farming techniques.

The proposed exemption will apply to transfer for no monetary consideration. To qualify for the exemption, the family member receiving the property must continue carrying on the pastoral business in their own capacity. With this legislation, the Northern Territory will join other jurisdictions that have removed similar impediments to transfer of this type.

As a final matter, the bill also makes a minor amendment to section 8BA(2) of the act to clarify the operation of the stamp duty concession for purchases under the HomeStart or HomeShare housing assistance scheme. This amendment ensures the availability of the concession, provided the person has not previously owned land in the Territory.

I commend the bill to honourable members.

Debate adjourned.

SUMMARY OFFENCES AMENDMENT BILL (Serial 56)

Continued from 22 April 1998.

Mrs HICKEY (Opposition Leader): Madam Speaker, the *Summary Offences Bill* deals with the current situation that requires the forfeiture of weapons used in an offence, which at the moment have to be forfeited to the Territory and must be destroyed by the police commissioner.

The bill provides for discretion to return the weapon used in an offence to the owner, where the owner had nothing to do with the offence. One can imagine a situation where a weapon – and that might be a firearm, but it could also be a knife or whatever, was stolen from the owner and used in an offence. The court does not have to return the weapon if the owner has not safeguarded it, or has no reasonable excuse to be in possession of it.

However, it does make allowance for the return of a weapon – say, a firearm – to somebody who has safeguarded it properly, properly locked it in a container – and it has been taken from the person without his or her consent. Where a person has properly safeguarded it, it means that there is now no automatic destruction of that weapon. It can be returned if that is merited. The opposition supports this provision.

Mr REED (Deputy Chief Minister): Madam Speaker, on behalf of the Attorney-General, I thank the Leader of the Opposition for her support. These amendments will serve admirably those people to whom she has referred, and to whom the second-reading speech referred.

Motion agreed to; bill read a second time.

Mr REED (Deputy Chief Minister)(by leave): Madam Speaker, I move that the bill be now read a third time.

Motion agreed to; bill read a third time.

SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDERS

Mr BURKE (Health, Family and Children's Services): Madam Speaker, I move that so much of standing orders be suspended as would prevent the *Mental Health and Related Services Bill* (Serial 80) passing through all stages at these sittings.

Motion agreed to.

MENTAL HEALTH AND RELATED SERVICES BILL (Serial 80)

Continued from 13 August 1998.

Mr RIOLI (Arafura): Madam Speaker, the Labor opposition supports this bill and its smooth passage through the House on urgency.

The bill has been a long time in the making. Labor welcomes the fact that the Territory will finally have legislation that reflects the modern approach in this area. It is time the Territory had an up-to-date regime to deal with mental illness and people going through mental disturbances.

I have received 2 briefings on this bill. I thank the public servants involved in these briefings for the comprehensive information that was provided and for their professionalism.

This is a complex area. The lengthy new legislation reflects the difficulty in balancing the competing interests at stake. As a community, we must ensure that the rights of people experiencing mental illness and mental disturbances are protected. These people are often very vulnerable. It is critical that we ensure that the rights of these people are protected and that the system guarantees this protection.

At the same time, mental illness and mental disturbance can cause difficulty and sometimes havoc to the rest of the community. The system must ensure that sufficient protections are in place. The general thrust of this legislation is to provide more flexibility and responsiveness to the way the complex issues are handled.