolishing the Child Deaths Review and Prevention Committee, which was established in response to the Little Children are Sacred report to improve outcomes for children and help prevent tragic deaths.

The timing of this legislation exposes this government's cynicism. It talks about protecting children but continues to weaken the safeguards, oversight and independent scrutiny designed to keep children safe.

We saw it with the youth justice legislation which was not focused on ensuring children in detention received the care, rehabilitation and support they desperately need; it was about imposing increasingly punitive measures on children already caught in the justice system.

This week has demonstrated the hypocrisy of this government.

The Bill continues to erode the CLP's independent expert and collaborative approaches to government. It creates significant risks for transparent and accountable decision-making. While there are some relatively uncontroversial amendments contained in this Bill, there are also some deeply concerning changes. The abolishment of independent statutory oversight bodies cannot simply be waved through as an administrative tidy-up.

These committees exist for a reason. They provide independent scrutiny to identify systemic failures, recommend improvements and give the community confidence that serious concerns will not simply be buried inside government departments. For those reasons, Territory Labor will not support this Bill.

I turn first to the Child Deaths Review and Prevention Committee. The government repeatedly tells Territorians that its number one priority is community safety, yet today it is dismantling a body created to improve the safety and wellbeing of children. The Little Children are Sacred report highlighted the importance of properly examining child deaths and learning from them. Like other jurisdictions across Australia, the Northern Territory established a committee to understand the underlying causes and patterns of child deaths, identify systemic failures and recommend measures to prevent future deaths. At the time, the CLP recognised the importance of this work and supported the committee's establishment. It therefore defies logic that the CLP government now seeks to abolish it.

The committee has been unable to form a quorum since 2024. The responsibility of appointing members to that committee sits squarely with the government. Rather than fulfilling that basic responsibility and ensuring the committee continues its important work, the government has allowed it to become inoperative. Now, instead of fixing the problem, it is abolishing the committee altogether. There was no meaningful warning or general consultation.

The Children's Commissioner has already raised concerns about the serious gaps it creates in child death prevention and oversight. Those concerns are particularly significant in the Northern Territory where child and infant mortality rates are the highest in the country. The child mortality rate is more than double the national rate. We are experiencing devastating rates of childhood deaths from disease, sudden infant death and other preventable and potentially preventable conditions. Recent reporting has highlighted the Territory's extremely high rate of stillbirths and perinatal deaths. Against that background, how can a government possibly justify abolishing a body dedicated to examining child deaths and preventing future tragedy? Is it simply about saving money? Is it about avoiding uncomfortable recommendations? Is it about reducing scrutiny of those government agencies? The government needs to answer those questions.

The Attorney-General will argue that the Coroner can investigate child deaths and that the committee is therefore unnecessary, but the Coroner has raised concerns about this legislation. The Coroner has warned about the loss of an independent statutory body capable of examining broader systemic failures across government departments, services and agencies.

The committee could identify gaps in policy and service delivery and make recommendations that may be uncomfortable or inconvenient for government. That is precisely why independence matters. Independent oversight is not always comfortable; it is not supposed to be. Its purpose is to identify problems, expose failures and drive improvement.

The Child Deaths Review and Prevention Committee could examine deaths that were not otherwise reportable to the Coroner. That distinction is critical. The government claims the committee must be abolished to avoid overlap and duplication, but evidence demonstrates the opposite. Since October 2024 there have been 151 reported child deaths in the Northern Territory. Over that same period only 30 deaths were reported to the Coroner. That is not evidence of duplication; that is evidence of a significant gap. It is a gap that the Child Deaths Review and Prevention Committee was designed to fill, and it is a gap that the government is now choosing to leave open.

The Bill also abolishes the Health and Community Services Complaints Review Committee. Again, the Attorney-General may present this as an efficiency measure, but abolishing an independent review mechanism is not administrative reform; it removes an important layer of accountability from our health and community services system.

Our health workers do an incredible job; they work under immense pressure with limited resources, workforce shortages and difficult conditions. However, no system is perfect; mistakes occur, complaints are made and processes fail. When that happens, Territorians deserve the confidence that their concerns will be handled fairly and independently.

The review committee helped determine whether the complaint processes and procedures were properly followed. It monitored the operation of the *Health and Community Services Complaints Act*. It made recommendations about how complaints could be managed and provided advice to the commissioner and the minister. Its membership brought together legal expertise, service providers and representatives of the people who use those services. That balanced structure was important. It ensured that complaints were not solely examined from the perspective of a government or service provider but also from the perspective of patients, families and community members.

Today that committee will also be formally abolished, and there is no clear or adequate transfer of all its functions to another independent agency or body. Once again, the CLP is creating a gap and removing

oversight rather than strengthening it. Once again, it appears that saving a relatively small amount of money is being placed ahead of safeguarding the rights and wellbeing of Territorians.

Territory Labor does not oppose reform. Independent oversight structures should be regularly reviewed and properly resourced. Their legislation should be updated when necessary, and their membership and functions should be strengthened when weaknesses are identified. Reviewing and improving a body is different from abolishing it.

The government could have restored the quorum of the Child Deaths Review and Prevention Committee, but it did not. It could have consulted the Children's Commissioner, the Coroner, health professionals, Aboriginal organisations, child protection experts and affected families, but it did not. It could have considered how both committees could be improved and effectively modernised them to better support our community. Instead, it has chosen to abolish them.

Territory Labor values the critical role of independent oversight, expert advice and transparent review mechanisms. These structures support continuous improvement in legislation, policy and practice. They help identify systemic and emerging problems before more people are harmed and ensure that government agencies remain accountable to the people they serve.

Good legislation requires transparency and early engagement and meaningful consultation with relevant stakeholders. This Bill does not meet that standard; it weakens independent oversight, creates serious gaps in child death prevention and health complaints reviews, and removes safeguards without providing clear or adequate replacements.

For those reasons we do not support the Bill.

Mr MACKAY (Goyder): Mr Deputy Speaker, today we are presenting another Bill designed to cut red tape in the Northern Territory and get rid of overarching bureaucracy that is not needed, not functioning and not serving its purpose.

This Finocchiaro CLP government was elected just under two years ago with a mandate to get the Territory moving. Part of that is making sure we have systems and procedures in place that work. The ones that do not—for ideological purposes, there is no defence for keeping them. If a committee is not meeting or doing its job and other government agencies are already doing that work, do we need the duplication?

There will be a lot of discussion today about the Child Deaths Review and Prevention Committee. A lot of this discussion will be focused purely on the title of the committee and not on the functions of the committee and whether that work is ongoing or was taking place. It is purely the title that is being politicised.

The Electrical Safety Board Discipline Committee is being abolished and replaced. The Health and Community Services Complaints Review Committee is also being replaced. Their functions are being moved into existing agencies instead of standalone committees. It reduces duplication, making the system more practical and easier to navigate.

We have a Coroner in the Northern Territory. Every child death will still be reviewed.

J Davis: Incorrect.

Mr MACKAY: Work has been done over the last couple of years to make sure that we have systems, committees and boards in place. These committees have not been functioning or meeting, yet the Territory has been ticking forward.

J Davis: Why?

Mr EDGINGTON: A point of order, Mr Deputy Speaker! Standing Order 20. The Member for Johnston is continuing to intervene.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: I ask the Member for Johnston to desist.

Mr MACKAY: This Bill does not remove the function of the Child Deaths Review and Prevention Committee; it changes the structure. The independence still exists across the Coroner, who has statutory independence, and the Children's Commissioner, who has an independent oversight role.

The functions of this committee already sit within existing statutory mandates. There is no need to duplicate powers across multiple Acts. These changes avoid overlap and conflicting legislative frameworks. The functions already exist in law.

Regarding the detailed allocation already provided to the committee, the Coroner will now look at the data on national reporting; the Children's Commissioner has oversight of the recommendations; and the Child and Youth Development Research Partnership (CYDRP) will conduct the research. The final allocation of the functions of that committee for dispersal will be resolved before commencement.

This Bill also allows the liquor commissioner to attend meetings via Teams or online. It is funny to think that the majority of this legislation was written before we had modern technology and pre-COVID—before the last 10 or 20 years. This ensures the commissioner can attend remotely to make sure meetings can still happen—the commissioner still has to remain a resident of the Northern Territory—in Darwin while the commissioner is in Alice Springs, Katherine or Tennant Creek and conducting work across the Territory.

The Member for Johnston said that there would be no investigation of child deaths. The Coroner will still be looking at reportable deaths and the national reporting. Any non-reportable deaths will be looked at by the research body, which is the Child and Youth Development Research Partnership.

This Bill represents another step forward by the Finocchiaro government. It is about ensuring that Territorians have faith and confidence in our public services that will be taking on these functions; the Northern Territory is not waiting for non-functional committees to do things; the structures are in place; and the public servants who are working hard across many different departments in the Northern Territory are getting on with the job and have confidence to get things done in a streamlined process.

I do not know whether this Bill came directly from the fast-track review process, but an overarching theme of this government is to identify the mess created over 20 years of Labor rule in the Northern Territory, say what is and is not working and ensure that we have a plan going forward.

With the exception of that one committee, which garnered headlines because of its name, this Bill would have gone through without a second thought from the opposition. It would have been nodded through and approved on the voices; because of the committee name, those opposite thought they would make a political argument out of this, instead of looking at what the committee's role was, what functions are already being done and whether it needs to stand alone. I concur that the timing of this change is perhaps a bit politically sensitive, but if the committee is not doing its job and other people are already doing that job, the committee should not exist just to say that we have one.

That committee has not met since October 2024 due to a lack of quorum. This Bill brings legislation in line with operational reality. The committee has not been operating. This Bill reflects that reality and ensures the functions continue in a workable form.

Children dying is a personal and profound—issue is the wrong word, but I am having a day. It is something that all of us in this Chamber care about, and it impacts families and communities in a way that no other death does. We acknowledge that the NT has high child mortality and that there is severe over-representation of Indigenous and Aboriginal First Nations people in those child death statistics. It is a very emotional—again, issue is the wrong word, but I studied maths not English. It is something that we all deeply care about.

Just because we are removing the committee, that does not mean those functions will not take place.

I will leave it there. I am sure my colleague the Member for Blain will continue forth.

Debate suspended.

The Assembly suspended.

PETITION
Petition No 25 – Urgently Address the Deterioration of NT Public Housing

Mr PAECH (Gwoja)(by leave): Mr Deputy Speaker, I present a petition not conforming with standing orders from 432 petitioners praying the Northern Territory Government urgently address the deterioration of NT public housing and take action to fix and maintain safe, liveable homes.

I move that the petition be read.

Motion agreed to; petition read:

To the Speaker and the Members of the Legislative Assembly of the Northern Territory

This petition, signed by the undersigned, calls of the Northern Territory Legislative Assembly to require the CLP Government to urgently address the neglect and deterioration of public housing across the Northern Territory and to take immediate action to fix and maintain safe, liveable homes.

The Petitioners therefore ask that the Northern Territory Legislative Assembly:

- *Urge the Northern Territory Government to take immediate action to ensure all Territory Housing properties are maintained to a safe, secure, and liveable standard.*
- *Ensure that both urban and remote housing is properly maintained, with all repairs and maintenance requests completed in a timely manner.*
- *Prevent public housing properties from being left vacant, derelict, or unusable for extended periods, particularly given excessive waiting times for housing.*
- *Require clear commitments and timelines for when new builds, rebuilds, renovations, and repairs will be delivered.*

Mr PAECH (Gwoja): Mr Deputy Speaker, I move that the petition be referred to the Public Accounts Committee to consider whether the petition should be debated.

Motion agreed to.

SPEAKER'S STATEMENT
Question Time Conduct

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Before we start Question Time, I remind people that the questioners are entitled to raise their questions in silence. The response is to be given in silence without any unnecessary interjections.

I also remind all members of Standing Order 34:

A member must refer to other members by their title of office or by the name of their electorate.

QUESTION TIME

Mr EDGINGTON (Leader of Government Business): Mr Deputy Speaker, in the absence of the Minister for Lands, Planning and Environment, the Treasurer will be available to answer any questions in regard to his portfolios.

Nightcliff Police Station – Closure

Mr SMELT to MINISTER for POLICE

You announced the closure of the Nightcliff Police Station in my electorate 44 days ago, despite ongoing community safety concerns. Correspondence has been sent to you by local residents, community groups and small business owners. Forty-four days later, they want to know what your plan is to keep our community safe.

ANSWER

Mr Deputy Speaker, I am thrilled to answer this question. I found this flyer from the former Member for Nightcliff Natasha Fyles, promising the people of Nightcliff 'a 24/7 facility'.

I know you are the new Member for Nightcliff, but there is the old member, Gunner, authorised by Kent Rowe. You are new, but the long and sorry story that is the Nightcliff Police Station is entirely a Labor failure.

It is a broken promise from 2016 by the former Member for Nightcliff who delivered an office building that was not operational for police. It had no watch house, it was five kilometres from another police station and it was not fit for purpose—what a joke. Do you know what is worse? Labor not only lied to the people of

Nightcliff and broke its promise but also spent $12m in the process on an office building with the world's biggest sign that says, 'Police Station'. I would love to know how much it spent on the sign alone.

Today is a historic moment; we end the days of trying to fool the people of Nightcliff like Labor did for so long. We are pulling down that sign; by the end of the day it should be gone. Then the people of Nightcliff can be under no illusion that it is a police station.

For the first time in its lifetime, that building will be used for a purpose. It will now be the home of the Northern Territory Fire and Rescue Service, which *currently* does not have a home *and* is occupying space in a Police building. We will make sure that police officers can police from Police buildings and *the* Northern Territory Fire and Rescue Service can maintain that facility.

The year 2016 was a long time ago. You probably did not even live here then, Member for Nightcliff; you are that new to the Territory and to parliament. This is a Labor broken promise. It is another Labor mess that we are fixing. If one thing has been shown, it is that Labor cannot be trusted.

It is interesting that you and I sat opposite each other during Estimates for quite a while, probably hours. I had with me the Police Commissioner and the entire Police executive team. Member for Nightcliff, you did not ask me a single question regarding this then, and now you claim that you care.

Mr SMELT: A point of order, Mr Deputy Speaker! Standing Order 110; relevance. The question is about the plan to keep our community safe. All we have heard is a history lesson.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: There is no point of order.

Mrs FINOCCHIARO: Member for Nightcliff, clearly you needed it. You did not ask me, the Police Commissioner or anyone a single question regarding this in Estimates. I will tell you what we are doing for the people of Nightcliff: we are reducing crime, which is something that Labor failed to do during its crime crisis. We wound back the clock on crime by 10 years. That is real action.

Rights of the Terminally Ill Bill 2026

Mrs ZIO to CHIEF MINISTER

Since 1995 the Northern Territory has shown the desire for the rights of the terminally ill to be legislated. It has been a long journey. Over the last 30 years the NT has fallen behind and is now the last jurisdiction to legislate for the rights of the terminally ill. Can you update the Assembly on the work our CLP government is undertaking to legislate for these changes? How does this compare with other approaches?

ANSWER

Mr Deputy Speaker, today is an historic day for all Territorians, particularly for the Member for Fannie Bay. She has been a strong advocate for voluntary assisted dying for a long time, and it is something that her community welcomes. She has shown leadership in her community and been clear with her support for the Rights of the Terminally Ill Bill and its passage in August, which is incredibly important.

This morning the Attorney-General stood in this Chamber and gave an incredible speech to a gallery full of people who have been tireless advocates for returning to Territorians the rights to access voluntary assisted dying. Whilst this is a difficult topic for many people, it is also something that a majority of Territorians want to return. It does not necessarily mean that people would like to use it themselves, but they want others to have the opportunity to access it if they need to and want to, which is important.

We have done a lot of work to get to this point. We have been in government for less than two years and have had a huge legislative agenda to get through for our promise to reduce crime, rebuild the economy and restore our lifestyle.

Despite all our prior commitments and emphasis on those reforms, we had the Legal and Constitutional Affairs Committee—led by the Member for Fong Lim, with the Members for Wanguri, Blain and Daly—do an extensive body of work. We brought the legislation together and heard the voices of passionate people, like Sue Shearer from COTA and others, who are invested in seeing this reform come back to the Northern Territory.

We delivered to parliament today a Bill that will be brought back to the Assembly in August, and it will pass in parliament with the numbers that the CLP has. There is no uncertainty in this process. The CLP can

guarantee passage of the Rights of the Terminally Ill Bill in August with a majority CLP vote. I thank our entire team for working so hard on this reform and being so supportive of it.

This 30-year process began when Marshall Perron stepped down as Chief Minister to bring it in as a private member's Bill. Being able to bring it in as a government and guarantee it means a lot to the people who care. It is also a reflection of another failure by Labor to get things done. Labor had 20 years in power and did not bring this Bill to parliament. We have done it in less than two years.

Mr PAECH: A point of order, Mr Deputy Speaker! Standing Order 1; the Chief Minister is alluding to the previous Territory government not bringing it in. It was Commonwealth law that blocked the Territory from being able to do it. That is misleading.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Continue, Chief Minister.

Mrs FINOCCHIARO: Member for Gwoja, you were in the previous Labor government, and you did not bring it in. You had a committee panel …

Mr Paech: Yes, the Territory rights Bill—have you heard of it?

Mrs FINOCCHIARO: … and you did not bring the laws in, even after the Restoring Territory Rights Bill was lifted.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Let the Chief Minister finish.

Mrs FINOCCHIARO: We have done the work. We have listened …

Mr Paech: Jacinta Price did not support it, did she? She voted against it.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Gwoja, I will not warn you again.

Mrs FINOCCHIARO: We have consulted, and it will pass through the parliament in August.

Flood Recovery Fund

Mr SMELT to MINISTER for PUBLIC SERVICE

During Estimates the Chief Minister admitted that $87.5m of your $100m flood recovery fund remains unallocated. We are now three months post-flooding and communities are still waiting to find out whether they will benefit from this funding. When will you tell Territorians how the funding will be allocated? Can people expect better infrastructure before the next Wet Season?

ANSWER

Mr Deputy Speaker, there was $100m for flood recovery. In tranche 1, numerous amounts of money were spent on issues on the ground. I have been to Nauiyu in the Daly region, Mataranka, Jilkminggan and surrounding areas to talk to people. I saw the devastation of the floods there and in Katherine. The Jawoyn Association received $600,000 for upgrades to the Maud Creek bridge. Money was allocated to the future plans of Nauiyu community. I met with Malarndirri McCarthy, Green River Aboriginal Corporation and many residents of Nauiyu in an online meeting a few weeks ago. I spoke about all the things that the Territory government had done with the cleanup, rebuilding the roads—Wooliana Road had extreme devastation—cleaning up Northern Territory Government housing and the health clinic and things like that in Nauiyu, as well as some of the non-government corporations.

Tranche 2 will come in time. We are constantly working with those people on the ground. As I said, I met with Malarndirri and members of the Nauiyu community. After that meeting, which was about a month ago, Malarndirri said that she would get back to me in two weeks. It has been a month, at least. I have written back to Malarndirri to say …

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: I think you need to refer to people by their office.

Mr PAECH: A point of order, Mr Deputy Speaker! Standing Order 110; relevance, and you need to refer to a Commonwealth minister by their title. The question is: where is the rest of the allocation of the money going, considering that you have allocated only a small portion of that money?

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: No further question. Continue, Member for Katherine.

Mrs HERSEY: I have met with the senator. She said that she would get back to me within two weeks, but I have not heard from her. I have written to her again this week, and I am waiting for a response.

The tranche 2 money can be given out only when the feds get back to us in an appropriate time to say where that money can go. We have asked for help from the federal government. To this point we have not received any support from the federal government at all. We talk about Closing the Gap and all the things that we want to do for Aboriginal organisations …

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Katherine, your time is up.

Livestock and Agriculture Industries

Mr MACKAY to MINISTER for AGRICULTURE and FISHERIES

Recently, you have been talking with local Territorians in the Big Rivers region and Central Australia, meeting with pastoralists and engaging with true Territorians. Can you update the Assembly on how the Northern Territory's livestock and agriculture industries are driving economic growth, creating jobs and supporting regional communities? How is the government backing our pastoralists, producers and growers through recent challenges such as the floods and severe weather, while also attracting new investment, strengthening live export and expanding opportunities such as the Parilla potatoes development near Katherine?

ANSWER

Mr Deputy Speaker, the Member for Goyder understands how important agriculture is to the Territory economy. His electorate has a range of agriculture throughout, and he is a mathematician so he understands the numbers.

Before I start talking about my trip to Douglas Daly, I will give a brief history of what the previous Labor members did to the department of Agriculture. They hid it at the bottom of the soup and forgot about it. They forgot about an industry that provides Australia with over 52% of the mango crop; more than half of Australia's mangoes are grown in the Northern Territory. They hid it at the bottom of the soup and said, 'Do not come near us or cause any problems, we do not care about you'.

We brought that out and have given it a department because it is one of the key pillars to grow our economy. We were elected to reduce crime, which we are doing. We will rebuild the economy because that is a super part of restoring our lifestyle. Along with Defence, tourism, mining and energy, we will use these sectors to restore our economy to where it should be—where it was before the previous Labor government destroyed it.

The cattle industry is also part of agriculture. More than 447,000 head of cattle were exported last year. That is a lot of cattle; it is a record. What does that do? We might see it as a number. Imagine the supply chain and the jobs and money that it brings into the economy. There are Territorians who can afford to live here because of the cattle and agriculture industries.

Whilst I was on my trip I saw a new industry of potato farming in the Northern Territory around Katherine. It was exciting to see. They grow seed potatoes based on the season and use them to grow potatoes for consumption. This is a great benefit for us because of our Wet Season and Dry Season versus the summer down south. It gives Northern Territory farmers an opportunity to grow the seed stock and have it ready to plant for a bigger company in South Australia, instead of them sourcing it somewhere else.

This is a classic example of growing the Territory economy because we are getting a new industry. If you think a potato is just a potato, these are 25% less carbs.

We are putting $100m into flood recovery to support them.

Gunbalanya Health Clinic

Mr BROWN to MINISTER for HEALTH

You promised to build a new health clinic for the people of Gunbalanya. Can you explain to my constituents why you have gone back on your word and, instead, released the tender for a minor upgrade to the existing clinic? Why have you not told anyone about this decision, especially my constituents in Gunbalanya? Why

are you spending only a pathetic $8m on new health infrastructure across the Territory, most of which is in your electorate, whilst forking out $250m for new jails?

ANSWER

Mr Deputy Speaker, I do not know how many times we have been through this to remind the member of what has been going on. Let us track back to when Labor was in government. Labor, as we have heard many times before, made a number of promises which were unfunded in the budget. One of those was the Gunbalanya Health Clinic.

Labor promised that as …

Mr PAECH: A point of order, Mr Deputy Speaker! Standing Order 110; relevance. If the member is that obsessed with Labor, I will give him a membership form. We want to know what your government is doing about Gunbalanya clinic.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: There is no point of order. The minister was talking about Gunbalanya. Do not give me those interjections again.

Mr EDGINGTON: Labor simply does not want to hear about its past failures when it was in government and what it has been doing. You cannot trust Labor. This was another broken promise by Labor to build a health clinic at Gunbalanya. Do not trust Labor. The electorate understands that it cannot be trusted. Labor makes promises that it cannot deliver and has been caught out many times; do not try to spin it.

Our government promised 18 months ago to do the necessary upgrades at that clinic to make it habitable, safe and presentable for the staff and workers. Today, Labor is trying to peddle and rewrite history; that will not go down well, Member for Arafura. Today, we have had questions about the Nightcliff Police Station and Gunbalanya Health Clinic, and I am wondering what is next. It seems to be all about rewriting history in the absence of …

Mr BROWN: A point of order, Mr Deputy Speaker! Standing Order 110; relevance. Are you going back on your word by doing a minor tender instead of doing the whole tender?

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: There is no point of order. Continue, minister.

Mr EDGINGTON: At the moment, you have your own problems you need to worry about without worrying about what we are doing. I have explained that we are getting on with the job and supporting the people at Gunbalanya by providing additional upgrades to that clinic. We said we would do that, and we are getting on with it.

We are not here to try to rewrite history like the Labor Party. We have heard it with Nightcliff today. I will have to repeat myself: today is not about rewriting history. Listen to the facts. We will continue to deliver health services across the Northern Territory. We support Red Lily, and I thank it for its work.

Cost-of-living Relief – Vehicles

Mrs CARLSON to MINISTER for LOGISTICS and INFRASTRUCTURE

Can you update the Assembly on why reducing the cost of driving is so important to Territorians, particularly those living in our regional and remote communities, and how the CLP government is delivering practical cost-of-living relief for all Territory motorists? In a jurisdiction where people rely on vehicles—especially me with short legs—to get to work, take children to school, access healthcare and travel vast distances, how can this CLP government's reforms ensure that Territory drivers are better off?

ANSWER

Mr Deputy Speaker, for many Territorians a car is not a luxury; it is a necessity, a tool of your trade. Territorians drive further and rely more heavily on their vehicles and often have multiple cars, utes and trailers to support work and family life than probably anywhere in the country. Our tyranny of distance shows how important vehicles are to us.

We are focusing on practical measures that will put money back into the pockets of Territorians and Territory businesses. Territorians are far better off under the CLP because we froze car registration, putting money

back into people's pockets. That was done in our first year of government. Recently, We are doing fiscally responsible work, so we will freeze the MAC levy on insurance for a year to keep those costs down.

We introduced flexible trailer registration with two and three-year options to reduce the administrative burden, which also reduces costs for Territorians. More than 3,837 Territorians have already taken up that option—the deputy leader and I have.

We introduced and delivered free 12-month drivers' licences for eligible Territorians. This is real cost-of-living relief for stuff that people need every day. We scrapped annual inspections because we realised Territorians are driving much newer vehicles, a far cry from many years ago. We are saving motorists time and money. We heard stories of people taking days off to get their vehicles inspected and then having to go to MVR to get them registered.

For a typical Territory family with two drivers and two vehicles, that is more than $270 back in their pockets every year.

What are we doing? We are reducing costs, cutting red tape and making life easier for Territory drivers. That is what growth is about, and that is what certainty and security looks like. The Member for Gwoja backed the changes we are making to MVR because he understands the real outcomes for people in rural and remote areas, and they are the people we are trying to help.

These changes make real differences to everyday Territorians, saving them time and money. We are putting money back in Territorians' pockets and making their lives easier every day.

Water Resources – Data Centres

J DAVIS to TREASURER on behalf of MINISTER for LANDS, PLANNING and ENVIRONMENT

Given hyperscale data centres can require enormous volumes of water for cooling, will you guarantee that this government will not commit a single litre of Territory water to any proposed data centre before independent assessment, public consultation and full transparency on its water use?

ANSWER

Mr Deputy Speaker, it is great to represent the Minister for Lands, Planning and Environment on this issue. There is water available to support development across the NT. While there is a lot of interest in data centre development in the NT, no application for a water extraction licence has yet been received by the department.

There are large quantities of water available in the Georgina Wiso Water Allocation Plan. There is 170,000 megalitres per year available for allocation under that plan. This is backed by the best science made publicly available by the minister's department. There is also water available across other regions of the Territory.

One thing I must note is that I have been in discussions with the proponents around data centres, and that technology is changing continually, day by day. This is emerging technology and is changing quickly. I can see how it will work for us. The proponents are talking about closed-loop systems for water so that they do not use as much water. In the old systems there seems to be high water use, but the technology and engineering is changing, and they are talking about closed systems for water. That could be a game changer longer term.

J DAVIS A point of order, Mr Deputy Speaker! Standing Order 110; relevance. The question was not about how much water we have here. Will the government guarantee that it will not commit a single litre of Territory water to any proposed data centre before independent assessment, public consultation and full transparency on its water use?

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: The minister still has a minute-and-a-half to go.

Mr YAN: Water sources and water allocations will depend on location. Water could be sourced through urban water supply networks directly from groundwater or service water systems or, where available, recycled water. Any allocation of water will go through a normal process. There is a robust process within the Department of Lands, Planning and Environment for water allocation and the Northern Territory's water resources. Those processes will be applied. That is what any prudent government department would do.

I have no doubt that the Minister for Lands, Planning and Environment, through his department, will look at any applications that come across his desk through that lens. The legislation and the regulations exist now for water allocations and usage for any enterprise in the Territory. Those rules will apply to data centres. I have no doubt about that.

I look forward to the data centres coming to the Northern Territory. This is exciting news about exciting developments.

Water Resources – Data Centres – Supplementary Question

J DAVIS to TREASURER on behalf of MINISTER for LANDS, PLANNING and ENVIRONMENT

Given what you said, what level of water use would this government consider unacceptable for a single private data centre?

ANSWER

Mr Deputy Speaker, that would be determined through whatever process exists within Lands, Planning and Environment to assess water usage. Whether it be for a data centre, a pastoralist or an agricultural enterprise, those things will be assessed through the normal regulatory and legislative processes of the department.

Test Cricket

Dr RAHMAN to MINISTER for MAJOR EVENTS

One of the ways in which we are delivering for Territorians is by restoring the Territory lifestyle, including doing the hard work to bring back events beloved by Territorians and, for that matter, people across Australia whom we want to encourage to visit the Top End. While those opposite are consumed with their internal affairs, leadership changes and reshuffling of shadow portfolios—basically running out their own batsman—our CLP government remains focused on getting runs on the board for Territorians.

As a genuine wicketkeeper, I am thrilled to reiterate that on 13 August, after decades of waiting, test cricket will finally return to Darwin. Can you update the Assembly on the economic, cultural and social significance of this major event and explain what it will mean for the Territory?

ANSWER

Mr Deputy Speaker, I know the Member for Fong Lim loves cricket. He not only can play, but also was at the last international test match we had, which was between Australia and Bangladesh 20 years ago.

Mrs Finocchiaro: He looks the same.

Ms BOOTHBY: That is right, Chief Minister, he looks the same.

The Member for Fong Lim told me that his younger brother was also at that match and he was the flag bearer, which is pretty cool. He is returning to Darwin for the next international test cricket match 20 years later, and now he has a new role. He is the event manager for Cricket Australia, which is fabulous. It runs in the family. As the Minister for Major Events, I am excited to have the member's brother come back to the Territory. I know that he will have a wonderful time. I very much look forward to being there to see the Member for Fong Lim, his brother and the many Territorians who will be there because Territorians love their major events and cricket.

We had the T20 last year, which also for the first time in decades—I think it was 16 years—returned to Darwin. That was a sellout over two games. It was amazing. We filled the stadium with not only Territorians but also a lot of visitors.

Guess what? So far, of all the tickets sold for this international test game which will be in August, 51% of those sales are not from the Northern Territory. That is amazing. It is such great news to think that we will attract that many people who do not live in the Territory to come and enjoy our wonderful lifestyle. Of course, when they are here, the weather will be pretty good. It will be mid-August, so we will have already done a lot of our Dry Season events. The racing carnival will have just finished, so it is not quite the peak season, but we will certainly still have nice cool weather. I think those visitors from interstate and across the world will love the Territory for the time that they are here. They will enjoy the cricket.

Recently, Nathan Lyon, who is an Australian cricketer, came and spent time with me and the Chief Minister. He spent time with kids across different schools in Darwin. They loved it. He did a session with the cricketers at the Palmerston Cricket Club. It was fabulous.

About a month or two before that, Jake Weatherald was back. He is our local boy, and we love him. He came back—he is a Stuart Park boy—and did not only some things with the students who love cricket but also some tourism things. There are videos of him fishing locally and swimming in Berry Springs. Really good content was captured, and it is being aired all over the world. Everyone loves Jake Weatherald; he is a huge hit. I think the Hot 100 boys are imitating him with hats to make them look bald.

Get out there and enjoy the cricket, everyone.

Housing Construction – Remote Communities

Mr PAECH to MINISTER for HOUSING CONSTRUCTION referred to MINISTER for HOUSING, LOCAL GOVERNMENT and COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Amanbidji, Alpurrurulam, Papunya and Hermannsburg are strong communities from the bush. They are waiting for information on when your government will build new homes in those communities. How many homes will your government build in Amanbidji, Alpurrurulam, Papunya this year?

ANSWER

Mr Deputy Speaker, I had a similar question earlier in the week from the Member for Gwoja, and I gave the assurance that I would get back to him on that with the numbers for houses across Central Australia. Unfortunately, I do not have those numbers at hand, otherwise I would supply them. As soon as I have those numbers I will provide them to the Member for Gwoja.

We are committed to the $4bn housing project that was signed up for by the previous government. We are delivering those houses across the Territory, including Central Australia. I have a particular interest in Central Australia. A number of communities in my electorate have high overcrowding and are in desperate need of additional houses. I have a particular interest in this, and as soon as I can get those numbers on what we are looking at across Central Australia—I will hand over to my colleague the minister for Local Government, who may have some numbers for you.

Mr EDGINGTON: Mr Deputy Speaker, I have a summary of the housing program and am happy to share that with the Member for Gwoja. There are quite a few numbers on there. The decisions to build houses are made by the Joint Steering Committee, which includes the four land councils—the Tiwi, Anindilyakwa, Northern and Central Land Councils—the Commonwealth and Aboriginal Housing NT.

Mr PAECH: A point of order, Mr Deputy Speaker! I understand it has been reallocated to a different minister. Standing Order 110; relevance. Minister, can you tell me how many new homes for Papunya, Alpurrurulam, Amanbidji and Hermannsburg?

Mr EDGINGTON: I will have to write down those names, but I am happy to have a discussion with you about the housing program. It is developed through the Joint Steering Committee, which is the NT, Commonwealth, the four land councils and Aboriginal Housing NT. I am happy to share that information with you offline.

Exercise Pitch Black 2026

Mrs ZIO to CHIEF MINISTER

I have another question for someone I know is as passionate about this topic as I am. Chief Minister, those on this side of the Chamber understand that Defence is an important part of the NT's economy, identity and way of life. Major exercises bring personnel, families and visitors to the Territory. This supports local businesses and creates opportunities for Territorians to engage directly with our Defence community.

It is timely that the minister for Tourism talked about visitors from interstate because every weekend in my community room, at the Parap markets, I speak with locals and tourists who love what Defence is bringing to the NT and are happy to come and visit.

Can you update the Legislative Assembly on the contribution Exercise Pitch Black 2026 will make to the Territory's economy—maybe somewhere in the electorate of Fannie Bay, for instance—and tell us why we bring the world's leading multinational air combat exercise here?

Mr Paech: A point of order! Time has expired.

Members interjecting.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Gwoja, please desist.

ANSWER

Mr Deputy Speaker, the Member for Fannie Bay is right; the electorate of Fannie Bay is special tonight because Pitch Black is having its air show over Mindil Beach and 40,000 people are expected on Mindil Beach from 5 pm. It is not too late to rearrange your afternoon plans and head out there, but you will want to get in early. Road closures start at 3 pm. Tonight, Pitch Black will be one of the best air shows in the country. Territorians can go to Mindil Beach and other viewing points along the coast to witness 19 countries with 30 different aircraft in an excellent display of jet noise and fuel.

Exercise Pitch Black happens every two years. It is a significant exercise for our country, particularly the Northern Territory, to host. It brings hundreds of people from 19 different countries to the Northern Territory to engage in serious exercises over two weeks. This will be Territorians' best opportunity to see the jets. Otherwise, they can head to Amy Johnson Avenue and park their car on the dirt and watch them land and take off. Of course, there will be the open day in a week or so.

That is a huge injection into our economy. People buy food, go into restaurants and cafes and stay in hotels. It is an excellent opportunity to showcase the Northern Territory as a Defence and allied partner of choice. It cannot be underestimated how valued the Northern Territory is as a partner of choice. It is something we pride ourselves on and we work hard to maintain and expand that.

Of course, we have had the Marine Rotational Force hosted in Darwin for 15 years—an important partnership with the United States and the Marines. That is going from strength to strength.

Pitch Black is an exhilarating opportunity to access the world's air forces and military. Tonight will be particularly special as Mindil Beach lights up. I hope everyone has a fantastic time. We welcome the participants from 19 nations who are in the Territory and hope they enjoy their time safely. We are proud to be hosting Pitch Black.

The Minister for Tourism has done a lot of work to make sure people around the country know how special Pitch Black is and the opportunities it presents. There are a lot of people from interstate who have come just for Pitch Black. It is a flagship piece for us which reinforces our importance as a strategic Defence partner. We are proud to be delivering it.

Data Centre Proposal – Finn Road

Mr YOUNG to TREASURER on behalf of MINISTER for WATER RESOURCES referred to DEPUTY CHIEF MINISTER

Many concerned constituents have contacted my electorate office since the announcement of the new data centre along Finn Road. It is estimated that 3.5 billion to 43.8 billion litres of water will be used on the data centre per year. Where will the water be drawn from? What consultation will take place with rural residents? If there is overwhelming opposition to the project, will you consider other options?

ANSWER

Mr Deputy Speaker, this is an exciting announcement for the Territory. This is a large opportunity for a large data centre in partnership with Beetaloo Energy. We look forward to seeing what this project looks like in the future. This is all it is at the moment—a project idea. We certainly hope this idea and project comes to fruition because it will mean a lot for the people of the Northern Territory, with the construction work to build the facility and ongoing employment for Territorians longer term. It starts to cement our place in the world's future for data management.

Why can we do that? Because there is certainty to invest in the Territory now that the CLP is in power—something you could not trust with Labor. We were not seeing proponents falling over themselves to come here and invest in data centres and other businesses. We are seeing that shift now in investment opportunities in the Territory.

What will the water usage figures be for this data centre? I cannot tell you that, Member for Daly, and I do not think anyone can at the moment. As I said in my last response, the technology is emerging. How much water will it use? Will it use a closed system?

Mr YOUNG: A point of order, Mr Deputy Speaker! My question directly asked where the water will be drawn from and what consultation will take place with rural residents and, if there is strong opposition to it, whether other options will be considered. They were the questions.

Members interjecting.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Desist. That is enough. Minister, continue.

Mr YAN: I was getting there. In my last response I said that there are already strict water allocation plans for how water is extracted, what it is used for and enterprises.

I will pass to the Deputy Chief Minister, who has been working with these proponents and knows a little more about this than I do.

Mr MALEY: Mr Deputy Speaker, I was with the Minister for Water Resources when he made the announcement with Alex Underwood at the site yesterday. This is day one of a very large project. We have done a 'do not deal' for one year. Now the proponent has to consult and work out what jobs will be available and the benefits to the community. The proponent has committed to do that.

The proponent will work with the community in your electorate, my electorate and Palmerston. They will ask, 'What can we do to make sure that this project benefits the Territory?' We will talk about jobs …

Mr YOUNG: A point of order, Mr Deputy Speaker! Standing Order 110; relevance.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: I believe the minister is answering the question.

Mr YOUNG: There are other parts to it, Mr Deputy Speaker.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Take your seat, Member for Daly.

Mr MALEY: This will be about jobs. This is day one of a very large project. There will be no government money. This is a private enterprise spending money in the Northern Territory.

Mr YOUNG: A point of order, Mr Deputy Speaker! I appreciate that he has answered one part of the question; I acknowledge that. The other part to the question was: if there is overwhelming opposition to the project, will the CLP government consider other options?

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Minister, continue. You have 16 seconds.

Mr MALEY: The proponent will consult. This is day one of a very large project with no government money. It will provide jobs and certainty. It will grow our economy. We are making sure these proponents come to the Territory and invest their money to give Territorians jobs and certainty and grow our economy.

Sports Oval Upgrades

Mr HOWE to MINISTER for PEOPLE, SPORT and CULTURE

Community infrastructure is vital to restoring the lifestyle that Territorians have asked for. Families in Drysdale demanded of us to create a safe Drysdale, a stronger economy they can participate in and a lifestyle they can enjoy. That includes safe and modern places for sport and recreation. In Drysdale, we expect delivery on election promises.

How is this Finocchiaro CLP government already delivering on our long list of election commitments for sport in Drysdale, in the wider Palmerston area and across the Darwin region? Why can Territorians trust our government after years of broken promises?

ANSWER

Mr Deputy Speaker, I know how the Member for Drysdale values his community. When he made those promises to his community he strongly advocated for this project.

We came to government to reduce crime, rebuild the economy and restore the lifestyle. When it comes to the Territory lifestyle, sport plays an important role in delivering that. Many members on this side of the Chamber provided commitments to their electorates and asked, 'How will we support sport in your community?'

The Member for Drysdale made a commitment regarding Gray Oval. This government has announced $1.25m to upgrade Gray Oval. It will improve infrastructure for that well-used oval in Palmerston. We also announced $980,000 towards improvements for Goodline Park.

Much of the sporting infrastructure was long neglected by the previous Labor government. There were no infrastructure upgrades at many ovals; that is why this CLP government is providing upgrades.

The Member for Blain strongly advocated for $150,000 for lighting upgrades at Moulden Park. That is something that we have worked on and announced two weeks ago.

We made a series of announcements for Darwin. The first one is for Kahlin Oval with a $2m announcement made with the Member for Port Darwin, who is also the Minister for Trade, Business and Asian Relations. That will be one of the important developments in Port Darwin.

The Member for Fannie Bay has strongly advocated for improvements at Gardens Oval. The Finocchiaro CLP government has announced $2m towards the Gardens Oval project. The women's changeroom facilities will be the number one priority, as well as the grandstand. We would like to see investment coming from the Commonwealth and the City of Darwin because it is a City of Darwin-owned asset.

Moving on to the Member for Wanguri's electorate, there is $1.5m to upgrade the lights at Wanguri Oval. We have worked with the City of Darwin and did a deal to upgrade the lights at Wanguri Oval. For Nakara Oval we have committed $1.1m and the department is working with the City of Darwin on that upgrade.

On top of that, in the Member for Casuarina's electorate, there is $3m for Tracy Village.

YiSSA Crisis Accommodation

Mr GUYULA to MINISTER for CHILDREN and FAMILIES

People at YiSSA are very worried about losing their houses. My office has had many phone calls. On Tuesday you said that they would be cared for and looked after, but will they have appropriate housing? Can you confirm that they will all have safe housing rather than being forced into overcrowded houses and short-term accommodation from which they become homeless?

ANSWER

Mr Deputy Speaker, it is important to categorically make clear that the situation we are experiencing with the Batten Road facility is a direct result of the owners of the infrastructure on that facility refusing to come to a fair, reasonable and fiscally responsible agreement to enable that facility to continue in its current form. The reality is their lease expires in October, which means that come October they have to make good that site. We approached them and made a fair offer and said, 'You don't need to do that. We will forgo the need for you to expend what will be millions of dollars making that site good. We will give you the equivalent of a year's lease income for compensation, which really does not need to be given, to enable us to continue operating the facility as it currently stands.' They said, 'No. We want closer to somewhere between $8m and $12m.' That would be for infrastructure that is more than a decade old. That is the situation we find ourselves in. We have been working hard to find an alternative process to assist those people.

The other thing we need to make clear is that YiSSA is a temporary facility; it is not a long-term facility. The initial entry point for people coming into the Batten Road facility is 28 days. After 28 days an assessment is

made about what their needs might be and then there is an option for them to transfer into the second part of the facility which is meant to be for a maximum of six months.

A lot of work is being done to find those people adequate accommodation and somewhere more permanent to be. Work is being done to understand why some of them have been there for much longer than they should have been and why they have not been found a more permanent home. That work is being undertaken by the department, and I am expecting a copy of the transitional plan early next week.

As I have said in this parliament a number of times over the last couple of days, we will do everything in our power to make sure that everybody who has been impacted by the decision of Ausco not to come to the party with us is cared for, looked after and safe.

NAIDOC Week Events

Mrs CARLSON to MINISTER for ABORIGINAL AFFAIRS

The Territory joined in 50 years of NAIDOC Week celebrations recently. NAIDOC Week is about celebrating culture, sharing stories and bringing communities together.

Mr Young: NAIDOC.

Mrs CARLSON: Have you got something to say?

Mr Young: Pronounce it correctly.

Mrs CARLSON: I am reading the question.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Can we continue with the question, please.

Mrs CARLSON: Events are held across the Territory from Alice Springs to Tennant Creek and Katherine and across to Gove and the Top End, as well as many remote communities. Many members of our team attended events in their electorates and joined in celebrations.

The CLP government made commitments to restore our unique Territory lifestyle and empower the bush. Can you highlight how the CLP government met these commitments and supported NAIDOC Week events and activities across the Territory?

ANSWER

Mr Deputy Speaker, the Member for Wanguri knows how important NAIDOC Week is, like every member on this side.

I highlight that NAIDOC Week was between 5 and 12 July, celebrating 50 years of deadly. The events I went to were, in fact, deadly.

The CLP government, through our commitment …

Mr Paech: Said you are gammon.

Mr EDGINGTON: Thank you for the comments, Member for Gwoja.

Our government contributes to the celebration of NAIDOC Week, celebrating culture, language, history and the achievements of Aboriginal people in the Territory. We backed the milestone celebrations with a $350,000 grant to Larrakia Nation to deliver program events across the Top End. We also supported NAIDOC Week with $40,000 of grants to support activities in the Northern Territory.

NAIDOC Week grants made it possible for many remote communities to celebrate their culture, language, history and achievements. These $40,000 grants supported activities such as cultural learning days, art and culture projects, community celebrations, sporting competitions, barbecues and other events. In our year of growth, certainty and security, these grants are an important part of the CLP government's commitment to empowering the bush. Grants of up to $5,000 were awarded to Aboriginal organisations, businesses and community groups to deliver events and activities in communities.

The Chief Minister attended the NT NAIDOC Flag Raising Ceremony and the 2026 Darwin NAIDOC Gala Ball & Awards Ceremony with me. It was a fantastic night at the Convention Centre celebrating NAIDOC. I congratulate all this year's winners. Those at the event would agree that it was wonderful event celebrated by many.

I also attended several events in the Barkly. Our NAIDOC Week march and the official reopening of the Nyinkka Nyunyu Art & Culture Centre were attended by many. It was a great day. There was the elders lunch and other activities throughout the Barkly.

From a CLP government perspective, NAIDOC Week was wonderful. Here's to another 50 years of deadly.

Road Upgrades – Melville Island

Mr BROWN to MINISTER for LOGISTICS AND INFRASTRUCTURE

When will the people of Melville Island finally get to see the road upgraded between Threeways and Pirlangimpi? When will the works get underway, and when will they be completed?

ANSWER

Mr Deputy Speaker, it was not that long ago I met with the councils about some of these roads on the islands. I believe we have works underway to get them moving, which is great.

Our government's budget delivered this year has a record spend on infrastructure. Most of that infrastructure spend is on roads and, of that, most is on roads in the bush. We understand the importance of roads in the bush. They are not just roads; they connect people and communities and provide people with access to services.

We are committed to doing that work on the islands, and the planning is underway. I do not have an exact date for you, Member for Arafura, but I can find it and provide it to you. It is on program and in the pipeline to get done because we understand the need for roads in the bush.

Alice Springs Correctional Centre – Prisoner Barbering Program

Mr PATEL to MINISTER for CORRECTIONS

The Member for Karama and I have graced the Assembly with our new slick haircuts. That is because on our recent visit to the Alice Springs Correctional Centre the Member for Karama and I had the opportunity to try out the barber's chair and receive a wonderful haircut from prisoners participating in the new barbering program. Can you update the Assembly on how this local program is being delivered, the skills and qualifications it is providing to participants and how it is creating real employment and small business pathways, particularly for prisoners returning to remote communities?

ANSWER

Mr Deputy Speaker, I thank the Member for Casuarina for his support in the rehabilitation services of Corrections in Alice Springs. I commend him and you, Mr Deputy Speaker, for participating in the program and literally putting your hair on the line for rehabilitation. This is what commitment is about.

in all seriousness, this is a good program, because it is a local initiative to give people in the prison system a real skill. Rehabilitation is about making sure that they can go into the community and give haircuts. You might think that is a funny thing, but haircutting is a big thing. People in this Chamber need a haircut every now and then, like the Member for Goyder. He needs to go there and get a haircut as well.

This is a real opportunity for prisoners to build communication and interpersonal skills and to cut people's hair. While having a haircut you can chat with your barber or hairdresser, so it is about building relationships and confidence. It is about rehabilitation. It is not just cutting hair; it is building discipline, routine and confidence for the prisoners participating in the program.

It is important to ensure that prisoners do rehabilitation programs. We do not want to do what the previous Labor government did—that is, put prisoners in watch houses and forget about them. You cannot trust Labor. Imagine putting prisoners into watch houses for months on end. You think that would not happen, but it did under the previous Labor government. On this side of the House, we are offering rehabilitation. We have Sentenced to a Job and Sentence to a Skill. We are providing work skills to break the cycle for people in

prison so that they can come out a better person and give back to the community to make sure that they do not end up back in jail.

We have entered into an agreement with CDU. I thank CDU for working with the Corrections system to ensure we can offer rehabilitation and training to allow prisoners to come out better people. We want prisoners to come out work-ready with life skills. The prisoner with this skill—as you found out, Mr Deputy Speaker—did a great job.

It focuses on reducing reoffending to make sure we have stronger communities. We want to give prisoners an opportunity to go back to the community as better people.

Mr EDGINGTON (Leader of Government Business): Mr Deputy Speaker, I ask that any further questions be placed on the Written Question Paper.

STATEMENT BY MINISTER FOR EDUCATION AND TRAINING
Charles Darwin University – Electrotechnology Training

Mrs HERSEY (Education and Training)(by leave): Mr Deputy Speaker, I was briefed by Charles Darwin University that a group of about 100 students have missed a unit of competency as part of their training in the electrotechnology field.

The training failure was detected during an independent and comprehensive audit that I demanded in February. The audit followed a training bungle in the carpentry curriculum. CDU has advised that it is still assessing final numbers, but assured me that no licensed electricians, air conditioning and refrigeration mechanics or apprentices are caught up in this mess.

This morning I made clear to CDU my expectations that whoever is responsible for this failure needs to be held to account. The entire Finocchiaro CLP team shares the frustration and anger of the students, businesses and families impacted. CDU is working around the clock to determine final student numbers, all of whom will be contacted on Monday.

I have requested an urgent update from CDU early next week, but it is clear that further failure is not an option, and reform needs to be expedited. I have commenced work on a plan to overhaul and strengthen governance, better align priorities with industry and set clearer expectations for NT Government funding. As the largest public training provider in the Territory, a robust and durable CDU is not negotiable as we upskill students and rebuild our economy.

ATTORNEY-GENERAL LEGISLATION AMENDMENT (BOARDS, COMMITTEES AND STATUTORY OFFICES) BILL
Serial 65

Continued from earlier this day.

J DAVIS (Johnston): Mr Deputy Speaker, before I speak on this Bill, I will address the Member for Goyder's comments.

The Member for Goyder told this Assembly that the objection to this Bill was about the name of the Bill. I have no idea what he means. The deep offensiveness of saying that there are objections to a Bill, which removes a committee that is about preventing child deaths, because of the name and because it is just a political ideological stance—like you, Member for Goyder, I am lost for words.

You said that the committee was disbanded because it was not meeting. Member for Goyder, it was not doing its job because the government did not appoint any members for more than a year.

You said that every death would be reviewed, but we have had no clear answer to that from the department, despite asking. The Coroner reviews only reportable deaths, exactly as you said, which was only 16% of deaths in the last year. The research committee cannot take on that function when you still have no answer as to what will happen to the 151 unreviewed child deaths.

Member for Goyder, it astounds me. A couple of people contacted me, saying, 'How come people can say whatever they want in the Chamber? They can say whatever they want, and no-one ever holds them to account for it.' I agree with that. I think that in this Chamber we need to speak the truth, so I wanted to put that on the record.

This week in parliament we heard the words ‘child safety’ repeated over and again. The government said that child safety is its highest priority, and I believe that every member wants that to be true, but when I step back and look at the decisions this parliament has made this week, I struggle to reconcile those words with the government’s actions.

Earlier this week the government passed sweeping changes to the child protection system, despite overwhelming evidence from the people who know that system best that the Bill in the form it was passed will not make children safer. At the same time the government announced the closure of the YiSSA emergency accommodation service without a clear commitment to where those people will be housed. Being cared for is not the same as being housed, minister. Stable housing protects children. Homelessness increases family stress and contact with the child protection system and makes it harder for children to thrive. Today we are debating legislation that abolishes the Northern Territory’s independent Child Deaths Review and Prevention Committee. Three decisions in one week with one common thread and one clear pattern that weakens the systems to protect children instead of strengthening them; removes independent scrutiny rather than embracing it; and says one thing but does another.

This debate is not about one committee. It is about whether we believe governments become stronger or weaker when independent scrutiny is removed. Independent scrutiny is not a criticism of government; it is one of the ways that good governments protect children.

The Attorney-General Legislation Amendment (Boards, Committees and Statutory Offices) Bill contains provisions that I support.

The recommendation from the scrutiny committee relating to the Public Trustee is sensible, and I look forward to hearing from the minister whether that will be accepted. The evidence before the committee in relation to that was clear: introducing a four-month timeframe for providing financial statements will improve accountability and ensure that Territorians receive audited information sooner. I support that recommendation.

More broadly, this government says that the whole Bill is simply streamlining. If that were true, I would support it. Streamlining should improve efficiency and remove duplication. It should not remove accountability and should never come at the expense of learning from the death of a child to prevent that terrible tragedy from occurring again.

Throughout the scrutiny committee inquiry, I asked a simple question: what will replace the committee, not in theory, but in practice? I still do not have an answer that gives me confidence. The department assured us that the committee’s functions would continue elsewhere. We were initially told that the Child and Youth Development Research Partnership will continue the committee’s research functions, but the department later confirmed that it is not a replacement and does not assume the committee’s statutory role.

We were told that the child deaths register would continue, and it will, but not as a statutory register. The department confirmed that it will become an administrative register, even though the Coroner has no legislative responsibility to maintain it once these provisions are repealed.

The department told us that existing agencies would absorb the committee’s work. Again, that sounds reasonable until you examine what it means. The Coroner gave clear evidence that the office is not equipped to absorb the committee’s functions without a significant increase in capacity of between 25% and 30% and access to specialist paediatric expertise which does not currently exist within the Office of the Coroner. The Children’s Commissioner raised similar concerns. Despite that, the department confirmed that there will no additional funding, staff or infrastructure allocated to either office to perform these additional responsibilities.

Transferring responsibilities without transferring resources is not reform; it is wishful thinking, and it is transferring risk. If parliament removes one body and expects another to do the work, parliament has a responsibility to ensure that body has the capacity to do it. The evidence we heard in the committee tells us that has not happened.

Perhaps even more concerning is how this decision was made. The department confirmed that there was no consultation with the Coroner, the Children’s Commissioner, committee members and experts before deciding to abolish the Territory’s independent child deaths review body. I asked when the decision was made not to consult. The answer was that there had been no specific decision point; in other words, no-one ever stopped to ask whether independent experts should be consulted before abolishing an independent oversight body.

The department also confirmed that no human rights assessment had been undertaken regarding the impact of abolition on Australia's obligations under the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

The department confirmed that the Child and Youth Development Research Partnership is not a replacement for the committee; the child deaths register will continue without a statutory basis; no additional funding, staffing or specialist expertise has been provided to the bodies expected to assume these functions; and the replacement and transition arrangements have not been clearly established.

One of the most disturbing aspects concerns not what might happen in the future but what has already happened. The department confirmed that the Child Deaths Review and Prevention Committee has not met since October 2024. I note the minister told me previously in parliament that it had met since then, but it has now been confirmed that it did not. It has not met because the department decided not to appoint new members to the committee while it considered abolishing it. Therefore, the government stopped appointing members, the committee ceased functioning and that inactivity is now being used as part of the justification for abolishing it. That is circular reasoning; it is not evidence-based reform.

While the government was considering it, 151 children died in the Northern Territory and most of those deaths have not been independently reviewed. That is 151 children, 151 families and 151 opportunities to understand whether there are lessons that could prevent another tragedy.

When asked what would happen to those 151 cases, the department told the committee that it would finalise its approach as part of the transition work. There is no timeframe, no published plan and no certainty, just a promise that it will be worked out later. That is not the level of assurance that we should be accepting in this parliament when children's lives are involved.

The purpose of a child death review is not to revisit grief but to prevent future grief. Every recommendation made by that committee exists because another child should not die in the same circumstances. Every pattern identified represents an opportunity to improve our systems and every lesson learned has the potential to save the life of a child. That is why every other Australian jurisdiction has concluded that a child death review should be undertaken by a dedicated, independent statutory body. If this Bill passes, the Northern Territory will become the only Australian jurisdiction without a dedicated, independent statutory body to review child deaths, not because the government produced compelling evidence that every other jurisdiction is wrong or it has developed a better model but because it has decided that administrative arrangements are enough.

This Bill is not an isolated decision; it sits alongside a growing pattern. Time and again this parliament has been asked to weaken safeguards, reduce independent scrutiny or disregard overwhelming evidence. Good governments welcome independent scrutiny; they do not remove it because it is inconvenient.

When children die, our instinct should never be to ask: how can we streamline oversight? We should ask whether we are learning everything we possibly can to stop it happening again.

This week parliament has been told that child safety comes first, but this week the government also ignored overwhelming expert evidence on child protection; announced the closure of the YiSSA emergency accommodation service for vulnerable children and families; and today is asking for the abolition of the only independent body dedicated to learning from the deaths of children. If child safety is truly our highest priority, we should strengthen prevention, independent oversight, support for vulnerable families and the systems that help us learn from failure, not dismantle them.

The Child Deaths Review and Prevention Committee should not be abolished until parliament can be satisfied that every statutory function has been transferred into law, every receiving agency has the resources it needs and every one of the 151 children whose deaths have not been independently reviewed will be.

As we have heard in this parliament, every child matters. Every lesson we fail to learn is a lesson another child may pay for one day. For these reasons, I do not support clauses 4, 5 and 6 of this Bill.

Ms BOOTHBY (Attorney-General)(in reply): Mr Deputy Speaker, I thank all the members for their contributions to this important debate.

I also thank the Legislative Scrutiny Committee for its careful consideration of the Bill. The committee heard from a range of stakeholders, including the Auditor-General, the Office of the Coroner, the Office of the Children's Commissioner and the Australian Medical Association Northern Territory.

After considering that evidence and the department's responses, I am pleased the committee recommended that the Bill be passed, with only a minor amendment proposed to clause 22. Although the committee recommended requiring the Public Trustee to provide financial statements to the Auditor-General within four months of the end of the financial year, I do not consider this necessary. The existing requirement for the audit of the common funds to be completed within six months already ensures the timely provision of information. The proposed amendment is unlikely to improve audit or reporting timeframes.

Throughout the inquiry a common question was whether streamlining these boards and committees would reduce oversight or accountability. The answer is no. This Bill removes duplication and outdated processes, but it does not remove important safeguards or oversight functions.

The proposal to abolish the Child Deaths Review and Prevention Committee received considerable attention. I acknowledge the views put forward, and our government carefully considered those views.

It is also important to recognise the operational reality. The committee has not had a quorum since October 2024 and, as a result, has been unable to meet. This Bill brings the legislation into line with that reality while ensuring the important work continues in a practical and effective way.

The committee has not been operating, but the functions it performs continue through the agencies and statutory officers best placed to undertake them. This Bill does not reduce the investigation of child deaths or the ability to identify systemic issues. Those important functions will continue.

The Office of the Coroner has already been providing the secretariat support for the Child Deaths Review and Prevention Committee. Additional resourcing has been provided to the office to undertake that work, and that resourcing will continue. This means the expertise and support that currently exist will remain in place. The Coroner will continue to investigate reportable deaths. The Children's Commissioner will continue to exercise its important independent oversight functions. Other agencies will continue to carry out their respective responsibilities to improve outcomes for children and to identify opportunities for systemic reform.

Importantly, the Legislative Scrutiny Committee recognised this point in its report. The committee concluded that it was clear the important functions undertaken by the Child Deaths Review and Prevention Committee would continue when allocated across the relevant agencies and offices and those agencies would continue to have the expertise and resources needed to perform those functions effectively. What changes under this Bill is the administrative structure, not the government's commitment to learning from child deaths, improving systems and protecting vulnerable children.

Concerns were also raised about abolishing the Health and Community Services Complaints Commission Review Committee. As I outlined previously, this committee has a limited role. It reviews the processes of the commission rather than its decisions. Over many years it has not identified significant concerns requiring intervention. Importantly, Territorians will continue to have access to the existing complaints processes under the Act, along with other independent review pathways when appropriate. This reform removes an unnecessary layer without reducing people's rights.

The committee also considered the amendments relating to the Public Trustee. The Auditor-General supported greater clarity on reporting timeframes and auditing requirements. These amendments provide a clearer and more practical process while maintaining transparency and accountability. They also modernise the legislation and clarify the treatment of levies and fees.

The remaining reforms in the Bill are practical improvements that reflect the way government operates today. Combining the Electrical Safety Board and the Discipline Committee removes duplication while preserving the existing disciplinary functions. Allowing the Chair of the Liquor Commission to attend meetings remotely when temporarily outside the Territory reflects modern practice and provides greater flexibility without changing the commission's independence or decision-making.

This is a sensible and practical Bill. It modernises legislation, removes unnecessary duplication and administrative burden, improves clarity and allows government resources to be focused where they are most effective while maintaining appropriate oversight and accountability.

This Bill is not about reducing scrutiny; it is about ensuring that scrutiny is carried out in the most effective way by the agencies and the statutory offices best placed to perform those functions.

Motion agreed to; Bill read a second time.

Consideration in detail

Clause 1, by leave, agreed to.

Clause 2:

Mr PAECH: Can you advise when this legislation is expected to commence and whether it is expected to commence in full?

Ms BOOTHBY: The Act will commence on the day after the day on which the Administrator's assent to the Act is declared.

Mr PAECH: Do you have an indication when that will be? I highlight that we have heard this week in September there is an Exco meeting, because other legislation is scheduled.

Ms BOOTHBY: Yes, our expectation is it will usually be between two and four weeks from now.

Mr PAECH: When the legislation commences, is it anticipated that is when the child deaths review committee will be formally wound up, along with the health committee?

Ms BOOTHBY: That is correct.

J DAVIS: If the transition work is not finished by that date, what happens to child death reviews in the gap?

Ms BOOTHBY: It will be finished by that date.

Clause 2 agreed to.

Clause 3, by leave, agreed to.

Clause 4:

Mr PAECH: Your government has claimed that child safety is a top priority. Why has your department abolished a mechanism that is dedicated specifically to increasing child safety and preventing child deaths?

Ms BOOTHBY: As I outlined in my introduction speech, Question Time over the last few months and my summing-up speech, the functions that were being completed by the Child Deaths Review and Prevention Committee will continue to be delivered by other offices and the Coroner's office.

Mr PAECH: When you say 'other offices', can you describe which offices they will be?

Ms BOOTHBY: The Attorney-General's Department and the Office of the Coroner.

Mr PAECH: Given the Territory has the highest child mortality rate in Australia, what is the government's basis for the decision to be the only jurisdiction in Australia without an equivalent expert multidisciplinary child deaths review body?

Ms BOOTHBY: Like I said, those functions will remain and continue under the Office of the Coroner, who is currently the Chair of that same committee.

Mr PAECH: Were there any barriers as to why the membership of the committee has not been renewed since October 2024?

Ms BOOTHBY: No.

Clause 4 agreed to.

Clause 5:

J DAVIS: This clause removes the definitions of many things, including the child deaths register. What happens to the child deaths register when its defining term is removed from the Act? Where is it held? Who maintains it? Does removing the definition affect its legal status as an official record?

Ms BOOTHBY: The child deaths register is being retained. It will continue under the Office of the Coroner, ensuring continuity and continued compliance with national reporting obligations.

J DAVIS: Can you confirm that once this clause passes the child deaths register will have no legislative basis, and its continued existence rests entirely on administrative discretion?

Ms BOOTHBY: Yes.

J DAVIS: What stops a future decision being made to simply stop maintaining it?

Ms BOOTHBY: It will continue to be maintained.

Clause 5 agreed to.

Clause 6:

Mr GUYULA: My greatest concern with this Attorney-General Bill is the removal of the Child Deaths Review and Prevention Committee. The Coroner, the Children's Commissioner and the Australian Medical Association of the Northern Territory all made submissions to the Legislative Scrutiny Committee stating that they did not support the removal of the child deaths review committee.

The NT has the worst child mortality rates in Australia, and there should be a dedicated review of these rates for all child deaths in the NT. Aboriginal children are significantly over-represented within this group. I have mentioned many times that Aboriginal people in the NT are greatly outnumbered in the category of avoidable deaths, and many children also die from avoidable deaths. How do we prevent avoidable deaths if there is no dedicated committee to review the problems and patterns? There must be a committee that can work with all the departments and have a sole focus on this issue.

I cannot support this Bill because it removes a function that is about the protection and safety of children. This week there have been many Bills before the parliament about the protection and safety of children—the child protection Bill on Tuesday, the youth justice Bill yesterday and this Bill today. On each Bill, the government has got it wrong.

I used to sit on this side of the Chamber with the CLP, and CLP members talked about the arrogance of the Labor government. Now I sit on this side of the Chamber with Labor and see the arrogance of the CLP government. This is a systemic problem.

The Westminster system of parliament does not work in this country. Having one Chamber in the NT does not bring good governance. Every election there is hope that a minority government will be formed so that this parliament must enter into real discussions and all members of parliament be listened to and respected. We are all elected by the people; that is how we all got here. We all come into this Chamber to represent the people, but this system does not allow for equal representation. This system is about power and political games rather than making good decisions.

The government can be arrogant, play games and look after its friends because the Westminster system is created that way, but this is not the United Kingdom. We are on the other side of the world, and we should have a governance system that reflects who we are. I see a foreign Westminster system sitting on Aboriginal country, but beneath this parliament building is the parliament of the land, the law of the land of the Indigenous people and the policies that lie here. The balanda parliament sits on the land, but the Yolngu parliament is the land, and these two systems of governance should work together. Until there is a new system that recognises both First Nations and non-Indigenous systems of governance, we will keep failing. The Closing the Gap agreement is trying to bridge these systems, but it is being ignored.

We are sovereign people with our own system of governance. How dare people walk in here and start controlling us. I came here as a leader from my country to work with this government to create pathways for both systems to work together. It does not matter who the government is because the government of the day wants to maintain power instead of working in partnership with the people and getting real outcomes.

This week this government has shown us that it has no interest in working with Aboriginal communities—no consultation and no partnership. This parliament offers no checks and balances to a majority government. There is no way in this Chamber to hold back bad decisions, like the child protection laws this week. There is no requirement for the government to work with and listen to the members of this Chamber.

This system does not work; it is like two teams playing a game, and every few years they swap who is winning rather than engaging in the serious business of governing for all communities. This parliament needs to evolve and adapt to this land and this country and provide genuine representation for everyone.

In Yolngu *rom*, the law of the land for Indigenous people, we listen to each other respectfully. There are no time limits or games to shut down debate. When clans come together, we speak for our country and we are decision-makers for our country and we can agree on that. The real law of the land is about …

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Mulka, I am sorry, but your time has expired, and no extensions are allowed in CID.

Are there any further questions on clause 6?

Mr PAECH: Regarding this clause, the explanatory statement states that the relevant statutory functions will be carried out by appropriate government agencies. I cannot see where the Bill says that there is a transfer of power; it just says 'repeal'.

Ms BOOTHBY: The Coroner will maintain the register and national reporting; the Child and Youth Development Research Partnership will lead research; and the Children's Commissioner will continue oversight and prevention-focused reporting.

I highlight that an NT Health spokeswoman said:

> *… peri-natal mortality was a complex issue influenced by higher rates of preterm birth, maternal comorbidities and barriers to accessing healthcare in remote and very remote communities.*

Perinatal mortality makes up 50% of the child death numbers, sadly. The same health spokesperson said:

> *NT Health will continue to monitor outcomes, evaluate programs as further data becomes available and work with clinical experts, communities and government partners to improve outcomes for mothers, babies and families across the Northern Territory …*

Mr PAECH: The Bill says 'repeal'. Can you confirm that there did not legally need to be a provision regarding the transfer of those functions?

Ms BOOTHBY: That is correct.

Mr GUYULA: I came here to talk to you about the real law of this land. Treaty is the real law of the land, coming and working together—both ways. We support you on your side, and you support us on our side. However, the government has said, 'No, we know what is best for you'.

I can see there is no real law here because the law of the land is not being included and the people who speak for that law are not being included. We are being shut out. You brought your laws this week to take our children away from their law, when you should be supporting us and we should be working together.

This week it is clear that this system of government does not belong here. Everyone in this parliament needs to consider what they are doing and how they are helping or harming our communities. It feels like there is an awful lot of harm happening in this Chamber towards Aboriginal communities. Aboriginal people are being treated like flora and fauna, like what happened in the beginning, a long time ago. We are being treated like we are nothing.

I agree with Senator Thorpe that what we are seeing in the Northern Territory is the systematic slow genocide of Aboriginal people.

Until there is a new system that recognises both First Nations and non-Indigenous systems of governance, we will keep failing. The Closing the Gap agreement is trying to bridge these systems …

Ms BOOTHBY: A point of order, Mr Deputy Speaker! Standing Order 155; I want to see that this is relevant to clause 6, which we are talking about and which deals with the Child Deaths Review and Prevention Committee …

Mr PAECH: A point of order, Mr Deputy Speaker! Standing Order 1; the Member for Mulka has 10 minutes allocated to discuss any provision of the Bill, which he is doing.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: No, he has 10 minutes to talk as long as it relates to the clause. It is up to the minister to question whether that is happening.

Member for Mulka, you can continue, but you need to relate it back to clause 6, please. You still have six minutes to go.

Mr GUYULA: We are sovereign people with our own system of governance. How dare people walk in here and start controlling us.

I came here to listen and as a leader from my country to work with this government to create pathways for both systems to work together. However, it does not matter who the government is because the government of the day wants to maintain power instead of working in partnership with the people and getting real outcomes.

This week this government has shown us that it has no interest in working with Aboriginal communities. There is no consultation or partnership, and this parliament offers no checks and balances.

Every election there is hope that a minority government forms and all members of parliament are listened to and respected. We are all elected by the people of the land; that is who we are. We are not the United Kingdom, and we are not on the other side of the world. We should have a governance system that reflects who we are, and I see a foreign Westminster system sitting here on Aboriginal country.

Beneath this parliament building is the parliament of the land. The balanda parliament is on the land and the Yolngu parliament is the land, and these two systems of governance should be working together.

This week there have been many Bills—sorry; I have lost a page.

Ms BOOTHBY: A point of order, Mr Deputy Speaker! This is clause 6, and the title in part is 'repealed (Prevention of child deaths)', so I am still trying to understand the relevance of the question being asked of me.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: I agree. I remind you, Member for Mulka, that the time for debate is over; that was in the second reading. This is consideration in detail. If you want to continue and finish off, as long as you stick around the topic of the clause, child deaths, I am happy for you to continue. Do you wish to proceed, Member for Mulka?

Mr GUYULA: No, I am confused.

Mr PAECH: How will the Coroner carry out the unique preventive role in identifying systemic risks, emerging trends and opportunities to prevent further child deaths?

Ms BOOTHBY: Functions relating to data collection, research, recommendations and information sharing are already undertaken by agencies such as the Coroner, the Children's Commissioner, the Child and Youth Development Research Partnership and government departments, like the Department of Health which is involved with monitoring and evaluating programs related to stillbirths, as an example.

Mr PAECH: According to the Legislative Scrutiny Committee report, the Children's Commissioner will be expected to absorb the functions to:

> *… Raise public awareness and make recommendations about the death rates of children; the causes and nature of child deaths and of diseases and accidents involving children; and the prevention or reduction of such deaths, diseases and accidents.*

These matters sit outside the commissioner's current legislative functions. Do you anticipate that Act will be amended?

Ms BOOTHBY: The Children's Commissioner deals with vulnerable children. We are not suggesting that she will do a heap of additional things. Those functions are shared amongst other agencies and the Coroner.

Mr PAECH: When that advice was given to the Legislative Scrutiny Committee, it was that the Children's Commissioner would absorb the functions. I am curious because those functions sit outside the current remit of the Children's Commissioner and that Act. Do you anticipate that the *Children's Commissioner Act* will be amended?

Ms BOOTHBY: The Children's Commissioner will lead the work, but she will not do all the work. Other agencies will do that.

Mr PAECH: Are you saying that she will be expected to lead that work, but the agencies who have the legal carriage or responsibility will ultimately have to deliver that in partnership with her?

Ms BOOTHBY: The agencies will support her in the work that is needed.

Mr PAECH: Do you have any flagged amendments for the *Children's Commissioner Act* to bring that into the remit?

Ms BOOTHBY: No.

Mr PAECH: What additional, if any, resourcing do you anticipate the Children's Commissioner's office will need to receive to carry out these additional functions?

Ms BOOTHBY: None.

J DAVIS: There are no additional resources for the Children's Commissioner. The Coroner—where tasks are also being transferred—indicated a need for roughly 25% to 30% additional capacity and paediatric subspecialty expertise to absorb even the coronial part of this work. Has that resourcing been committed?

Ms BOOTHBY: No.

J DAVIS: How do you anticipate that the Coroner will take on that work?

Ms BOOTHBY: That is a part of her function.

J DAVIS: Are you asking her to increase the workload of the office by a third?

Ms BOOTHBY: The Coroner already does those functions and has been doing them for a long time.

J DAVIS: When the Coroner said that this would create an additional 25% to 30%, was she misleading us?

Ms BOOTHBY: I did not hear her say that. That is a matter for her.

J DAVIS: It is on the record from the scrutiny committee.

Ms BOOTHBY: That is a matter for her.

J DAVIS: It is a matter for all of us if we are passing a law when there has been a clear indication that additional resourcing is needed.

Ms BOOTHBY: Mr Deputy Speaker, I have answered the question.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: We need to move on, please.

J DAVIS: The decision to abolish the committee was made before the Coroner's inquest into Baby K, Baby B and Baby S was handed down on 30 April 2026. When exactly was the decision made and by whom?

Ms BOOTHBY: I introduced this legislation last month. It is being debated and hopefully will be passed shortly.

J DAVIS: What month was the decision made to abolish the committee?

Ms BOOTHBY: I think I have answered that question. I introduced this legislation last month, and we are debating it.

J DAVIS: Why was committee membership allowed to lapse from 2024?

Ms BOOTHBY: When I became the minister in the new government in late 2024, I conducted a review of all those boards and committees. I asked my department to look at whether their structure and membership continued to be the most effective way to support government priorities. The Child Deaths Review and

Prevention Committee was under active consideration. In that context it was not appropriate to proceed with new appointments until that decision was made.

J DAVIS: That restates the decision; it does not explain it. Will you confirm that the committee's membership was allowed to lapse before any final decision to abolish it had been made, meaning that child death reviews stopped, in effect, before parliament had been asked to approve that?

Ms BOOTHBY: That is not relevant to this clause.

J DAVIS: How is that not relevant to the clause about the child deaths review committee?

Ms BOOTHBY: You are asking me about an operational matter; it is not about the legislation.

J DAVIS: Has a human rights assessment been conducted on this clause's impact on Australia's obligations under the Convention on the Rights of the Child?

Ms BOOTHBY: Abolishing the committee does not breach the Convention on the Rights of the Child. The functions continue under different governance arrangements, and the convention does not require a specific institutional model.

J DAVIS: A formal human rights assessment was not conducted; is that correct?

Ms BOOTHBY: Mr Deputy Speaker, I answered that question.

J DAVIS: For the record, just yes or no, was a formal human rights assessment conducted?

Ms BOOTHBY: Mr Deputy Speaker, I have answered that question.

J DAVIS: I understand that the answer is no. Thank you, Attorney-General.

Mr EDGINGTON: A point of order, Mr Deputy Speaker! The Member for Johnston is trying to put her own words on the record. The Attorney-General did not say those words, and they should be removed.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: I do not think you can verbal the minister, so I ask you to withdraw that comment.

J DAVIS: I withdraw that you said the answer was no. I am unclear, therefore, what the answer is.

Mr EDGINGTON: You got the answer.

J DAVIS: Thank you for your assistance, minister.

The Public Guardian and the Liquor Commission were consulted before their functions were changed. The Child Deaths Review and Prevention Committee was not consulted with anyone outside government before the decision to abolish it. Why was the child deaths review committee treated differently?

Ms BOOTHBY: That was an operational thing by the reviewer.

J DAVIS: We asked this question during the scrutiny committee process and the answer was:

> *The difference reflects the different origins of the amendments, not their significance.*

Will you confirm that?

Ms BOOTHBY: Yes.

J DAVIS: The department confirmed that the Coroner's office, the Children's Commissioner and several former committee members raised concerns during the transition discussions. Can you outline those concerns? Were any of them about the abolition itself rather than the transition mechanics?

Ms BOOTHBY: Mr Deputy Speaker, the Member for Johnston is asking operational questions. It is not a part of the clause. I do not have these answers because they are a part of the department's operations.

J DAVIS: I will move on.

The explanatory statement says that this reduces overlap. I asked the department to identify where overlap happened, where the functions were going and to quantify it. The written answer confirmed that the Coroner reviewed only a certain number of deaths each year, so 32% in 2022–23, 64% in 2023–24 and 17% in 2024–25. It is also confirmed the Coroner will not take on review of deaths that are not reportable. If the Coroner reviews as little as 17%—as in the most recent year—of child deaths and cannot take on the rest, where does the review of remaining deaths now sit?

Ms BOOTHBY: I feel like I have answered this question, but I will go through it again to be clear. The functions relating to data collection, research, recommendations and information sharing are already undertaken by agencies such as the Coroner, the Children's Commissioner, the Child and Youth Development Research Partnership and government departments, like the Department of Health which is involved with monitoring and evaluating programs related to, as an example, stillbirths.

J DAVIS: How many child deaths remain unreviewed since the committee last met?

Ms BOOTHBY: That is not a relevant question for me as a minister; that is fact stated on the record.

J DAVIS: What will happen? I still do not have an answer to that.

Ms BOOTHBY: I will go through this again for you, Member for Johnston. All the functions of the Child Deaths Review and Prevention Committee will be done by either the Coroner, the Children's Commissioner, the Child and Youth Development Research Partnership and government departments, like the Department of Health.

J DAVIS: Is there an intention to retrospectively review those 151 deaths?

Ms BOOTHBY: I have already answered these questions.

Mr EDGINGTON: A point of order, Mr Deputy Speaker! It is not relevant.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Johnston, the minister has repeated her answer a number of times. Can we move on, please.

J DAVIS: It is totally relevant to the clause. Will this new mechanism you are setting up review those? We have 151 deaths …

Ms BOOTHBY: The Coroner reviews reportable child deaths.

J DAVIS: Will that include the deaths that have not been reviewed?

Ms BOOTHBY: The Coroner will take on all the functions that the previous committee undertook. I do not know how much clearer I can be.

J DAVIS: For the record, this is of concern to the community. The 151 deaths will be reviewed by the Coroner with no additional resources; is that correct?

Ms BOOTHBY: The Coroner is taking on all the functions of the committee that is being abolished.

J DAVIS: Does that include non-reportable deaths?

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: We need to move on.

J DAVIS: This is directly relevant …

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Johnston! You have mentioned it a number of times; the minister has given a response. We are going back and forth. Let us move on, please.

J DAVIS: Where will the case files and historical data held by the committee sit when it is abolished? Where will they go?

Ms BOOTHBY: I know that you asked the department a million questions through the scrutiny committee process, and I appreciate that. I also appreciate all the time and effort it spent answering all these questions. I know you have all that information available to you.

I feel like you are not understanding what I am saying when I say that the Coroner will be doing that work, the Children's Commissioner has some responsibilities, the Child and Youth Development Research Partnership and government departments like the Department of Health will have the responsibilities of all the things you are asking me about in relation to child deaths.

J DAVIS: I understand I have been told I cannot ask this question again, but …

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Move on, please.

J DAVIS: … there remains a gap for me and for many other people.

I think you said you guarantee that the Territory will maintain its national child deaths reporting obligations?

Ms BOOTHBY: Yes.

Clause 6 agreed to.

Clauses 7 to 14, by leave, taken together and agreed to.

Clause 15:

Mr PAECH: Can you confirm what pathway will be available for medical practitioners seeking recourse when they believe they have been denied natural justice through the complaint investigation process?

Ms BOOTHBY: It will be judicial review.

Mr PAECH: If the only option left is for health workers to pursue matters through litigation, do you have any understanding of what the cost and time of that would be?

Ms BOOTHBY: No.

Mr PAECH: Will health workers be expected to manage the financial and emotional burden because of the government's decision to remove this administrative mechanism?

Ms BOOTHBY: There is no change.

Clause 15 agreed to.

Clauses 16 and 17, by leave, taken together and agreed to.

Clause 18:

Mr PAECH: What gave rise to this amendment? How many instances have there been when the chairperson was unable to attend meetings due to interstate travel?

Ms BOOTHBY: That was a matter for the Liquor Commission at the time. It was put forward by the Liquor Commission, so we have made that change through the Bill now.

Mr PAECH: Although the policy intent behind this amendment is not for the chairperson to reside outside the Territory, will the proposed reform allow that?

Ms BOOTHBY: Just to confirm, there are no changes to the sections about that.

Clause 18 agreed to.

Clauses 19 and 20, by leave, taken together and agreed to.

Clause 21:

Mr PAECH: Why does clause 21 allow the Public Trustee to provide the annual report as soon as practicable after receiving the Auditor-General's audit instead of setting a clear deadline for the report to be provided?

Ms BOOTHBY: There are lots of steps before that report goes up, so we are just allowing time for those steps to take place.

Clause 21 agreed to.

Clauses 22 and 23, by leave, taken together and agreed to.

Clause 24:

Mr PAECH: Why does clause 24 remove the requirement for investors to receive financial information within four months of the end of the financial year?

Ms BOOTHBY: It is to create flexibility.

Mr PAECH: Will this mean people with money managed by the Public Trustee will receive audited financial information later than they currently do?

Ms BOOTHBY: Not necessarily; it is just putting a defined timeframe on it.

Clause 24 agreed to.

Remainder of the Bill, by leave, taken together and agreed to.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: The question is that the Bill be agreed to.

The Assembly divided:

Ayes 15	Noes 6
Ms Boothby	Mr Brown
Ms Cahill	J Davis
Mrs Carlson	Mr Guyula
Mr Charls	Mr Paech
Mr Edgington	Mr Smelt
Mrs Hersey	Mr Young
Mr Howe	
Mr Kerle	
Mr Mackay	
Mr Maley	
Mr O'Gallagher	
Mr Patel	
Dr Rahman	
Mr Yan	
Mrs Zio	

Bill agreed to.

Ms BOOTHBY (Attorney-General): Mr Deputy Speaker, I move that the Bill be now read a third time.

The Assembly divided:

Ayes 15	Noes 6
Ms Boothby	Mr Brown
Ms Cahill	J Davis
Mrs Carlson	Mr Guyula
Mr Charls	Mr Paech
Mr Edgington	Mr Smelt
Mrs Hersey	Mr Young
Mr Howe	
Mr Kerle	
Mr Mackay	
Mr Maley	
Mr O'Gallagher	
Mr Patel	

Dr Rahman
Mr Yan
Mrs Zio

Motion agreed to; Bill read a third time.

PAPER TABLED
Members' Quarterly Fuel Transaction Report – April to June 2026

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable members, I table the Members' Quarterly Fuel Transaction Report for the April to June 2026 quarter.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr EDGINGTON (Leader of Government Business): Mr Deputy Speaker, I move that the Assembly do now adjourn.

Mr MALEY (Nelson): Mr Deputy Speaker, a big thing in the rural area concerning the Litchfield Bears is that President Em Burkitt has been named Volunteer of the Year at the Northern Territory 2026 NRL Community Awards. Congratulations, Em. This is well-deserved recognition for someone who has dedicated countless hours to growing rugby league in the community. I have spoken with Em many times at the home games, and I have to agree that she is a tireless worker and does a great job for the Litchfield Bears.

I thank her family and friends because all the time she spends volunteering because of her love for the Bears is time away from her family and friends. I shout out to those people for allowing Em to do what she does. She is a terrific worker and has done a lot of work for the Litchfield Bears.

This award recognises the outstanding volunteer and is a reminder of all the volunteers across Territory NRL, including coaching, managing the players, running the canteen, marking out the fields, washing the kids' jerseys and fundraising. I am talking about the Litchfield Bears, but this relates to all clubs across the Northern Territory. This simply would not happen if people like Em did not give up their time and volunteer at these community events. It is great to see.

I congratulate Em on this fantastic achievement. Congratulations to the other people who were nominated, but Em was the winner on this day. She does a great job, and she deserves it. I want to make sure she understands that the Member for Goyder and I—we know her and speak to her—thank her for the work she does for the Litchfield Bears, which is a big rugby league club based at Freds Pass. It is a club dear to my heart. I played for the Litchfield Bears, so that is how long it has been around. It is a great family club, and the people there support each other. This recognised someone who I truly believe is a great volunteer, a hard worker and does so much for the Bears. Go you mighty Bears!

Mr YOUNG (Daly): Madam Acting Deputy Speaker, I will speak about a recent trip to the beautiful country of Wadeye of the Kardu Diminin people. I thank them for taking me mud crabbing with the Thamarrurr Sea Farmers.

It is a wonderful project happening in Wadeye. Many people are working on this project. It is great for the local economy and jobs. It means that young people are working on and looking after their country. It was a special time on that trip to collect the mud crabs and see the hard work they do.

I am told that people turn up every day wanting to work with the Thamarrurr Sea Famers, but they cannot fill those positions. The Aboriginal Affairs minister might look into that, as I know he has recently been to Wadeye to hear about the aspirations of the community.

It is a wonderful project that is supported by the Aboriginal Sea Company. It is something we should see more of: traditional owners working on their country, sending out and selling a delicacy for many people—I think everyone recognises that mud crab is a delicacy—in Darwin. That was a wonderful trip with the fellas on the boat.

It was also wonderful to be in Syndey recently for the National Indigenous Art Fair with many art centres across the Northern Territory, particularly from my electorate of Daly. Merrepen Arts, Durrmu Arts from Peppimenarti and the women's and men's centre displayed their artwork. It was a privilege to support the incredible artists from my electorate to showcase their art, culture and language on the national stage in Sydney.

The number of people at the opening night was amazing. I believe many of the artists from across Australia, especially from the Northern Territory, had many sales, which helps boost their art centres and recognition on the national stage.

It was a special moment for the families from Peppimenarti and Wadeye to see Joy Dumoo on the runway at the opening of the National Indigenous Art Fair fashion parade. It was wonderful. Kevin, her dad, was proud of Joy, along with me and community members from the Thamarrurr region to see Joy on the runway, showing off her fashion skills. She has a huge career ahead, and I look forward to following that journey.

My thanks to all those art centres for having me come along to see your wonderful artwork.

Mr O'GALLAGHER (Karama): Madam Acting Deputy Speaker, I will say three things. One is quite sad; it is a condolence. The other two are exciting things about my electorate.

I seek leave to table a condolence card that I issued and had delivered today.

Leave granted.

Mr O'GALLAGHER: This is about Andy Price. I acknowledge that my colleague the Member for Blain went to the memorial service today, representing a number of us, and he hand-delivered my card to the family. I will read the card:

> *It is with great sadness that I learned of the passing of Andy Price.*
>
> *Andy was a highly respected member of our community through his work with Neptune Security, PORU and the Alcohol Harm Reduction team. His dedication to keeping our community safe and supporting those in need made a lasting impact across Palmerston and the Northern suburbs.*
>
> *Although I only knew Andy for a short time since becoming the Member for Karama, I quickly came to admire his integrity, professionalism and genuine compassion. He earned the respect of everyone around him through his actions and unwavering commitment to serving others.*
>
> *Andy's passing is a significant loss to our community. My sincere condolences go to his family, friends and colleagues during this difficult time. May they find comfort in knowing the positive difference Andy made in so many lives.*
>
> *From all the residents of Karama, Malak & Knuckey Lagoon. Rest in peace, Andy.*
>
> *You will be greatly missed.*
>
> *Brian O'Gallagher MLA*

To more positive things, I have a community mower, and what a wonderful mower it is. As many people know, I pushed it around Hidden Valley because we were looking to help raise money for Ride Against Cancer. I was blessed that company I bought the mower from, The Big Mower, donated a brand-new mower for me to raffle, which I did in June. We sold $5 raffle tickets and three for $10. A couple of weeks ago I drew the raffle and it went to Katrina in Bakewell, a lovely winner. That raffle raised $1,500 for Ride Against Cancer. That $1,500 is in addition to the $35,000 that Clive Baxter and his team raised at the Hidden Valley event.

All that money, I understand, is going to the Alan Walker Cancer Care Centre to help purchase a bus to transport patients to and from cancer treatment. When people go for chemotherapy and so on, they might be in there for a lot longer than they think. This bus will help transport patients back and forth.

Thank you to everyone who bought a ticket in the raffle, including you, Madam Acting Deputy Speaker; I do not dismiss that because you were a major purchaser. You did not win it, though. I look forward to seeing that bus service eventually happening.

The third thing goes back to the Katherine Show. I was at the Katherine Show and St John was there, which was great. Mark Ferguson said, 'Brian, you keep saying you will get a defibrillator. We have one. This is our new pocket-sized defibrillator released on 13 July.' I thought it was magnificent and wanted to get one. He showed it to me. The defibrillator is fully automated and just a bit bigger than a mobile phone. It is the brand-new model, and the battery lasts three years. Apparently, the defibrillator can do about 130 charges.

I think you have to replace the pads in between, but that is okay. I took the show special. I will be honest: it cost $1,800, and normally they are $2,000, but this one is fully automated.

I will have that defibrillator in my office during office hours, but because it is so portable, I will carry it around. When I go to the Rapid Creek Markets or the Malak Markets, I will have it on hand.

I let all the stores in my shopping centre know that the defibrillator is there, noting that there are already permanent defibrillators in the library, Woolworths and the medical centre. However, this is the new-look portable one.

Some of my residents have commissioned me to go to the Royal Darwin Show and buy them a portable defibrillator. They cannot get to the show themselves. Some local businesses have been inspired and have bought a defibrillator to have on hand.

Everyone tells you that when you have a heart attack, access to a defibrillator increases your chances of survival. This is a fantastic thing to do. I encourage other members to buy one to keep in their office. It is a great community service. I might even have to take it with me when I take my lawnmower around because some people would probably push that lawnmower and fall over. If they dirty up the lawnmower, I will keep the defibrillator away from them—I am joking!

Regarding community service, all of us stay connected with our electorate and do what we can. These are the sorts of practical things we do.

Rest in peace, Andy Price.

Mr PAECH (Gwoja): Madam Acting Deputy Speaker, I recognise Territory Day and reflect on why 1 July matters so much to Territorians. Territory Day is more than fireworks or cracker night; it is community celebrations and raising the Territory flag. It marks the day in 1978 when the Territory achieved self-government and Territorians gained greater responsibility for making decisions about our future.

Before self-government, laws and decisions affecting Territorians were made largely by the Commonwealth Parliament and Commonwealth officials in Canberra. On 1 July 1978 that began to change. Territorians gained a government responsible to a locally elected Legislative Assembly, with autonomy and authority over most of the services and responsibilities that shape people's everyday lives. That is why we celebrate Territory Day.

We celebrate the belief that the people who live here, raise their families here, work here and understand this place are best placed to make decisions about it. We celebrate the resilience of Territorians; the people who built Darwin after Cyclone Tracy; the families who built our regional towns; the workers who developed our industries; and the Aboriginal Territorians who cared for this country since the beginning of time. We celebrate and honour our homelands, pastoral properties and remote communities. We celebrate the Top End, the Barkly, Central Australia and the Big Rivers region. We celebrate the cultures, languages, landscapes and people who make the Territory unlike anywhere else in Australia.

Territory Day should also cause us to stop and reflect on what self-government means today and what remains unfinished business. The Northern Territory is self-governing, but we are not constitutionally equal to states.

The Commonwealth Parliament retains the power under section 122 of the Australian Constitution to override Territory laws and restrict the authority of the Legislative Assembly. That means decisions made by elected representatives of the Territory do not have the same constitutional standing as decisions made by state parliaments. We have a responsibility for delivering hospitals, schools, housing, police, roads and essential services across one of Australia's largest and most challenging jurisdictions, but we do not have the same constitutional protections, representation and control over our future as that of the states.

Canberra does not always understand the Territory. The 2007 Northern Territory intervention remains one of the clearest and most painful examples of what can happen when Canberra decides it knows what is best for the Territory, particularly Aboriginal people, without genuine consultation, partnership or consent. From thousands of kilometres away sweeping decisions were made about Aboriginal communities. The intervention damaged trust, disrupted families and reinforced the idea that decisions could still be made about Aboriginal people rather than with them. Reviews have acknowledged the intervention's continuing impact and anxiety, caused by government's decisions made without sufficient consultation.

The lesson should be clear: Canberra should not be able to make sweeping changes and decisions about the Territory without Territorians having a meaningful and equal voice. It is time to take the next step. It is time to restart the conversation about Northern Territory statehood.

I look forward to working with and calling on the Chief Minister, the Territory government, my opposition colleagues and every member of this parliament to work together to progress it. Statehood should not belong to only one party. It should not be used as a political slogan or announced without a serious plan. It should be a Territory-wide project, bringing together the government, the opposition, traditional owners, land councils, local government, community organisations, unions, businesses, industry and people living in our regional and remote communities.

The people of the Territory must shape what statehood looks like. We have been down this road before. Fifty-one per cent of Territorians voted against the statehood proposal put before them in 1998. That should not be interpreted as Territorians rejecting statehood forever; it should be understood as a lesson that the process matters. People must be properly informed, genuinely consulted and given confidence that the proposed terms are fair.

A new statehood process must be built from the ground up. It must properly recognise Aboriginal people as the First Peoples and traditional owners of the Territory. It must protect land rights, culture, language, sacred sites and the autonomy of traditional owners as well as their authority. It must ensure that people living in the bush have the same opportunity to participate as people living in Darwin. It must also negotiate fair representation in the Commonwealth Parliament, a sustainable financial settlement and control over the resources that support our economy. That includes offshore gas.

At present, the Territory generally has responsibility for coastal waters extending only three nautical miles offshore. Petroleum projects in Commonwealth waters are controlled through Commonwealth arrangements and are generally subject to the Commonwealth's petroleum resource rent tax. Statehood would not automatically hand those revenues to the Territory, but the terms of statehood could and should include negotiations for the Territory to receive a fair share of the revenue generated from offshore gas projects located off our coast and supported by Territory infrastructure, Territory workers and Territory services. That could take the form of royalties, a share of petroleum resource taxation or a dedicated revenue arrangement between the Commonwealth and the new state.

We should be prepared to negotiate hard. When gas is brought ashore through Territory facilities, Territory workers support these projects and Territory roads, ports, emergency services and communities carry the pressures of development, Territorians deserve a fair return.

That revenue could be reinvested in remote housing. It could upgrade hospitals and health clinics, seal roads, improve schools and expand renewable energy. It could bring the infrastructure needed to grow our regions and create opportunities for the next generation.

Our natural resources should not simply pass through the Territory while the financial benefits flow south. Statehood must be about more than changing the name on the letterhead; it must deliver greater democratic equality, economic opportunity and control over the decisions that shape our future.

I also propose that this parliament establish a bipartisan statehood committee or working group. Its first task should be to develop a community-led pathway that includes public education, regional and remote consultation, negotiations with the Commonwealth and, ultimately, a constitutional convention and a vote of the Territory people.

This must be patient work, but it must begin. We cannot wait until the 50th anniversary of self-government in 2028 and simply hold another celebration without asking what comes next. Territory Day honours the courage of those who fought for self-government. Our responsibility is to continue their work.

Statehood is not about separating ourselves from Australia; it is about taking our rightful and equal place within the Australian Federation. It is about saying that Territorians are not second-class Australians and that our parliament, laws and voices should carry the same weight as those of every state. It is about recognising a simple principle that has guided the Territory from the beginning: decisions about the Northern Territory should be made with Territorians, by Territorians and for Territorians.

Let us not only celebrate everything that self-government gave us but also have the courage to finish that journey. Let the government and the opposition come together. Let this parliament convene the Territory conversation. Let us negotiate a fair statehood settlement, including a fair share of the wealth generated from

the resources off our coast. Let us begin by building a future in which the Northern Territory finally stands as an equal state in the Commonwealth of Australia.

Mr YAN (Namatjira): Madam Acting Deputy Speaker, I will speak about an event close to my heart. I was in the Member for Daly's patch for the Darwin Game Fishing Club 44th Northern Territory Barramundi Classic, held between 7 and 13 July. It was great to be back in the Daly region, particularly after what has happened there this year.

I congratulate the committee, particularly Debbie and Leigh Halprin, who are the coordinators of the event. A special thanks goes to all the volunteers and sponsors who help make this happen.

When you think about what happened during the floods at Banyan Farm and in the Daly region, it was wonderful to be at Banyan Farm and see it back up and operational, putting on that event for the teams. It was great to see some vibrancy and energy, and businesses and the community getting back on their feet.

The event changed its dates this year because of the flooding. It was supposed to be in early May but was pushed back to the end of July. Because of that, unfortunately, a number of teams could not make it. Instead of having the 53 or 55 teams that would normally be there, there were only 23; there were 20 for the major competition and three for the masters.

These events bring huge opportunity and revenue to that region because these teams are not only fishing but also utilising the community shop and fuel station—and the pub when it was open—and staying at venues throughout the area. These events are of huge economic benefit to the Daly River region.

The champion team this year was Team Tackle World, with Shane Compain, Cameron Briscoe and Terry Ryan. These guys are guns; I think this is the fourth or fifth year they have won this event. The runner-up team was Team Monsoon, with Josh Pucci, Jack Hamilton and Koby Villis. The third-placed team was Team Polar Bears, with locals Peter Politis, Eddie Carroll and Jordie Carroll.

Jordie gets a special mention. He is Eddie's son and was brought into the team for this year's event. Jordie is a young fella; he is a rookie. He caught a 109-centimetre barramundi, so not only did he get his metre-y but also he had the most meritorious capture for the competition, which was great to see.

As part of the Barramundi Classic, the Darwin Game Fishing Club introduced another part of the competition a couple years ago—the Barra Masters. These are for the older, more refined gentlemen who find it, probably, a bit harder to fish for five days solid from 7 am until 5 pm. These guys fish for only three days, and their hours are a little different; they start at the same time, but they get to knock off at 3 pm and sit in the pool and maybe enjoy a cool drink.

The winners of the masters competition was Bad Karma, the team of Rohan Short, Brian DeMarco and Neil Harding. Rohan Short, more commonly known as Shorty—a gentleman from Katherine, so it seems—took out Champion Master Angler. The second-placed team was Science Fiction, with Rob McCourt, Phil Clarke and John Roberts. The third-placed team was Old School Tackle World, with Stephen Compain, Ray Rendell and Mark Hutchings.

Overall, the champion angler for the event over the week was Shane Compain; the runner-up angler was Terry Ryan; and third place was Jack Hamilton from Team Monsoon. The champion rookie was Jordie Carroll, who also had the most meritorious capture. The Wilson Fishing Cup was taken out by Zac Clarke.

To give you an idea of the numbers, in the 13 years I have been involved as a volunteer I have been to events whether there were 53 teams and just over 470 fish caught. There were only 23 teams for this competition, and they caught 1,047 fish.

This competition works in conjunction with Fisheries because every fish that is caught is tagged and released. The fish is caught and the details—the size of the fish, where it was caught and the date and time—are logged on a card and then the fish is tagged and released. All those cards go back to Fisheries to create a database of fish movements, fish stocks and fish growth patterns in the Daly River region.

It was great to be there again for the 44th Barramundi Classic. I hope that I can get to the 45th, but I have seen the dates for next year and, unfortunately, I do not think I will make it, which is sad. I wish everyone involved all the best. It was a great event, and I was pleased to assist.

I recognise the outstanding achievements celebrated at the 2026 Civil Contractors Federation Northern Territory Earth Awards held in June. These awards recognise excellence in civil construction across the Territory and acknowledge the people and businesses delivering the infrastructure that keeps our communities connected and supports our economy.

I congratulate all the finalists, nominees and award recipients. Every project recognised reflects the skill, hard work and commitment of the Territory's civil construction industry. The winners reflected the scale and quality of work being delivered across the Territory.

Project award recipients included Mbudg-Mburrum's culturally sensitive rehabilitation works in Kakadu National Park; DAC Enterprise's outstanding improvements along the Vic Highway; Advanced Civil Engineering's upgrades at the Dundee Beach boat ramp, and we know that Territorians enjoy those upgrades; BMD's critical Defence infrastructure at RAAF Base Tindal; SMC Marine's delivery of the Mandorah marine facility; and Exact Contracting's remarkable Tanami Road upgrades, which are still ongoing. These projects showcase the capability of Territory industry to deliver complex projects in some of Australia's most challenging environments.

I also congratulate the recipients of this year's CCF NT Industry Awards which recognise excellence in business across the civil construction sector. Whether suppliers, subcontractors or specialist service providers, these businesses are an essential part of every successful infrastructure project. Their expertise, reliability and commitment help keep projects moving, support local jobs and strengthen the Territory's civil construction industries. Congratulations to Arjay's Sales & Service, Rhino Industrial and Keegan Group on their well-deserved recognition.

It is also important to acknowledge the many apprentices, trainees, supervisors, operators and support staff recognised on the night. A strong industry depends on skilled people, and investing in the next generation is essential to building the Territory's future. Congratulations to the individuals recognised this year for their stand-out performance. A final congratulations to Tom Harris, who received an NT Service Award in appreciation of his outstanding contribution to the industry.

Whether it is roads, bridges, marine infrastructure, subdivisions, Defence projects or remote community work, these businesses and their workforce are helping to build a stronger, more resilient Northern Territory.

This year that resilience has been on full display. Following significant flooding across the Territory, civil contractors have worked tirelessly to restore access, repair damaged roads and reconnect remote communities. Their willingness to mobilise quickly, often in difficult and demanding conditions, has been critical to our flood recovery efforts. On behalf of the Northern Territory Government, I thank every contractor, operator, engineer, supervisor and worker who contributed to that recovery.

I also acknowledge the strong partnership between the Northern Territory Government and the Civil Contractors Federation. CCF continues to be a constructive and valued partner, providing practical advice, sharing industry expertise and working collaboratively with government to improve project delivery, build workforce capability and strengthen local industry.

As the Territory continues to deliver one of the largest infrastructure programs in our history, the capability of our local civil construction sector has never been more important.

Dr RAHMAN (Fong Lim): Madam Acting Deputy Speaker, have you ever wondered where the term 'smashed avocado' comes from? The modern smashed avocado cafe phenomenon arguably originated in Sydney, probably around 1993, when the Aussie chef Bill Granger first featured a version of it on his menu in his iconic Darlinghurst cafe called Bills. However, it became a global sensation as an idea and a term that we all know following a viral article in 2016 by the *Australian* columnist Bernard Salt AM, who used the popular $22 breakfast as a symbol of millennial spending habits.

Recently, we were lucky enough to have Bernard Salt in Darwin giving a phenomenal lecture. Bernard Salt is truly one of Australia's most distinguished demographers and social commentators. His expert analysis of consumer and cultural trends is probably unmatched, and people take seriously what he has to say. As a result, I was grateful to attend a brilliant lecture at CDU. There have been good ones recently, but none more so than the Dr Bilawara Lee OAM (Aunty B) Faculty of Health Public Lecture 2026 on 8 July, called Baby Boomers and the Care Economy: Planning for Healthcare in Australia 2026–2036.

It was honestly a brilliant lecture—the best thing I have heard for a while and extraordinarily thought provoking. It was engaging and entertaining and spoke about demographic trends, data and futures in not

only Australia but also the Northern Territory specifically. I will liberally pilfer—share—from Mr Salt's lecture to give us all food for thought because I think there is a tonne in there that is worth us thinking about.

Interest in population and demographic affairs is high. As you all know, population policy was not introduced into our administrative orders until a couple of years ago and it is because we are now recognising the importance of population. We have ministries associated with thinking about population as well.

It is important that we are across the details, especially given that the Northern Territory is still the most racially, religiously, culturally and socially diverse population per capita in the country. While the rest of the country is having half-arsed debates about migration, it is important that everyone in this building understands our demographic composition and what is happening with our ageing population.

Interest is extraordinarily high, and there is no accounting for what goes viral on social media. I was surprised when I posted a couple of innocent-sounding ABS statistics on 22 June that they suddenly had 10,000 or 15,000 people going bananas, having something to say about them. It is indicative of the fact that we need to have conversations about demography and population so that we all understand what is going on and are not just shooting from the hip and making things up as we go. This is exactly what I said in my fairly innocuous post on Facebook and LinkedIn and a few other places:

> *The NT's population is growing at 1.6% year on year, as per the Dec 2025 quarterly ABS data released last week. That's the best result for the Territory since 2013–14. Incoherent policy choices undoubtedly exacerbated demographic decline here from 2016–24; both interstate and overseas migration are stabilising under our Government.*

I maintain that is a perfectly defensible position. I was shocked at the number of comments. Frankly, a lot of people who had a lot to say were looking at tiny bits of the picture without looking at the totality of the picture. People commented on the birthrate and how the answer was that we all need to have more children. They commented about how all the immigrants were coming to steal our jobs; how we need more immigrants to do our jobs; and how net interstate migration was negative, as if we had not realised that was our resting state for the last 40 years, essentially. There were things about visa policy changes, tourism, Defence being good, Defence being bad, FIFO being good and FIFO being bad. The bottom line is that these things all play a part in it, but if we are to have honest conversations about migration, its composition, its quantum and how that relates to us in the Northern Territory, we have to be across the data first; otherwise, we will be ignored.

To the many people who commented on those posts, I respectfully disagree with you. This government and the things it has been doing have stabilised population decline. I am not suggesting it could not be better or that we could not aim to grow the population even more aggressively. I am saying that since the CLP came to power, in every quarter the government has incrementally stabilised the population. Net interstate migration is mitigated; it is not haemorrhaging as fast. Overseas migration is growing ever so slightly. Natural increase is more or less stable, which is pretty much what it has been for a while. It is important to understand that what the government is doing is engendering confidence in people to stick around in the Territory. We can do more, but let us understand where we are at now.

Returning to Bernard Salt's lecture, there are some headline things I want to get across that I think are super important. The first is the global population is flattening out. It will not keep going up; we will reach 10 billion at some point—probably when we are all dead—but it is important to understand that it will not keep growing.

The next is what Australians spend their money on. We are 10th on GDP per capita, and we spend our money on housing and super but also increasingly on lifestyle and wellness. That is important because per capita the Northern Territory has a significantly lower population aged 65-plus; however, Indigenous people are still getting lesser access to ageing—that is, they die younger—and the NT is still experiencing uneven population gains.

There are uneven population gains and losses. Whilst Australian cities are on the rise, Darwin is still 15th and is not going anywhere between 2016 and 2036. We should be overtaking Cairns. We need to start making choices and thinking about how to compete with comparable places like that.

There are big shifts happening, though, in immigrant source countries nationally. In about 18 months' time when we get the new census data, we will see how fundamentally the demographic composition of Darwin and the Northern Territory are changing. That will affect social cohesion, how we work together, who is here and what sort of communities we need to support.

The census is happening on 11 August. I encourage all members to encourage everyone in their electorates to fill in the census because it matters so much in understanding what we do here, prosecuting arguments with the federal government and making sure we get our fair share.

The NT essentially—this is the important one to understand—has a late forties/early fifties millennial wall that is surging towards retirement. You can see from this graph I am holding—have a look at it; you can find all Bernard Salt's stuff online—we have an ageing population that is about to hit us like a freight train. We will need to look after all those people. The even more worrying part about all this is the giant dip on the graph that shows we do not have people in their thirties. When you look at the net annual change in the NT population by age between 2026 and 2036, you see that people in their thirties are leaving the Territory. Think about what people in their thirties do. They build families, homes and populations. They have kids. That is our long-term workforce, so it is important that we figure out how the Northern Territory can retain people in their thirties, because if we do not do that we will have big problems.

Consumer spending has widened dramatically from lifestyle to wellness. What do I mean by that? When you look at the percentage change in retail sales by category from 2015 to 2025, you see that a decade ago we used to spend most of our money—about 58%—on cafes, restaurants and catering. Do you know what is at the top now? Pharmaceutical, cosmetic and toiletry goods are up, at 57%. Basically, we spend our money in Chemist Warehouse rather than in cafes and on catering and hospitality.

When you think about what is happening to our ageing population, you realise that aged-care and disabled care workers will be needed, and it turns out they can be drawn from any demographic bin. The peak age of care workers is in their mid-fifties, so we need to be thinking about attracting not only youthful people from England and Ireland to try to service our workforce needs and look after our elderly but also 50-year-olds who stay the course and work in aged care.

The most common jobs in the NT are changing. While sales assistants are still at the top from 2011 to 2026, registered nurses are up to second, and aged-care and disability care workers—who were not even in the top five before—are fourth. Proportionally speaking, the NT has a paucity of medical specialists, when we should have way more compared with the rest of the Australian population. There will be a need for 85-plus care in the NT, and it will surge from 2032.

Thank you for the opportunity to talk about our demographic outlook in Australia. It is challenging across the country, but it will be especially challenging in the Northern Territory. We, as representatives of the Northern Territory who need to think about how to look after our respective communities and populations, must understand what the needs and real numbers are. If we look at them, we can come up with better solutions, because better solutions start with a better understanding of our present demographic situation.

Mr CHARLS (Sanderson): Madam Acting Deputy Speaker, I acknowledge the outstanding success of Sanderson Day 2026, held on Saturday 14 June at Yanyula Park in Anula. As the Member for Sanderson, it was once again a privilege and an honour to host this wonderful annual community event.

Sanderson Day has become much more than a community gathering. It is now a celebration of the people, organisations and volunteers who make our electorate one of the most vibrant, diverse and welcoming communities in the Northern Territory. Every year I am reminded that while governments build infrastructure and deliver services, it is people who build communities.

Sanderson Day is a shining example of what can be achieved when neighbours, volunteers, community organisations, local businesses and electorate representatives come together with a common purpose to celebrate our community and create a welcoming environment for everyone. Yanyula Park was transformed into a hub of activity, laughter and friendship all afternoon. Families from Sanderson and surrounding suburbs came together in a safe, relaxed and inclusive environment where people of every age and background were welcome.

There truly was something for everyone. Children delighted in the interactive activities provided by Norman Millington and his family-owned and operated business Speed Dart. His enthusiasm and energy ensured that there was never a dull moment. The incredibly talented artists from CGee Face Painting had queues throughout the day as children eagerly awaited their colourful and imaginative creations.

For those thinking something a little more active, AFL NT and the South Darwin Rabbitohs Rugby League Club provided opportunities for young Territorians to test their skills, learn new techniques and perhaps even inspire the next generation of sporting stars.

Entertainment throughout the afternoon showcased the extraordinary talents that exist across our community. Peter, Paul & Jacko kept the crowd entertained with their music, while the Keltikka Irish Dancers and the Top End Mustangs impressed everyone with their precision, energy and vibrant performances. The Darwin Multicultural Choir once again demonstrated the rich diversity that makes the Northern Territory so unique, bringing together voices from many cultures in celebration of harmony and community spirit. I must also acknowledge my colleague, the Member for Port Darwin, who delighted the audience by stepping up to the microphone and performing for the crowd.

One of the undeniable highlights of the day was Hyper the Clown, whose incredible balloon artistry captivated children and adults alike. Hyper's patience, creativity and infectious enthusiasm meant she was literally the last person entertaining families as marquees were being packed away around her. That dedication speaks volumes about the generosity of those who choose to participate in community events such as this.

Adding to the excitement were our much-loved roving mascots. Hector the Cat from the Northern Territory Road Safety team, Boof the Barra from Royal Life Saving NT and Candy the Crocodile from Neighbourhood Watch provided countless hugs, laughs and treasured family photographs throughout the afternoon. Their presence created countless smiles and lasting memories for many youngsters.

I was also delighted to welcome several parliamentary colleagues who took the time to join us and engage with the community. I thank the Members for Karama, Goyder, Drysdale, Casuarina, Wanguri, Fannie Bay and Port Darwin for their support. Their attendance demonstrated the importance of community events that bring people together beyond electoral boundaries.

No community event is complete without good food. I extend my sincere appreciation to our incredible volunteer barbecue team, comprising Praneesh Badlu, Mathew Mattam, Abraham Varghese, Jeffers Jose, Bijo Baby, Peter Bailey, Srinivas Bitla and Pradeep Palanisamy, who together cooked more than 700 sausages throughout the afternoon. Their tireless work over the hot barbecues ensured that nobody went hungry.

Likewise, I thank Amin Khan from Xpresso Coffee, who brewed almost 200 coffees for attendees throughout the event, keeping volunteers, performers and visitors alike refreshed. A special thankyou goes to one Sanderson constituent, Aphrodite Larentzos whose generous donation of 200 homemade Greek treats perfectly complemented the coffee and was warmly appreciated by everyone fortunate enough to enjoy one.

Behind every successful community event is an army of volunteers whose efforts often go unnoticed. I acknowledge Shannara Field; Helen Poon; the Members for Port Darwin, Wanguri and Fannie Bay; Leonie Melder; my wife, Anu; and my daughter Aimie. They worked tirelessly serving food, handing out more than 600 Zooper Doopers, distributing raffle tickets and ensuring every attendee felt welcome. Their friendly smiles and willingness to help demonstrated the spirit of Sanderson Day.

The Sanderson Mega Raffle proved enormously popular. I sincerely thank every stallholder, business and participant who generously donated prices. Your contributions added another layer of excitement to what was already a fantastic community celebration.

This year's static displays provided valuable opportunities for community engagement and education. I thank Neighbourhood Watch, Australian Ears and Hearing Care, Dementia Alliance Australia and the Darwin Dog Obedience Club for their participation.

The obedience demonstrations by the Darwin Dog Obedience Club were particularly popular with families. I extend my sincere appreciation to Gloria Page and Kevin and Ronda Brien for ensuring that the demonstrations were both educational and entertaining while showcasing the incredible bond between owners and their dogs.

Community events simply do not happen without dedicated volunteers working behind the scenes. I recognise Butch Melzner whose commitment to our community is ever reliable. Together with David Pederick, Butch ensured every marquee was erected before the event commenced and efficiently packed away at its conclusion. Their hard work, supported by my electorate office staff, ensured the logistical side of the event operated seamlessly. Special recognition must also go to Paul Wyatt, who once again volunteered to coordinate the performers' run sheet.

I acknowledge the City of Darwin rangers who ensured that Yanyula Park remained clean, safe and welcoming throughout the event. Their professionalism contributed enormously to the day's success. I was also pleased to welcome the City of Darwin Waters Ward councillors who spent time engaging with

stallholders, volunteers and members of the community. Their attendance reinforces the importance of local government working collaboratively alongside elected members of this Assembly for the benefit of our communities. The ongoing partnership between the Sanderson electorate office and the City of Darwin continues to deliver positive outcomes for our residents, and I sincerely thank everyone involved.

Planning an event of this scale requires a significant amount of work. I place on record my appreciation to my electorate office team, electorate officer Suzi Spedding and Megan Howlett, whose professionalism, commitment and attention to detail ensured that every aspect of Sanderson Day was delivered to the highest standard. Their dedication before, during and after the event is something of which I am immensely proud.

Thank you to all the performers, volunteers, stallholders, sponsors, community organisations, emergency service representatives, council officers, local businesses and families who attended. Your support is what makes Sanderson Day possible.

Community events such as these remind us why local representation matters. They strengthen social connections, foster community pride and provide opportunities for people from every walk of life to come together in friendship and mutual respect. While we continue to work hard on addressing the challenges facing our electorate, days like Sanderson Day remind us of the enormous strengths that exist within our community and that Sanderson is resilient, compassionate and inclusive. Most importantly, they remind us that when communities work together, remarkable things happen. I left Yanyula Park that afternoon with an overwhelming sense of pride, not in hosting an event, but in representing such an extraordinary community.

I can assure the Assembly that planning has already begun for Sanderson Day 2027. We will build on this year's success, striving to make it bigger, better and even more enjoyable for families across Sanderson and the northern suburbs. I look forward to once again bringing our community together to celebrate everything that makes Sanderson such a wonderful place to live, work, volunteer and raise a family.

Mr SMELT (Nightcliff): Madam Acting Deputy Speaker, I was pleased to be invited to join the Clontarf Foundation's annual Bush Run which was held in Nightcliff in early June. This event was organised by the Casuarina Senior College Clontarf Academy and Shaun Cusack, Zone Manager, NT Clontarf Foundation, for all the academies in the Top End. The Bush Run aims to energise young men by encouraging them to get out in the community and stay active.

This event brought together members from Years 3 to 12 from eleven academies. More than 120 runners who competed in the biggest Bush Run since it commenced in 2013. I am proud to say that I joined the running along the glorious Nightcliff Foreshore, starting and finishing at Sunset Park alongside the iconic Nightcliff Jetty. The weather could not have been better. Everyone pushed themselves in the run and can be proud of their efforts.

There were also Clontarf partners and supporters involved, making it a fantastic community event. The run concluded with a barbecue cooked by the team from Larrakia Nation. Many thanks to the numerous corporate partners and supporters who made this event possible.

At the post-run presentations, Nightcliff High School's Oliver Rivas won the middle school section; the senior school winner was Josh Moussa from CSC; and the primary school winner was Kale Cunningham from Moulden Primary School. Well done to you all.

The Clontarf Foundation helps young men to study at school, finish Year 12 and enter employment or further study. Using supportive relationships, a welcoming environment and a diverse range of activities, the young Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander men in the programs develop improved self-esteem and confidence. Clontarf's approach has proven to be successful in not only attracting young men to school and keeping them engaged but also supporting students to embrace more disciplined, purposeful and healthy lifestyles.

Ashton Hams, Director of Nightcliff High School's Clontarf Foundation, advised their academy was represented by 23 students running in this year's Bush Run. Nightcliff High School has 36 enrolled students and the Clontarf team work with a further six students, hoping to encourage them to come on board with the activities offered at the school. The young men who are enrolled with Clontarf at Nightcliff High School have sports training two mornings a week, followed by a cooked breakfast before school and one afternoon playing footy or basketball each week. Through committed engagement in the programs offered at Nightcliff High, these students are supported to travel on camps each term. Last term they travelled to Kununurra, Western Australia.

Clontarf's sister program operating at Nightcliff High School is the Stars Foundation. Forty-seven Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young women are enrolled in the program. The Stars Foundation's mission is to support and enable its members to make active choices towards realising their full potential in all aspects of their development and wellbeing, by offering full-time onsite mentors who provide the intensive daily support their members need to identify and achieve their goals.

Leicolhn McKellar, Program Coordinator at the Nightcliff High School Stars Foundation, let me know that the purpose is to improve education and health outcomes for these young women through four key pillars of personal development: healthy lifestyles; wellbeing; employment, education and training; and community, culture and leadership.

With the Clontarf and Stars Foundations operating within the Nightcliff electorate, our students are assured of a supported journey through their important years of education. It has been shown that students participating and engaging in both these programs consistently achieve higher school attendance, exceptionally high Year 12 completion rates and successful transitions into employment or further study compared with national averages. Both in-school mentoring programs utilise a holistic approach to deliver measurable improvements aligned with national Closing the Gap targets. Thank you to all the staff and champions of the Clontarf and Stars Foundations for supporting our young people to achieve their goals.

I look forward to joining the Bush Run again in 2027.

Mr PATEL (Casuarina): Madam Acting Deputy Speaker, I will acknowledge some of the people, organisations and community events that make an important contribution across the Casuarina electorate.

I congratulate Tracy Village Football Club on welcoming Liam Holt-Fitz to the club. Liam brings elite skills, on-field leadership and a wealth of experience. His résumé speaks for itself. He is a three-time premiership player with the Nightcliff Tigers and won the 2018–19 Chaney Medal.

The club has also locked in its men's coaching staff for the 2026–27 season, and what a duo it has put together. Matt Cameron is returning for his third season as the division 1 men's coach, with Liam 'Flanno' Flanagan joining him as a co-coach. Congratulations to Matt and Liam. I wish them and the Razorbacks every success for what I hope will be another fantastic season.

It was a pleasure to support Softball NT by supplying bottled water to help keep players and spectators hydrated. That is particularly important under the Territory sun. I was even more honoured to throw the first pitch for the NT Softball Championships at Tracy Village Social & Sports Club, alongside my colleague the Member for Wanguri.

I thank the Wanderers Football Club volunteers who helped in the canteen and the bar throughout the weekend, along with all the volunteers who assisted with ground preparation, facility support and many jobs behind the scenes that helped the tournament run smoothly.

It was fantastic to see players, umpires, volunteers and supporters all come together for a great weekend of softball.

I acknowledge Katy Chin, General Manager of Amber NT. Amber NT held two special events in May and July: the Amber NT Walk to Remember and the Amber NT Memorial Car Drive. Katy creates beautiful spaces for families to honour and remember the babies and children who are forever loved and deeply missed. Katy, thank you for your ongoing commitment to bereaved parents, carers and siblings.

I make special mention of Amber NT's incredible volunteers. Thank you for your compassion, time and care you give to families in our community.

There is much happening at Casuarina Square. Renovations continue, new stores are opening and existing businesses are expanding.

Solo Casuarina, a new service station, has opened, offering competitive fuel prices. It is proudly 100% Australian owned and offers an incredible range of goods for the community. We all love lower fuel prices. Good on Solo at Casuarina.

The store formerly known as Strandbags (STRAND) has reopened bigger and better in a brand-new level 1 location with a fresh, spacious layout and a great new range of bags and luggage.

Congratulation to Ajanta Caves on its opening. The store specialises in bohemian Indian handmade homewares and accessories. I found many beautiful items when I visited, and I look forward to seeing the business thrive at Casuarina Square.

You will find a beautiful smell in the air at Casuarina Square thanks to the team at MBRÓUD, the only custom perfume house in the Top End. The store officially opened on Saturday. I encourage everyone to visit the team next to Kmart and perhaps find their own signature scent.

During the school holidays CasQuest HQ kept children entertained with a fantastic free family program. The first week featured Monsoon Mission, inspired by the Top End Wet Season. The second week brought the Basecamp Challenge, an explorer-themed adventure zone focused on teamwork, movement and memory. The final week featured the Croc & Roll Arena, bringing croc country to life through challenges, including croc crossings, billabong balance and jump the creek.

Well done to the team at Casuarina Square for providing such a fantastic program of free family fun for the community. The team has also demonstrated a strong commitment to safety and emergency preparedness.

In May NT Police conducted a large-scale mock attack and counterterrorism exercise at Casuarina Square. The exercise simulated an active armed offender moving throughout the complex and involved approximately 650 participants across Casuarina Square and Charles Darwin University, including about 150 NT Police officers, emergency responders and hundreds of volunteers acting as the casualties. The exercise tested mass casualty response procedures, communication streams and the tactical readiness of frontline staff. I was pleased to attend and see the professionalism of everyone involved. I congratulate NT Police, emergency services, Casuarina Square, Charles Darwin University, the volunteers and everyone else who took part in what was a seamless and important operation.

As we are all aware, NAIDOC Week ran from 5 to 12 July this year. The theme was 50 Years Deadly. I was pleased to support the NAIDOC celebrations at Casuarina Community Care Centre, alongside my colleagues the Members for Karama and Wanguri. We provided a lunch for the dedicated primary care nurses, child and family health nurses, customer service team, Aboriginal health practitioners and social workers. Thank you to each of you for the care, compassion and support you provide to our community every day.

While Territorians were lighting up the sky for Territory Day, Royal Darwin Hospital welcomed six new little Territorians into the world. Among this year's Territory Day babies were two baby boys: Colton, with his parents, Emma and Joel; and Rayan, with his father, David, and mother, Ishara, and proud big sister, Inaya. Congratulations to all families who celebrated the arrival of their beautiful babies on a truly unforgettable Territory Day.

I acknowledge Sue Shearer from COTA NT. The Seniors Expo was another great success. It was wonderful to see many seniors from the Casuarina electorate enjoying a great day out. Thank you to the COTA NT team, volunteers, stallholders and community groups who made the event such a success and continue to support seniors throughout the year.

I thank the volunteers at the Ronald McDonald House Hospitality Cart at Royal Darwin Hospital. Melody and Ben, thank you for the time you give to supporting families and patients at Royal Darwin Hospital. It is a pleasure to volunteer, seeing the little moments of happiness in a time that can be stressful or scary.

To all the volunteers, community organisations, businesses, health workers, sporting clubs and individuals I have mentioned, thank you for everything you do for our community. It is your commitment, compassion and willingness to contribute that make the Casuarina electorate such a strong and connected family.

Mrs CARLSON (Wanguri): Mr Deputy Speaker, I honour the life of the late Pak Andre Omer Siregar, a distinguished Indonesian diplomat, a trusted friend of the Northern Territory and a man whose work strengthened one of Australia's most important international relationships.

On behalf of this Assembly, my family and the wider Indonesian community, I extend my deepest condolences to his wife, Eurika; his four children, his family, his colleagues in Indonesia's Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the people of the Republic of Indonesia.

His passing at just the age of 52 is heartbreaking. It is difficult to accept that someone with such warmth, wisdom and generosity, who was still in the prime of his life and career, has been taken from us so suddenly. There is a deep sadness in knowing that a man who dedicated his life to building friendships between nations has left us far too soon.

For those of us in the Northern Territory, Pak Andre was much more than the Indonesian Consul in Darwin; he became part of this community. He understood something that every Territorian instinctively knows: Indonesia is not simply another country in our region; it is our closest neighbour. Our futures are intertwined by geography, history and generations of friendship. Long before there was a Northern Territory, Makassan fishermen sailed these waters to trade with Yolngu people across Arnhem Land. Those relationships, built on mutual respect and shared understanding, remain among Australia's oldest international connections.

Pak Andre understood that history. He recognised that the work of a diplomat was not simply to represent a government, but to continue a strong story that began centuries ago. He also appreciated the special place Darwin occupies in Australia's northern gateway. Whether through trade, Defence cooperation, education, tourism, agriculture or cultural exchange, he knew that what happens between the Northern Territory and Indonesia matters for not only our two communities but also the stability and prosperity of our region.

During his time as Indonesian Consul in Darwin from 2015 to 2017, he continued the work of strengthening those relationships with extraordinary skill and genuine warmth. He was present at countless community events, business forums, cultural celebrations and official occasions. He was equally comfortable meeting ministers, speaking with business leaders, encouraging students and chatting with local families. He understood that diplomacy is ultimately about people. Those who knew him well remember his easy smile, humility, intelligence and remarkable ability to bring people together. He made everyone feel welcome and he built trust, not through grand speeches but through quiet conversations, gestures and genuine friendship.

Pak Andre's service extended well beyond the Northern Territory. He served Indonesia with distinction in a number of important diplomatic roles, including as an interpreter and adviser to Indonesian Presidents, as Director of Intra-Regional Cooperation within Indonesia's Ministry of Foreign Affairs and later as the Indonesian Consul General in Houston. Most recently, he served as Vice Chairman of the Association of Diplomats of Indonesia, continuing to mentor and support the next generation of diplomats.

Despite these prestigious appointments, those who have spoken since his passing have remembered something much simpler: his kindness and generosity and that he genuinely cared about people. Perhaps that is the greatest compliment anyone could ever receive.

The tributes that flowed over recent days have come from not only Darwin but across Australia and around the world. Indonesian diplomatic missions in Houston, Switzerland, Canada and Nigeria have honoured his memory, while leaders across the political spectrum in the Territory have recognised his enormous contribution to strengthening our friendship with Indonesia. That bipartisan respect says everything about the man he was.

As Territorians, we often speak of the importance of our relationship with Indonesia. Pak Andre did not simply speak about that relationship; he lived it, strengthened it and embodied it. Because of his work, the bonds between our peoples are stronger. Businesses found new opportunities, students forged new friendships, communities developed deeper understanding and governments found trusted partners. That is a remarkable legacy.

Today we mourn his loss, but we also give thanks for a life of service that has left the Northern Territory better connected to our nearest neighbours and better prepared for the future we share together.

To his beloved family, I hope you take comfort in knowing that his work reached far beyond the walls of diplomatic offices. It touched communities, shaped friendships and strengthened relationships that will endure for generations.

On behalf of this parliament, I extend my sincere sympathies to the government and people of Indonesia, his diplomatic colleagues across the world and especially those who loved him most. May Pak Andre Omer Siregar rest in eternal peace. His friendship honoured the Northern Territory, and his service strengthened our region. His legacy will endure every time Australians and Indonesians work together in the spirit of trust, respect and friendship.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: On that note, I also extend condolences to Pak Andre's family. I had the personal pleasure of working with him when I was in the Northern Territory Government and in the Chamber of Commerce. I also travelled to Indonesia with him for various trade and business expos. We also had meetings with the Indonesian President and other ministers. He was wonderful in fostering the relationship between the Northern Territory and Indonesia, and I acknowledge that.

Mr MACKAY (Goyder): Mr Deputy Speaker, in May we celebrated the 2026 NT Top End Volunteer of the Year Awards in Parliament House. Across the Territory there are countless individuals who volunteer across many organisations, and this event was just one way of thanking some of them.

I pay credit especially to a finalist in the grassroots organisation category, Save a Paw NT. Indy and Meg are two wonderful human beings who are dedicating their lives to giving back to those without a voice. In the first 18 months of operation they successfully rescued and rehomed more than 800 animals, and they continue their work with nearly 100 animals in foster care on any given day, each one waiting patiently for their forever home. Save a Paw NT was born out of heartbreak from witnessing too many animals being euthanised unnecessarily due to homelessness, treatable medical conditions or financial hardship. Indy and Meg knew something had to change, and they could not stand by while so many innocent lives were at risk. With the continued support of their network of foster carers, volunteers and the local community, they keep fighting to make sure every animal finds a safe loving home, because no animal should have to suffer in silence any longer. They make sure their voices are heard. Congratulations on being a finalist, Indy and Meg.

I also pay credit to a finalist in the volunteer organisation/team of the year category, the Berry Springs Volunteer Bushfire Brigade. This brigade does an incredible job of maintaining safety in the rural area in its patch of Berry Springs. I shout out to its members for their incredible work. People in volunteer bushfire brigades in the Top End give up their time and effort, spending time away from their family to make sure that other people's homes are safe. It is an incredibly selfless act that they do. Thank you, Berry Springs Volunteer Bushfire Brigade.

I shout out to Deb Hallett, a Foodbank SA/NT volunteer nominee, who does an incredible job with Foodbank to make sure that people do not go without food; Diane Priest from Top End Dirt Karts; Michael Reidy from the Rural Athletic Centre; Paul Wyatt; and Sarah Brown at Purple House. The rural area has many great volunteers who give their time and make sacrifices to make the world a better place.

I recently had the privilege, alongside the Member for Nelson and Litchfield Councillors Kevin Harlan and Kris Civitarese, of attending the NT Chilli Fest held at Darwin River Tavern. A large crowd of heat enthusiasts attended. Brave competitors in the chilli eating competition powered through a range of spicy food, including a 1.5-million Scoville chilli con carne prepared by Da-Bomb Street Food Taco. The government proudly supported the NT Chilli Fest with a $2,000 grant. I look forward to seeing this event grow each year through the hard work and fiery dedication of the organiser, Liz Tugwell from Berko Jerky.

May also marked an important day in the rural area calendar—Mr Deputy Speaker, I saw you there—the first-ever Litchfield Rural Show, formerly known as the Freds Pass Show. It was held at its spacious new home on the grounds of Livingstone Recreation Reserve. This was the 47th annual show and showcased the agricultural, social and cultural elements of the greater rural area.

There was plenty of fun for everyone, with a great equestrian program, live entertainment, animals and a variety of food and exhibitions. Congratulations to everyone who entered the exhibition categories, and a special mention to those who took out first place in their chosen category.

Many months of hard work and dedication from committee members and volunteers, under the leadership of outgoing Chair Shirley Preston, pulled off a terrific weekend for the community to enjoy. Thank you on behalf of the rural area for delivering the Litchfield Rural Show.

Well-known and well-loved local rural resident Helen Gordon was the worthy recipient of the 2026 Litchfield Rural Show Volunteer of the Year Award. Helen has been volunteering at the show for many decades in the poultry pavilion, the goat pavilion and the animal nursery. Helen loves sharing animals with children and seeing the smiles they put on their faces. Well done, Helen.

It was great to catch up with the crew at Lambells Lagoon Volunteer Bushfire Brigade for their AGM in May. There was a celebration for Kim and Davo who, after 25 years of volunteering with the brigade, were stepping down from brigade leadership roles to head off on another volunteering adventure, surveying birdwatching sites. Thank you both for your many years of keeping your fellow community members safe, and good luck to the new committee.

June has been a huge month for the Humpty Doo Community Garden. Its annual open day on 6 June was a hive of activity. Great plants and produce were on sale, and the entries for the scarecrow competition were impressive. Later in the month the garden's committee was thrilled to flick a switch on its newly installed solar power system, seeing the addition of lights, fans and power points in the gazebo area. This will make a huge difference to the functionality of the garden, which is grateful for the support of TotalEnergies H2 for delivery

of the project. The garden then came alive on 28 June, playing host to the Arafura Music Collective's collaboration with the Ukededoo Ukulele Strummers, Music in the Garden.

On 13 June the Darwin Dressage Club celebrated its 50th anniversary with a competition and dinner. Fifty years is a testament to past and present committees, volunteers and competitors. It is an all-round milestone worth celebrating. Congratulations. I do not have the skill needed to participate in dressage. I describe my horseriding ability as a romantic stroll around the backyard. The control the people have over their animals is insane. Well done on 50 years, and I look forward to another 50.

Held on 13 and 14 June, the 2026 Orchid Spectacular was just that—spectacular. Congratulations to all of this year's entrants and winners. I am forever in awe of your skills and enjoy looking at the beautiful blooms that you so carefully curate. I recently managed to grow my first-ever orchid flower that can best be described as not a stress response. I have an orchid that I hang in my shower. Once or twice a week I water it under the shower. For some reason, it has decided to grow a flower. I am impressed with myself, but that is nothing compared with the hard work and dedication of these competitors. The Orchid Spectacular was another raging success this year.

We also celebrated the Refugee Week Australian Citizenship Ceremony at Litchfield Council, welcoming 12 new citizens from six countries, being South Sudan, the UK, Vietnam, Philippines, Thailand and Indonesia. It was a proud moment, celebrating the diversity that makes our community so strong. I enjoyed talking with the new citizens and finding out their stories and journeys to becoming Australian citizens. I look forward to the contributions that they will make, but also acknowledge the contributions they have already made to the Territory.

On 26 June the rural community gathered at the Noonamah Tavern, rallying to raise funds for former staff member Tia, who is recovering from a stroke she suffered five days after welcoming her baby girl into the world. Together, the rural community raised more than $75,000 to support Tia. I give a big shout-out to Moonie, Bec and Tony for their continued support of the rural community. I wish Tia a healthy recovery.

The Darwin and Rural Poultry Club Annual Show was held on 4 July. Congratulations to all the exhibitors and award winners, including Ben Reinke on taking out Champion Bird of Show; Kelly Burnett on being awarded Reserve Champion Bird of Show; and Charlotte Burnett for her outstanding results, taking out Best Junior Handler. Thank you to the Darwin and Rural Poultry Club volunteers and officials and everyone involved in putting together another successful show.

The NT Pony Club Camp was held at Freds Pass Reserve from 6 to 8 July. The camp is a few days of horsemanship, clinics and a whole lot of fun. I brought pizzas to celebrate its superhero-themed disco. I am proud to say that Domino's Coolalinga is a great partner of the rural area and makes sure, when it can, to dip into its own pocket to support great organisations such as the NT Pony Club Camp. I shout out to the manager and owners of Domino's Coolalinga for helping to feed the hundred or so hungry kids, their obliging parents and talented coaches.

A lot has happened this Dry Season. I shout out to Madam Tou and the NT Thai Association on hosting not only a spectacular night with the annual Thai Grand Festival but also the Siam Gala Dinner Under the Stars at Tou's Garden in Acacia. Well done to the committee, Tou and the Thai organisation. I look forward to next year's events.

Mr KERLE (Blain): Mr Deputy Speaker, I make brief mention of the life of Andy Price. Today I attended his celebration of life, and I will have more to say at another sittings, probably in August. It has been very emotional, so forgive me for that.

Congratulations to the newly elected committee of the Kenyans in Darwin Association. On 28 March 2026 members of the Kenyan community came together to participate in a general election, demonstrating their commitment to strong leadership, unity and community development. I am pleased to congratulate the newly elected KIDA committee: President Paul Machuki—he is a great fella; his kids go to school with mine, so I know Paul, and I am glad he is continuing for another year—Vice President, Winny Lagat; Secretary, Zena Cheruiyot; Treasurer, George Ngoru; Events Coordinator, Cynthia Ndungu; Public Officer, Desmond Gitonyi; Students Representative, Thomas Opiyo; Community Liaison Officer, Edith Njoka; Sport Coordinator, Zablon Pingo; and Social Media Manager, Justus Korir. I wish all elected officials success as they serve the Kenyan community in Darwin.

The Nepalese Association of Northern Territory (NANT) has a new executive committee for 2026–2028, and I officially welcome and congratulate Vice President, Namrata Sharma; Vice President, Santosh Khadka;

Secretary, Anupam Dhungana; Joint Secretary, Sangam Tamang; Treasurer, Sandip Bhusal; Joint Treasurer, Umakanta Ghimire; and Executive Members, Roshan Khatiwada, Ravi Poudel, Shubham Dhakal, Darpan Bhattarai and Dipesh Raj Baral. I extend my warmest congratulations and best wishes to the committee members as they begin this important journey of leadership and service. I am confident that their dedication, integrity, teamwork and vision will continue to strengthen NANT and serve our community with excellence.

I also express my sincere gratitude to the outgoing 2024–2026 executive committee for its support, outstanding service, commitment, countless volunteer hours, leadership and dedication, which have laid a strong foundation for the continued growth and success of the organisation.

Congratulations again to the new NANT executive committee team for 2026–28; I wish you every success for a productive, rewarding and impactful tenure.

On Tuesday 21 July the 2026 NT Westpac NRL Community Awards were held at Government House. I am proud to speak about three outstanding members of the Palmerston Raiders who were recognised at the awards.

Claire Corbett was awarded Young Person of the Year. Claire has been recognised for her incredible work in growing the game by encouraging and recruiting under-17 girls to try rugby league. Her passion, leadership and commitment to creating opportunities for young female players has played a vital role in strengthening the club and inspiring the next generation of women in rugby league.

Anthony Smith received the Indigenous Community Award. Anthony is passionate about encouraging our younger generations and creating opportunities for Indigenous youths and adults to be part of the Raiders family. Through his leadership, mentorship and commitment to growing participation in rugby league, he continues to make a meaningful difference within the Palmerston Raiders Club and across the wider community.

Marie Greenwood received the Women in League Award. Marie has been recognised for her unwavering dedication to women and girls in rugby league. She goes above and beyond to support the women's and junior girls' teams, while always being willing to help others, regardless of the club they represent. Her generosity, selflessness and tireless work behind the scenes continue to strengthen the rugby league community and embody the true spirit of women in league. I see the hard work that Marie puts in constantly behind the scenes, supporting the Raiders. Thank you, Marie, for all your hours of hard work and your dedication.

Congratulations to Claire, Anthony and Marie on this well-deserved recognition. The Palmerston Raiders and I are incredibly proud of your achievements and grateful for the positive impact that you continue to make on and off the field.

Special congratulations go to Ricky Liddle on being awarded Community Match Official of the Year.

To all of this year's NT Westpac NRL Community Awards recipients, thank you for your dedication, passion and commitment to making rugby league stronger across the Northern Territory.

In closing, I have missed the contributions of the Opposition Leader who is on the record as not being present. I hope she has fun at the Labor National Conference, which is running from today until Saturday in Adelaide. I will be at the Royal Darwin Show all weekend representing and fronting up for Territorians. It will be good to see how many of her colleagues front up to Territorians at the Royal Darwin Show or choof off to Adelaide to hobnob with their Labor buddies from around the country.

Motion agreed to; the Assembly adjourned.