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### **Alcohol Reduction Measures Debate**

#### **Mr HIGGINS to CHIEF MINISTER**

Yesterday, the opposition brought to this House an opportunity to adopt a whole-of-government approach to an entrenched social problem that impacts on Territorians. Your government supports the National Plan to Reduce Violence against Women and their Children, which is not a partisan plan. Yet yesterday one government member out of 18 rose to speak in this House. How is that you support this national plan, yet you did not see it as sufficiently important to speak on the alcohol motion? You are the Chief Minister and minister for Police. Why did you see it as necessary to play politics on this opportunity to work constructively to reduce the effect of alcohol abuse in the Northern Territory?

#### **ANSWER**

Madam Speaker, I appreciate the question from the Leader of the Opposition because it is a very important subject. I am quite surprised at—I will not say ignorance—the failure of the Leader of the Opposition to realise how many times we have debated this subject inside and outside this House, and in many forums. He is a little sly to talk about his motion last night. The issues of alcohol and domestic violence have been debated a lot; they are very important and serious issues. We have had many debates about how we as a community and parliament can handle this issue. It is complicated.

I have had meetings as recently as the other day in Alice Springs about our plans and how we intend to transition out of the CLP's policies on Alcohol Mandatory Treatment, paperless arrests and Alcohol Protection Orders into the much more integrated system which used to have under the Banned Drinker Register.

We will not make the mistake the CLP did early in its term where it scrapped all the Labor policies because they were Labor's and had a vacuum before they brought in their policies. That was a policy mistake; we will not do that. We do believe in transitioning, consultation and working through these issues to make sure there is an integrated, comprehensive response ready to go when we wind out of how the CLP approached things. That gives you the time to consult properly, look at the evidence and make sure you are putting in place proper, serious reforms.

The other thing we have said, and this applies across government, not just in the alcohol space, is that we want to be better at data collection and how we share that data and make informed decisions. Recognising during the debate about the Banned Drinker Register—did it work? We had our opinion on this side and the CLP had its opinion on its side. It ran for about 13 months. There was a serious debate about the data and whether or not it worked.

What we have committed to—this goes across policy areas but I think alcohol is a very good example of it—the collection and dissemination of data so we can make informed decisions about what works and what does not. While I support the Banned Drinker Register and think it is great idea, if it is not working after a couple of years we will need to revisit it and refocus. We do not want to stick to something just because it was our idea; we want to have an evidence-based approach to things.

This is what we are working on and doing. It has been said many times; this is not new information. I am stunned that the CLP was not aware of this. That is up to them to decide; they need to talk amongst themselves, maybe re-read some old debates and look at some of the stuff that went through the last election campaign. They would be more informed about Labor Party policy and the Labor approach to what is a very serious issue that affects many in our community. We will be acting on this; we will be ...

**Madam SPEAKER:** Chief Minister, your time has expired.

### **Backpacker Tax**

#### **Ms NELSON to MINISTER for PRIMARY INDUSTRY and RESOURCES**

Can the minister inform the House of any developments in Labor's campaign to save Territory businesses from the Liberal and National Parties' backpacker tax? What can members of this House do to support the campaign?

## ANSWER

Madam Speaker, I thank the Member for Katherine for the question. Katherine is a pivotal part of the primary industry area and where many backpackers are working. I was advised during the lunch break that the Senate has voted to accept the amendment to the backpacker tax proposal, to reduce it to 10.5%. The federal government originally set it at 32.5%, then it went down to 19%, and now it has passed through the Senate at 10.5%. That is for the first dollar earned.

This is a critical issue for the Territory and one that requires bipartisan support. As I have said a number of times, the backpacker tax is a huge issue for our agricultural sector, where 85% of our labour force is overseas workers. The overseas labour market is a competitive one. If our tax rates are too high, backpackers will go elsewhere. That means our fruit will not be picked and could end up rotting on the ground, which would be terrible.

The uncertainty in this saga has dragged on and on. I have said many times, let us stop the political rhetoric and niggling, and make this happen. I take this opportunity, on behalf of Territorians, to ask the Leader of the Opposition and Country Liberal Party to work with me in the best interest of Territorians.

I hope, after Question Time, the Leader of Opposition can get on the phone to Malcolm Turnbull and Barnaby Joyce and say, on behalf of Territorians and government, that we want to work together and get this sorted.

I am acknowledging that we need bipartisan support, and we are fully aware, as a Labor government in the Northern Territory, that there is a Liberal federal government in Australia. We need to work together on behalf of all Territorians for their best interest. I implore the Leader of the Opposition to ring the Prime Minister and the Deputy Prime Minister, and ask them to support our stance and get this voted through parliament.

## Violence against Women

### Mrs FINOCCHIARO to MINISTER for TERRITORY FAMILIES

Yesterday the opposition brought to this House an opportunity to adopt a whole-of-government approach to an entrenched social problem that impacts on Territorians. The government you are a member of supports the National Plan to Reduce Violence against Women and their Children. How is it that you support this national plan yet you did not see it as sufficiently important to speak on the alcohol motion yesterday?

## ANSWER

Madam Speaker, I thank the Deputy Opposition Leader for my first question in this House. We were wondering when it would happen. It is on a very important issue. When I was at the recent COAG meeting, giving a speech on behalf of the Chief Minister, we spoke about the importance of the national plan. It is a very important plan. It talks about domestic and family violence as an issue of national importance.

There are a range of drivers for domestic and family violence, as we know. The national plan is very clear on the ways forward. One of the really important ways forward relates to gender equality. We need to make sure we drive a range of reforms in this area.

**Mrs FINOCCHIARO:** A point of order, Madam Speaker! Standing Order 110: relevance. My question was very direct; I asked why she did not feel it was important to speak on the alcohol motion yesterday.

**Ms WAKEFIELD:** We know there is interplay with alcohol and domestic and family violence. The interplay relates to impacting on the severity and frequency of domestic and family violence, but we could take all alcohol out of the NT and we would still need to deal with domestic and family violence.

There is a link. Strong alcohol policy, as we outlined in our pre-election commitments—we need to make sure those things are in place.

I was in charge of the Alice Springs Women's Shelter when the CLP decided to take away the Banned Drinker Register. It was one of the most distressing periods in Alice Springs, and we will not make that mistake.

**Members** interjecting.

**Madam SPEAKER:** Order!

**Mr GUNNER:** A point of order, Madam Speaker! Standing Order 20: no interruption. I would love to hear the Minister for Territory Families answer the first question the CLP has asked of her.

**Ms WAKEFIELD:** We know the damage it will cause. We have been very clear about what we are doing. I talked about alcohol policy relentlessly before the election because people were concerned. They voted in our plan and we need to get on with it.

I agree that we do not need to talk about it in the House; the Chief Minister is right. We have talked about it. Look at the debates of the past. Look at our pre-election campaign. We know what we are doing; we are getting on with it and we will take the domestic and family violence policy seriously. If any of you on that side of the House doubt that I will take domestic and family violence in the Northern Territory seriously, you have not been paying attention.

### **Early Childhood Development Policy**

**Mr COLLINS to MINISTER for CHILDREN**

How will this government's plans to place children at the centre of government improve social and educational outcomes for Territory children?

**ANSWER**

Madam Speaker, I thank the member for his question. One thing we are clear about, as a new government, is that children will be at the centre of government decision-making. We went to the Territory election with a very strong policy position that a Territory Labor government would ensure we have a very strong early childhood policy and a plan that puts children at the centre of government decision-making.

It is something we must do. When we continue to hear the appalling, horrendous and tragic stories that impact children in the Northern Territory every day, this space needs to be a priority. We have seen more reports from the Children's Commissioner that highlight the need for government to take action in this area. That is what we are committed to doing.

This morning I had the opportunity to go to the Nightcliff Family Centre. It was wonderful to see the wonderful work they do as early childhood educators, working with children and helping to ensure they get the very best start to life. It was a pleasure to announce there today that, as part of our work in developing the early childhood strategy and plan, we have the first group of experts which will be on the expert advisory panel. They will be joined by up to six local experts from the Northern Territory in the early childhood development space.

It was fantastic to announce that Professor Kerry Arabena, Professor Frank Oberklaid, Professor Sven Silburn, Professor Fiona Arney and Professor Collette Tayler will be working here. We have some wonderful people there. They are not only nationally- and world-renowned experts in early childhood development but people who have spent considerable time in the Northern Territory, working on research, evaluation and monitoring, and working with the Families as First Teachers program. They will be joined by local expert Territorians who have been working in this field, many of them for their whole career.

We have always said our work in the early childhood development space will be with the non-government sector, which will choose the experts to go on the panel. We are taking its advice and will work with it through the implementation of this plan to make sure it holds us to account as a government on the progress we make and what we are doing well. If we are not doing well, we want that scrutiny. We need to re-evaluate and make sure we get programs on track.

It will be a huge effort. Solutions will need to be place based. What might work in Darwin will not necessarily work in Wadeye or Yuendumu. It is important that we work hand-in-hand with the NGO sector and communities to make sure we make a difference for our children.

**Madam SPEAKER:** Minister, your time has expired.

### **Cycle Path from Johnston to Howard Springs**

#### **Mr WOOD to MINISTER for INFRASTRUCTURE, PLANNING AND LOGISTICS**

The cycle path from Johnston, in Palmerston, to the Howard Springs cycle path has just been completed. According to a brochure from the government, this cycle path was to be completed in December 2015, 12 months ago. Could you please say why the path took so long to complete? What was the final cost and what was the original budget price?

#### **ANSWER**

Madam Speaker, I thank the Member for Nelson for his question. Cycle path infrastructure is very important. It is great to give people access to transport corridors through the Territory to get out and get healthy and fit on a bike.

You are correct. This is a project which—one of the things you do not like saying as an infrastructure minister—ran over time and over budget. The advice I received is that there were design issues that required additional consideration and time to ensure there was appropriate erosion control. With that, as we all know, when you put infrastructure at the front, you want to do it properly so you are not constantly coming back to repair it.

There have been months of delays, and there is more work to be done. The path is open now and people are able to use it; however, final works to protect the path from environmental erosion are being completed before the Wet really begins.

The original budget was \$1m, which has blown out by another \$200 000 to \$300 000. As frustrating as it is when a project goes over time and budget, I can see the rationale to ensure it is done properly up front so it is not repeatedly being attended to with repairs and maintenance. Once those paths go in, they are there for decades. That is what we want, and we want to minimise the need for repairs.

Member for Nelson, it is a project that, since coming to government, we have discovered went over time and over budget, but it is important to get the erosion works right.

### **Infrastructure**

#### **Ms UIBO to MINISTER for INFRASTRUCTURE, PLANNING and LOGISTICS**

How is the government using its infrastructure program to drive the economy and help create jobs, particularly in the bush?

#### **ANSWER**

Madam Speaker, I thank the member for her question. There has been much debate about infrastructure in this House. We outlined our plans at the start of the week, and some of the tough decisions we had to make. I remind the House that there is a huge infrastructure program, a \$1.7bn infrastructure program. As part of that, this year alone, the roads program is worth \$697m; that is a significant roads program.

One of the challenges we face is that we have one of the largest unsealed road networks in the country. Ideally, you want every road sealed, we all want to see that but we know the costs that come with that, and it will not happen overnight. It is a fine balance, but we are working towards that.

One very important part of the infrastructure plan, which will help drive better social outcomes and jobs, is the \$1.1bn housing infrastructure program. That is the most significant investment a Northern Territory Government has made to remote Indigenous housing and, from that, we will be working very hard. My colleagues, the Minister for Housing and Community Development and the Chief Minister, will be working very hard as well to make sure—I will say my part as well at CFFR—to make sure the federal government recognises that commitment by the Territory government. The National Partnership Agreement on Remote Indigenous Housing is set to expire in 2017-18. We have shown our commitment; we need to see theirs. It will be very important to get more funding on the table.

We have a greater emphasis on government employee housing, which will be very important for helping people in communities so they have a good place to live and can go to work and do their job to the best of

their ability every day. For so long they have missed out. It is also about generating employment in those communities and investing in GEH.

School upgrades are very important; schools need more work. That is something we will invest in, and, of course, as I said, a huge roads program. There is \$679m in the roads program this financial year alone. There is a \$697m in the roads program this financial year alone: \$27.9m for the Mereenie Loop; \$28m for the Outback Way roads; \$25m for the Yellow Creek upgrade over the Port Keats Road; \$29m for the Litchfield Park Road continues at the Lower Finnis River Bridge; and \$5m to lift and seal Ramingining and Central Arnhem roads.

The list goes on. On top of that we have already attracted another \$234m from the Australian Government to continue work on the Plenty Highway, Docker River Road and Lasseter Highway. There is a lot of work happening with infrastructure in the bush.

### **School Enrolments**

#### **Mr MILLS to MINISTER for EDUCATION**

In an answer to a question yesterday your reference to the category of passive enrolments to describe what many would call truancy has raised some interest. To gain a better understanding of the actual school attendance in the Northern Territory I invite you to provide the Assembly with the following information. I do accept this could be provided on notice. How many children of school age are there, between 6 and 17, the compulsory years, in each of the following jurisdictions: Darwin; Palmerston and rural; Katherine; Tennant Creek; Alice Springs; and Nhulunbuy? How many are currently actively enrolled? How many are passively enrolled in each of those jurisdictions?

#### **ANSWER**

Madam Speaker, I thank the Member for Blain for the question. I will provide that information; obviously I do not have it at my fingertips.

To clarify some things, if a parent moves their child, sometimes that parent does not notify the school that they are moving their child. That happens for a number of reasons. It might be due to a marriage breakdown and the family might need to move very quickly. There are children on the passive roll who are no longer in the Northern Territory. They may have moved interstate. People do that for a heap of reasons.

In the Northern Territory there is the active roll and the passive roll. There are people in the department and schools who work very hard to track down and make sure those students on the passive—if a child does not show up the school will notify and follow up with the parent to try to find the student. In the Territory this issue is complex. Schools, in the first instance, will often use their Aboriginal Islander Education Workers to go around to houses, and look at the last address to find where the student is to make sure they are going to school.

Attendance is everybody's business in education. Teachers in schools know how vital it is for kids to be at school. The schools work hard on that. Things have gotten better and better around keeping track of students. Parents get text messages and phone calls. Parents have to ring every morning that their child will be away. There is a lot of work done by schools to make sure they know where their students are and that their students are at school.

But there is a transient population in the Territory. People move into town for a number of reasons—medical, to go to court, to visit relatives. There are issues around making sure, when those students are in town, they go to school.

One of the initiatives, when I was the executive director in Central Australia, was to set up the KITES program, which is Kids in Town Engaged in School. We set up classrooms at one of the primary schools so when parents were in town for medical reasons those students could be enrolled and attend that school temporarily so they still had access to education.

Member for Blain, I will get those figures. Attendance is a complex issue. A lot of time, energy and money, from the federal government as well as the Northern Territory Government, goes into attendance. We want to see every child at school every day. I can assure you that every principal wants that as well, and everybody in the Education department.

**SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION**  
**School Enrolments**

**Mr MILLS to MINISTER for EDUCATION referred to MINISTER for TERRITORY FAMILIES**

To get a clearer picture on this, are the three juveniles who came to the attention of the Palmerston community on Monday—12, 13 and 15—on the active or passive roll?

**ANSWER**

Member for Blain, I do not have that information. The issues around those students are operational issues with the school. Sometimes that information is also confidential. The Minister for Territory Families might be able to give us an update on that.

**Ms WAKEFIELD (Territory Families):** I have been briefed on the situation with those three children. Two of them are known to the department. One of them has an intensive case manager, and we will be working closely with them, along with the police, because many of the issues involved are police matters.

**Mr Mills:** Are they on the school roll?

**Ms WAKEFIELD:** One of them is, I understand.

**Infrastructure Planning – Economic Confidence**

**Mr KIRBY to CHIEF MINISTER**

How is the government's open and transparent approach to infrastructure planning helping to rebuild economic confidence in the Northern Territory, and how does this compare to previous policy approaches?

**ANSWER**

Madam Speaker, I thank the Member for Port Darwin for the question. The government understands that infrastructure spending must be carefully targeted to support jobs and deliver a return to the taxpayer. I commend the outstanding work of the Deputy Chief Minister in bringing together an infrastructure plan that does just that.

We understand that trust, confidence and certainty are just as important for creating the right environment for businesses to invest and create jobs. It is about how you go about it as much as anything else. This is why we were up front with our plans to Territorians before the election, and we made it crystal clear that we would have to reprioritise infrastructure spending over the forward estimates if we were to create jobs and be fiscally responsible, and that we would be up front about the tough decisions we would need to make.

They were tough decisions, particularly given the ferocity of advocacy by every member of our team. They are fantastic advocates for their areas. There were tough decisions we needed to make about what went out of the four-year envelope into the fifth year. We kept faith with Territorians, and we honoured our promise from before the election that we would prioritise and be open and transparent about what was on the list, which we have done.

That is in stark contrast to the approach the CLP took after winning government at the last election. It was important that had a deliberate difference in approach to how the CLP went about its decision-making at the last election.

If the CLP members had a chance to revisit what they did, I am sure they would do it differently. That would include—although I cannot speak on their behalf—the Members for Blain and Araluen. The CLP outsourced decision-making to the million-dollar men, the Renewal Management Board. The CLP did not make the tough decisions; it sent them away.

Not only did it cost the taxpayers \$1m, but I believe the CLP made an error in taking that advice. That saw surprises to Territorians like the 30% increase in power and water bills. That was not disclosed before the election and it was outsourced to the million-dollar men to make the decision. By contrast, we made the decisions ourselves, and we were open and transparent about those decisions.

**Mrs FINOCCHIARO:** A point of order, Madam Speaker! Standing Order 110; he is failing to answer his own Dixer.

**Mr GUNNER:** This is the contrast: openness and transparency versus outsourcing important decisions to the million-dollar men. Fees and charges, like motor vehicle rego, went up. Support for businesses was reduced. Investments in education and youth services were cut. It was a disgraceful breach of the promises that were made.

In restoring faith and confidence to Territorians, we have been open and transparent about the tough decisions we have made. That is why we stand in stark contrast to the CLP when it was elected in 2012.

**Madam SPEAKER:** Chief Minister, your time has expired.

### **Holtze Prison Project – Management**

**Mr HIGGINS to CHIEF MINISTER**

Earlier this week you admitted the previous Labor government caused the housing crisis that put buying a home for most Territorians out of reach. In the same spirit of openness and transparency, will you now also admit Labor completely bungled the Holtze prison project it commissioned and contracted in that last term? What will you do to fix it and how much will it cost you? Let us be open, transparent and honest.

### **ANSWER**

Madam Speaker, I thank the member for the question. He is being a little creative with how I have phrased things. We recognise that there was a housing crunch during the years of the last Labor government. We were not releasing land at the time and we have to be careful and make sure we do not have a crunch again. We will be careful about the land we release to ensure we get ahead. It is about learning those lessons.

In the Hamburger report, obviously the opinion of Mr Hamburger was that mistakes were made in the approach we took to the new prison. We can all agree that the old prison was unfit for purpose. To quote the Corrections minister at the time, 'A bulldozer needed to be driven through it'. So we made a decision to build a new prison.

We want to take the lessons we are learning from the Hamburger report about the mistakes that may have been made in how that new prison was commissioned to make sure we do not make those same mistakes again when we tackle the future of Don Dale and Owen Springs. We have to ensure we consult broadly and get people involved on the ground, which is what we have been doing.

I commend the Minister for Territory Families and the Attorney-General for the conversations they are having with grassroots stakeholders about making sure we have people involved, that we get alternative sentencing right and the shape of the facilities right.

Talking about alternatives in sentencing, that is when we get into the mistakes that were made during the last term of government. Mr Hamburger made the point that part of the problem was with the programs. Decisions were made, for example, to scrap the Katherine work camp and the 200 beds. It is about the alternative sentencing programs and the other options, which saw much pressure go on to the new prison facilities at Holtze.

We have to learn those lessons, take the Hamburger report and apply it to how we act this term of government. The Attorney-General, the Corrections minister, has been talking about how we need to make changes to those programs, and we will be up front and transparent about that. The Corrections Commissioner, Mark Payne, will be very much a part of that. Mr Hamburger was very complimentary of how the Corrections Commission was approaching things and he made comments about the fact there is no strategic direction or plan around any of these issues. Over the last four years of the CLP government not once did they apply thought to how to address these things. This is the body of ...

**Mr HIGGINS:** A point of order, Madam Speaker! Standing Order 110; I asked, 'How much will it cost to fix? Will you guarantee you will give us those costs? Where are you going to get the money from?'

**Mr GUNNER:** That is very much part of the work, that the Corrections minister has been out speaking about today that we are considering, when it comes to those programs and alternatives and the budgeting



for it—we are also having those conversations in respect to Don Dale and Owen Springs, and alternative sentencing. We will be very open and transparent with Territorians about what those decisions are and how we roll them out as we make them.

### **PET Scanner**

**Mr SIEVERS to MINISTER for HEALTH**

How is the government supporting the delivery of a PET scanner at the Royal Darwin Hospital?

### **ANSWER**

Madam Speaker, I thank the honourable member for his question. I was very pleased to visit the Royal Darwin Hospital and the Alan Walker Cancer Care Centre on Sunday and announce the commitment of \$5m this financial year towards cancer services in the Top End. Sadly, every one of us in this Chamber will have been touched by cancer. Having treatment options available in the Top End, Katherine and Central Australia is so important. When you are going through a time of crisis and tragedy, it is so special to be able to be close to home, and normality of life can continue.

Unlike those opposite me, in their four years of the CLP government, within the first month of becoming the Minister for Health I got on a plane, went to Canberra and met with the federal Health minister, Sussan Ley. She committed that the federal government will deliver \$15m towards the PET scanner. We have announced \$5m for chemo services, as well as the additional funding thanks to the federal government, which the CLP could not deliver in its four years. This is a key piece of infrastructure. People diagnosed with cancer require a lot of imagery to ascertain what is happening in their bodies. The PET scanner is a vital additional piece of equipment, and we are working hard at Royal Darwin Hospital to deliver that equipment as soon as possible.

The \$5m we announced on Sunday will be fast-tracked and will happen this financial year. The \$20m will provide for the purchase of the PET scanner and associated equipment, and we will be able to house the PET scanner at the Royal Darwin Hospital campus. We will talk with the health professionals about the best location. We will also expand the Alan Walker Cancer Care Centre because, sadly, there is a demand to increase the number of chemotherapy chairs.

The design briefs for the PET scanner and the expansion of the cancer care services are being established as part of the Royal Darwin Hospital master plan, another project I am committed, as Health minister, to delivering over the next four years—a master plan of our main hospital and all health services across the Territory.

Not only will this project deliver health benefits for Territorians, it is expected that this project will deliver 100 jobs whilst the additional services are being built. Not only is this a good announcement for those who, sadly, need to utilise those services, it also helps our local economy.

For those opposite, who are crying out about what we are doing and when we are getting on the plane to Canberra, it is pretty simple. Within a month of becoming the minister, the Chief Minister and I headed to Canberra. The Chief Minister had a long meeting with the Prime Minister, and I was able to meet with the Health minister and ascertain—apologies, it was in Sydney. I was able to get that commitment from the federal government.

We will deliver the PET scanner and associated services for the Northern Territory.

**Madam SPEAKER:** Minister, your time has expired.

### **Infrastructure Funding – Central Australia**

**Mrs LAMBLEY to CHIEF MINISTER referred to MINISTER for HEALTH**

On Monday your government slashed \$140m from the infrastructure budget, \$40m of which was taken out of Central Australia and only about \$10m out of the Darwin area. My question is about the storm rectification works for the Central Australian health services. We need to know exactly what will not be fixed, to the tune of \$11m, in Alice Springs as a result of you scrapping this funding, which is not on any forward estimates. You have no plan to put it in place over the next four years. Will our health services have leaky roofs for the next four years?

## ANSWER

Madam Speaker, I thank the Member for Araluen for the question. As has been previously advised, those works were identified as non-essential. You will not see leaky roofs; that has already been advised. That is a very creative interpretation of the figures.

If you look at things like the remote housing spend and other things on the forward estimates list—they are happening in Central Australia, but, conveniently, have not been included in the list the Member for Araluen has put together.

It is not accurate, Member for Araluen. The Health minister has the details of that \$11m, if you want more information.

**Ms FYLES (Health):** Madam Speaker, as I outlined to the House yesterday, \$32m worth of infrastructure projects are taking place within the Central Australian health services.

In regard to the storm rectification, there was a figure of \$11m. We have been advised that a significant amount of that was not essential work. There is \$3m worth of critical upgrades, which are taking place. Within that \$8m that is no longer needed—part of the fund's original estimates talked about moving staff and patients whilst work took place. That is not necessary; the essential work is able to take place without moving patients and staff. That provides a significant cost saving.

We are committed to making sure the facilities our hard-working doctors, nurses and medical staff in Central Australia work in are up to standard. That is the advice from infrastructure, along with Health. We are committed to the \$3m essential upgrades, and I have outlined the elements of the remaining \$8m. Some of it was considered non-essential and some was not required because there is no need to move patients and staff, which was included in the original estimate.

I can talk about the significant amounts of work taking place, which you would be well aware of as someone who has worked at that facility and as the local member. I am happy to provide you with a further update on the breakdown. I read it out in the House yesterday, but I am happy to provide any further briefings you require.

### Youth Detention Centre – Alice Springs

#### Ms AH KIT to MINISTER for TERRITORY FAMILIES

How will the new youth detention centre in Alice Springs support the government's plan to reform the youth justice system?

## ANSWER

Members of the House will be aware that the recent infrastructure investment announcement included \$7m towards a new youth detention centre in Alice Springs. This was not a pre-election commitment; it was a decision made since coming to government and seeing what is required in this space if we are to move forward.

The points made by the Chief Minister about the Hamburger report being very clear that there was no strategic plan in place around youth justice infrastructure in the Corrections department—it is clear to anyone who has visited those facilities they are not fit for purpose; there needs to be further thought put into the shape of the building and how services are delivered in it.

We have had to put things in place so we can look towards building a facility that is about rehabilitation and supporting young people who have made bad decisions to take responsibility for those decisions and re-enter our community as positive and important forces in our community.

That is what we are doing at the moment. Meeting with the sector has been a privilege. We have some very fine people on the ground doing very hard work. Whilst we want to divert children from the justice sector as much as possible, we need to be realistic that we may still need to use detention as part of the process. I do not think anyone wants to build a new youth detention centre, but that is being realistic about where we are at.

We need to keep talking to the sector about what the model of care within that facility will look like and make sure the building reflects that model of care. At the moment it is very difficult to provide rehabilitation services in a building that is not designed for them. We will learn the lessons of the Hamburger report, and I look forward to working with the sector on building something positive that leads to positive outcomes for the young people of Central Australia, and in the Top End with the Don Dale centre.

### **Public Holidays Legislation – Consultation and Cost Analysis**

#### **Mrs FINOCCHIARO to MINISTER for PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT**

The Chief Minister has informed the House that he rang businesses to inform them of his decision to grant two half-day public holidays. Businesses have told us and the community that they were not consulted. Minister, you have carriage of this bill; can you please advise the House on what analysis you carried out on the cost to business, the public service and non-government organisations? What feedback have you sought on that analysis?

#### **ANSWER**

Madam Speaker, I thank the Deputy Leader of the Opposition for her question. Let us talk about the legislation that will return to the House next week, so that everybody is clear. The purpose of the Public Holidays Amendment Bill is to enable part of a day to be specified or appointed as a public holiday; to provide that Christmas Eve and New Year's Eve, from 7 pm until midnight, will be public holidays; to amend the definition of a public holiday in the *Interpretation Act* to reflect these changes, an important change that has cut a lot of red tape for the Office of Public Employment; and that payments, notices and acts which are due on a public holiday are to be done on the following business day.

**Mrs FINOCCHIARO:** A point of order, Madam Speaker! I do not know if this is pre-empting ...

**Madam SPEAKER:** No. Sit down if you do not have a point of order number.

**Mr McCARTHY:** Madam Speaker, it is important to discuss the nature and relevance of this legislative change. As members of this House know, the Chief Minister led this information campaign by contacting a number of major stakeholders, which has been mentioned in the House. The Chief Minister talked to major stakeholders in the tourism and hospitality sectors.

**Mrs Finocchiaro** interjecting.

**Mr McCARTHY:** Of course business has concerns; however, we have made it very clear that this legislative change will not only clean up some red tape in the public sector, but will also deliver for Territory workers. That is what this is about and what the CLP members cannot abide.

**Members** interjecting.

**Mr McCARTHY:** I have carriage of this legislation and I am proud to be working as part of a Labor team that will defend workers, including police, fire officers ...

**Members** interjecting.

**Mr VOWLES:** A point of order, Mr Deputy Speaker! Standing Order 20: no interruption. I am trying to listen to my colleague; everyone is interested in what he has to say.

**Mr McCARTHY:** We are proud members of a government that will deliver. We have presented the metrics around this. There is a figure of \$146 that a kid in K-Mart will get as a bonus for working on one of these part public holidays. If K-Mart was willing to back me up, they would say their turnover will probably be hundreds of thousands of dollars an hour. So why not support this kid who supports the business on these part public holidays?

This is about mischief. It is not a debate you want to run about Territory workers and entitlements, and supporting Territorians who give up their time.

**Mrs FINOCCHIARO:** A point of order, Mr Deputy Speaker! Standing Order 110: relevance. My question was, 'What analysis have you carried out to the cost of business, the public service and ...

**Mrs Fyles:** Mr Deputy Speaker, it is not a point of order.

**Mrs FINOCCHIARO:** ... non-government organisations, and what feedback have you sought on that analysis?

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** The Member for Barkly has finished.

**Mrs FINOCCHIARO:** A point of order, Mr Deputy Speaker! I caution the Attorney-General on directing the Chair.

### **Howard East Aquifer – Effects of Sand Mining**

#### **Mr WOOD to MINISTER for PRIMARY INDUSTRY and RESOURCES**

Recently there have been a number of meetings in the rural area regarding water and the recharge of water into aquifers. It is known that the recharge of water into the Howard East Aquifer is affected by the removal of sand from the Howard Sand Plains. Recently you and your department held a meeting with the extractive mining industry. I understand you have been having discussions about where the extractive mining industry is heading. Did any of those discussions include where the industry will get its future sand from, and the effects of the removal of sand on the Howard East Aquifer? What programs does the government have in place in regard to mine rehabilitation?

#### **ANSWER**

Mr Deputy Speaker, I thank the Member for Nelson for that important question. It is a tricky question, and it is something we need to be very aware of. The Howard Sand Plains are about 30 kilometres south of Darwin. They are a major source of sand for the Territory, especially the Top End, including the material for our concrete and pavers. It is essential for developments.

I am not aware of any future programs there. There has been a determination and it is now a Site of Conservation Significance. We need to get it right around supporting the industry and protecting the environment, while allowing activity to continue that supports our local economy. In 2015 local extractive industries put about \$68m into the economy.

An endangered species listed under the Commonwealth law has been found in the Howard Sand Plains. Our government is working with extractive industry and other stakeholders to address the wider environmental conservation issues in the area. I have personally met with the extractive industries a number of times over the last month-and-a-half, with an executive and a CEO, to discuss the issues and a way forward. I have met with environmentalists, surrounding landholders and Power and Water Corporation around that.

It is important we get this right. I hear the concerns regarding extractive industries in that area. In regard to the aquifer, for people's information, the extractive industries, especially sand mining, go to a maximum depth of about five metres so it does not hit the aquifer. Any potential risks ...

**Mr Wood:** Sand is a sponge and you are taking the sponge away.

**Mr VOWLES:** Yes that is right, Member for Nelson. Concerns around regulations and any issues with the aquifers are raised and put into the mine management plans, and are subject to the approval process.

It is a conservation area now. It is a delicate situation to support industry and the environment. We continue to meet with the industry and run audits and site inspections to monitor the operations. If you would like any further information, Member for Nelson, I am happy to pass it on.

### **School Enrolments**

#### **Mr MILLS to MINISTER for TERRITORY FAMILIES**

How many young Territorians of school age are in the care of the minister in each of the following jurisdictions: Darwin; Palmerston; Palmerston rural; Katherine; Tennant Creek; Alice Springs; and Nhulunbuy? How many of them are enrolled in local schools in each jurisdiction. I accept that should be taken on notice; it would be difficult to answer on the spot.

Are there children of school age in the care of the minister who are not enrolled in schools, and if so, why?

**ANSWER**

First of all, a technicality—in the care of the CEO, under the changes to legislation made by the CLP. However, as minister responsible for the department I am more than happy to take that question on notice and come back with some detail.

All the children under the care of the CEO are enrolled in school, including—I made an error when I spoke before. Both of the children are enrolled in school. I received that information. One is not involved with Territory Families at this stage. Only two of the three children you are interested are under the care of, or known to, Territory Families—the incident this week.

I am more than happy to give you that detail. I will get back to you as soon as I can.

**School Infrastructure Investment**

**Ms UIBO to MINISTER for EDUCATION**

How will this government's investment in school infrastructure support the learning environment of children across the Territory.

**ANSWER**

Mr Deputy Speaker, I thank the member for her question. As someone who has worked in schools for a long time I am very aware of the benefits of having school facilities and infrastructure that meets the learning needs of students. Learning spaces that are safe and engaging and that support diverse teaching strategies are so important.

The school infrastructure programs of this government will not only benefit school communities, they will also provide opportunities for local jobs through a continuous stream of projects across the Northern Territory, including our regional and remote communities.

As we are all well aware—I am sure you are all being lobbied by your school communities—we will invest \$300 000 into each school for minor new works and repairs and maintenance. This infrastructure program will look at exploring options to group projects in regional locations to provide opportunities.

**Mrs Finocchiaro:** When are the details coming out? Which schools; which years?

**Ms LAWLER:** You are asking for details, Member for Spillett? Schools have the details; I suggest you talk to your principals. We have asked schools to notify us and put out expressions of interest, and to let us know the works they want to do. We will clump those, especially those in remote areas, so we can get the painters or tilers to be in those locations. It is under way and the schools are very excited, even if the CLP is not.

There is \$5m for refurbishing and upgrading homeland schools in some of the Territory's most remote locations. The Member for Nhulunbuy and I met and discussed how useful it will be for the Laynhapuy homelands to have that money to upgrade their schools. There is \$6.5m—the Member for Barkly knows about this—for the integrated early childhood centre in Tennant Creek. I look forward to the opportunity to see that completed. That will happen in the second half of 2017.

We are also providing \$5m to fund solar power infrastructure for schools across the NT, a visionary project which will be of benefit to schools in the long term.

This government will also invest \$39m over five years for infrastructure located at Bullocky Point. This will support the delivery of the science, technology, engineering, arts and mathematics program, including international students. We need to be clear that there are about 2000 at the Bullocky Point site, between Darwin High and Middle Schools, as well as the distance learning facility. Many Territory students conglomered at Bullocky Point, so we are pleased to invest \$39m there.

We will also continue some of the projects the previous government had under way, such as the Acacia Hill School—\$6.8m. We look forward to rolling out education infrastructure across the Territory, supporting jobs in the Territory.

### **Alice Springs Women's Shelter**

#### **Mrs WORDEN to MINISTER for TERRITORY FAMILIES**

Can you please outline how this government's investment in the Alice Springs Women's Shelter will benefit the broader community of Alice Springs.

#### **ANSWER**

Mr Deputy Speaker, it is a pleasure to talk about a project so close to my heart. This is a really important project, and it has been talked about and needed for a very long time. It was on the Member for Araluen's wish list, and I look forward to standing at the opening with you, Member for Araluen; we will all be there, because this is a long-term service.

The other important thing to recognise is that this will be happening on the year of the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the service in Alice Springs, making it one of the oldest domestic violence services run by women in Australia. It shows the resilience and forward thinking of Central Australians, particularly Central Australian women. It is a service we should all be proud of.

The reality of the building at the moment is that the service is terribly overcrowded. It is set up in a way where the women and children have to sometimes share the bathroom with others. There are rooms with five beds in them, and sometimes those rooms have three different families in them, all sharing one toilet and shower. It is unacceptable in 2016. I am very proud to be working with this government to not only provide a very important infrastructure program that will provide real jobs in Alice Springs, but intertwine it with smart social policy by investing in the women and children of Alice Springs to have more positive outcomes from access to that service.

The reality is that the way the service runs at the moment it is doing homicide prevention but it is not providing women with opportunities to sit down, review what is going on in their lives and make a plan for the safety of themselves and their children.

Half of the clients who go through that service are children. Sometimes those children have had to travel a very long distance to the facility. It is worth noting that the Member for Namatjira, the Deputy Speaker, and the Member for Stuart's clients often have to travel many days to get to this service. It is an important service for the whole of Central Australia. Di Gippy, the CEO, is busily drawing up plans and consulting with the women who use the service, because we will consult with the women who use the service about how this building looks. I really look forward to the day it is opened.

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

**Mrs FINOCCHIARO:** A point of order, Mr Deputy Speaker! Standing Order 106; Question Time goes for an hour. We have been cut short—two Dixers in a row.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Standing Order 106 says approximately one hour. There is no point of order.

#### **CLARIFICATION OF ANSWER Larrakia Nation**

**Mr GUNNER (Chief Minister):** Mr Deputy Speaker, I seek to clarify an answer I gave about Larrakia Nation Aboriginal Corporation yesterday to the Member for Blain. I was incorrectly advised that an extension of the special administration had occurred. We strongly support an extension of the special administration, but it requires the support of the Australian Government, which has not been given yet.