

CONTENTS

VISITORS	1418
Nightcliff Primary School	1418
MESSAGES FROM ADMINISTRATOR.....	1418
Messages No 4 and 5.....	1418
REORDER OF BUSINESS	1418
PAPER TABLED	1418
Select Committee on Opening Parliament to the People: Report on Opening Parliament to the People with a Summary of Recommendations and Associated Minutes of Proceedings.....	1418
MOTION.....	1420
Note Statement – Education in the Northern Territory	1420
VISITORS	1429
Nightcliff Primary School	1429
SPEAKER'S STATEMENT	1429
Media Coverage of Budget.....	1429
VISITORS	1429
Chris Burns and Kon Vatskalis	1429
APPROPRIATION (2017–2018) BILL.....	1429
(Serial 20)	1429
APPROPRIATION 2017–2018 BILL	1439
(Serial 20)	1439
PAPERS TABLED.....	1469
Travel Reports – Members for Fong Lim and Arnhem	1469
CONSIDERATION OF COMMITTEE REPORTS, ATTORNEY-GENERAL'S REPORTS AND GOVERNMENT RESPONSES	1469
ADJOURNMENT	1469

Madam Speaker Purick took the Chair at 10 am.

VISITORS
Nightcliff Primary School

Madam SPEAKER: Honourable members, I advise of the presence in the galleries of Year 4 students from Nightcliff Primary School, accompanied by their teachers, Krissy Magee and Jill Patterson. On behalf of all honourable members, welcome to Parliament House. I hope you enjoy your time here.

Members: Hear, hear!

MESSAGES FROM ADMINISTRATOR
Messages No 4 and 5

Madam SPEAKER: Honourable members, I have received Message No 4 from His Honour the Administrator, notifying assent to the bills passed at the March sittings. The message is dated 27 April 2017.

I have also received Message No 5 from His Honour the Administrator, recommending to the Legislative Assembly a bill for an act that authorises an amount to be paid from the Central Holding Authority for the purpose of the agencies specified in the bill for the year ending 30 June 2018. The message is dated 27 April 2017.

REORDER OF BUSINESS

Ms FYLES (Leader of Government Business): Madam Speaker, I want to say good morning to the fabulous Nightcliff Primary School students. It is wonderful to see them all.

Pursuant to Standing Order 59, I move that the routine of business this day proceed with the Business of the Assembly, followed by Government Business, interrupted at 11 am for the Treasurer's presentation of the Appropriation Bill in accordance with the provisions of Standing Orders 170 and 171.

Resumption at 2.30 pm commencing with Notices, Petitions, Responses to Petitions, Question Time, and then the normal routine of business outlined in Standing Order 60 to allow for the government members to speak on the Appropriation Bill and other bills during government business.

I further move that tomorrow, 3 May, the Leader of the Opposition's budget reply commence at 10 am, taking precedence over other business.

Motion agreed to.

PAPER TABLED
Select Committee on Opening Parliament to the People: Report on Opening Parliament to the People with a Summary of Recommendations and Associated Minutes of Proceedings

Mr COLLINS (Fong Lim): Madam Speaker, I table the Select Committee on Opening Parliament to the People's report entitled, perhaps not surprisingly, *Report on Opening Parliament to the People*, together with a summary of recommendations and associated minutes of proceedings.

The Select Committee on Opening Parliament to the People was established as one of the first orders of business of the 13th Assembly as the fulfilment of a key election promise of the new Gunner-led government to restore integrity to the process of government.

The committee was charged with looking at how the parliament could work better and be more open, more transparent and more accountable to the people of the Northern Territory. This was considered a fundamental failing of the previous government.

In the words of the Leader of Government Business in moving the establishment of the committee:

The select committee will be asked to speak directly with experts to hear best-practice parliamentary processes. They will consider all the information from these experts and report back to the Assembly so we end up with the best-possible parliamentary reform model.

I congratulate every member of the select committee for the hard work and thoughtful consideration each has applied to our deliberations and to their individual roles. Thank you.

The select committee consists of seven members with a total of around 33 years experience in this Assembly. The bulk of those years have been accrued by the Member for Nelson. I make special mention of the member and thank him for his well-regarded input. The committee also had the benefit of the knowledge and experience of the Leader of the Opposition and the Member for Araluen. Thank you both for your guidance and for sharing your experience.

What we on the government side lacked in experience, we compensated for with enthusiasm, interest and a real desire to achieve meaningful reform. For this I thank the Members for Sanderson, Karama, Namatjira and Stuart.

I stand here today as the proud chair of the select committee to confidently state my belief the committee has acquitted the task assigned to it by the Assembly in an exemplary manner. The result of all this hard work, undertaken by the committee members and support staff, is the report and the 30 recommendations it contains, which will deliver a more open and transparent parliament by increasing opportunity for public participation.

The greatest change proposed by the committee is to the present standing committee structure, in combination with a proposal to refer all non-urgent bills to those committees for public consultation prior to the bill passing through the Assembly and becoming law.

The Leader of Government Business said that everyone deserves to be listened to. We need to hear those wide-reaching stories before decisions are made. This proposal, if adopted, will go a long way towards achieving that goal. It will provide every Territorian the opportunity to participate by making submissions and speaking directly to the committee. Stakeholders' views will be placed on the public record and will inform the Assembly consideration of whether to make the proposed law. This will result in better laws, as members will have a greater appreciation of community views when amending and passing bills.

As detailed in the committee's green paper, the report proposes to establish two portfolio scrutiny committees, which will be responsible for monitoring government performance under each ministerial portfolio. In addition to examining bills it is recommended the new portfolio committees will be able to conduct inquiries into issues of public concern and perform a range of other scrutiny functions, such as alerting the Assembly to the impact that bills may have on human rights and fundamental legal principles.

This initiative will greatly increase the opportunities for Territorians to be active participants in the Assembly's deliberations in a range of areas.

Petitions are another mechanism that have opened parliaments to the people across centuries. Petitions allow people to raise their concerns directly with the Assembly. The committee has recommended that petitions with at least 1000 signatures be debated by the Assembly. This means that petitions demonstrating a degree of popular support among residents of the Territory will be debated.

The committee gave lengthy consideration to the issue of petitions, how many signatures, how much Assembly time should be allocated and at which point the debate will be most productive. The number of 1000 signatures was settled on as a reasonable expression of an issue of importance to a significant number of Territorians.

At present the standing orders do not require signatories to a petition to be residents of the Territory. The report recommends amending the standing orders to ensure that if Assembly time is to be taken up debating issues, they will be issues of importance to Territorians. I acknowledge the position of some that petitioners should be registered voters on the electoral roll.

On balance the committee felt this excluded far too many Territorians: those directly affected on a day-to-day basis by the work carried out in this place; those who do not have the opportunity to express themselves in the same way as enrolled voters at election time; those who are otherwise productive, engaged and highly relevant members of our community; Territorians such as children under the age of 18; and, importantly, immigrants and refugees, who are a vibrant and essential part of the economic fabric of the Territory's community. Many of these people are waiting for their permanent residency and citizenship to come through. These are people who, as a result of recent announcements by the Commonwealth Government, will now be waiting in excess of four years.

The committee considered that to better follow up on concerns raised by people through petitions there should be an opportunity to debate government responses where required and has therefore recommended a procedure to allow debate on any government response to a petition at the request of four members. In both instances, the petitions with 1000 signatures, or where a debate is required on a government response, the debate will be limited to 16 minutes total; two speakers for five minutes and two speakers for three minutes.

The committee has recommended that the Assembly amend its procedure to acknowledge, at the beginning of each meeting day, not only the traditional owners of the land on which we meet, but also the traditional owners of the lands we each represent.

The committee has also identified a number of issues for further consideration; these include areas such as the provision of adequate library and financial analysis services to enable members to better perform their duties, and assessing the extent to which the Assembly complies with international benchmarks for democratic legislatures so we can continue to improve the standard of governance in the Northern Territory. The committee respects the fact that the government has to weigh up the budgetary impacts and priorities, which are a particular focus on a day as significant as today.

The committee's recommendations have drawn on a range of earlier discussion papers, the experience of other parliaments and the ideas and suggestions of Territorians who made submissions and spoke to the committee. All submissions and witnesses were broadly supportive of the proposed changes outlined in the committee's green paper. The committee also sought comment from the Leader of Government Business on its draft recommendations to give the committee the opportunity to address any concerns the government might have before reporting to the Assembly.

On behalf of the committee, I thank all those who made submissions to or appeared before the committee. Their feedback has been invaluable and has resulted in a number of changes and improvements to the committee's proposals.

I also thank members of the committee for their commitment to championing a more open, transparent and responsive Assembly for all Territorians. My thanks also go to the First Clerk Assistant, Russell Keith, and to Annie McCall, Julia Knight, Elise Dyer and Kim Cowcher for the excellent support they have each provided the committee throughout the process. These things simply would not work without them.

Madam Speaker, I move that the report be noted.

Debate adjourned.

MOTION

Note Statement – Education in the Northern Territory

Continued from 14 March 2017.

Ms AH KIT (Karama): Madam Speaker, I wish to continue my reply to the education statement from the March 2017 sittings.

I was fortunate to attend the Malak Primary School AGM in March this year, where I joined a number of dedicated staff members and caring parents who want to help maximise educational outcomes for not only their children, but for all students at the school.

Principal Lorraine Evans and her team continue to look at ways in which students can be supported, and I am excited that the school will receive \$26 700 to help deliver for Malak Primary School students. This new funding has increased the school's resourcing capacity and will contribute to the delivery of the following three objectives: to employ a dedicated senior teacher who will focus on building student success across the school; to provide flexible programs for identified students at risk; and to allow additional administration support to provide and manage literacy and numeracy resources for all teachers.

All three objectives will provide extra benefits to students, and I look forward to witnessing the positive impacts on students and their families.

Manunda Terrace Primary School is located on Manunda Terrace in Karama. The school caters for the educational needs of approximately 186 students under the guidance and leadership of Lisa Hirschhausen, the principal. In February I was fortunate to attend the school's AGM and hear about the great work the

school staff and school council have undertaken in the previous year. All parties work extremely hard for the benefit of students, and I congratulate them all for their efforts.

The school is very proactive in seeking partnerships to benefit all students, and I acknowledge the Smith Family for their ongoing support of Manunda Terrace Primary School. I also thank Lisa, the principal, for our partnership which enables the school's drumming group, named Manunda Thunda, to provide entertainment at my free monthly community barbecues.

More than half the student population identifies as Indigenous, and more than one-third of students speak a language other than English. I am very excited to see that Manunda Terrace Primary School will receive \$65 400 out of our government's \$24m investment in schools. I look forward to learning how the school will use the additional funding to support students.

I am fortunate to attend assemblies on a regular basis at Karama Primary School, Malak Primary School and Manunda Terrace Primary School. These assemblies always bring a smile to my face and I am grateful to witness the public acknowledgment of positive student behaviour and achievement. There are many children who will benefit from our commitment to provide \$8m each year for early intervention and to help address challenging behaviour in the classroom. It will also allow us to support students with additional needs. Schools do what they can to support all students, but they can always do more if they receive more specialist support. This additional \$8m in funding will benefit students, staff and families. I welcome it wholeheartedly.

The Minister for Education stated:

Funding to schools ensures every child is supported to reach their full potential.

This statement really hits home with me. When a child attends school they are looked after and safe. They are supported and encouraged to reach their full potential.

When I worked and volunteered in suicide prevention I learned more about the importance of engaging with young Territorians than I did in any other position. I understood that every young Territorian needs to be engaged in education, work or a meaningful activity, such as volunteering. I also learned that our schools provide a fantastic avenue to attract and keep an engaged audience.

In order for people to feel empowered they need three supports in their life. Number one is a sense of purpose; number two is a sense of connectedness; and number three is a sense of identity. Schools provide the first two supports, which automatically help to lower the risk for young Territorians.

I congratulate all schools in my electorate for continuing to deliver for students and their families, especially with the challenges they experienced when the previous government slashed more than \$100m from the education budget.

I am proud to be part of the Michael Gunner Labor government, which values education. I look forward to witnessing the benefits our investment in education will have on schools, students and families in the Karama electorate.

I commend the Minister for Education for bringing her statement before the House.

Mrs WORDEN (Sanderson): Madam Speaker, I am happy to stand today and support the minister's statement and vision for education in the Territory. I thank her for bringing this important statement to the House.

We in the Labor government are very happy to talk all day and night about education. We know it is the most important thing a government can deliver. Through education we develop skills that prepare children for everything life will throw at them.

As we heard the minister eloquently tell us last sittings, education is the key to opening a lifetime of opportunity. It can allow kids to reach for the stars and seize opportunities that they either seek out or that come their way. It is, in fact, a life enabler. More importantly, education has the power to iron out life's inequalities and take individuals and families out of poverty and into prosperity. There are many examples of these families in our broad migrant and refugee families across the Territory, who choose to call this place home and make the most of their education to unlock the opportunities they have spent a lifetime dreaming of in their country of origin.

I was pleased to hear the brave admissions last sittings by my colleague the Member for Stuart in relation to how his lack of formal education has impacted on his life, causing him many challenges. Whilst it is fantastic to see this lack of formal education has not held him back in life, it is important to acknowledge the critical issues it has caused him throughout his life.

Similarly, my husband struggled in a strict schooling environment, which would not surprise many people who know him. As a result of failing to finish Year 10 he has found it very difficult to move from a tradie role, working for others, to running his own business and navigating his way through the business world, where there is a significant emphasis on things like information technology and paperwork.

Over the years he has struggled to read with our children, but he has inspired us all with his desire to read the sporting pages of the *NT News*—and then embracing technology and providing quotes and submitting OHS site-specific paperwork to meet the requirements of the work safety group. He has inspired us all and continues to learn into his forties, but it has sometimes been a cruel and difficult journey that this government's investment into education seeks to avoid for as many Territorians as possible.

Our education system is in good hands with the minister's wealth of experience and broad knowledge base. I am very fortunate that one of my children attended a school several years ago when the minister was the principal. It was a strong school under her leadership; children and parents knew the academic direction the school was taking. Her record stands for itself. The Territory education system is in excellent hands.

Since 1995 all my children have attended and continued to attend Territory schools. Through their schooling I have had some wonderful opportunities in this job to engage with a broader range of local school staff, councils, broader communities and school boards. I have seen some great community-led initiatives, such as the establishment of school market gardens, through to some great academic initiatives, such as the STEM program, which is currently being provided by Casuarina Senior College, and the connection of childcare right through to primary school.

Our education sector in the Territory is dynamic and agile, always looking to respond to ensure it stays contemporary and provides our kids with the best pathway to employment and, by consequence, provide them healthy and engaged futures.

I have spoken a number of times about my experience on school councils. I have been on the Wanguri and Jingili Primary School councils. I think my time there connected me well to our education system and parents. It has certainly contributed to me gaining the skills to be in the House today. I am now engaged with my youngest child's school, much to her disgust, as a parent representative on the board. I am also engaging with the local school councils in my electorate. I look forward to working with all the parents who support the good work of our school leaders and teachers.

On the Wanguri school council I was lucky enough to be a parent representative under the council chair. Many of us are familiar with John Bailey, a former member of this House and a fierce community advocate. John showed us novices how a strong council was run and how it was accountable and supported the work and objectives of the school. I think the Member for Wanguri would agree that the school continues to be a strong one, and that demonstrates excellence in school governance and community engagement. Some years later I took the skills to the Jingili school council and enjoyed a number of wonderful years primarily supporting the work of their principal, Carin Symonds, who continues to lead that school today.

Whilst on this council, due to changes in national legislation, we became responsible for the childcare, which was at the time being successfully run as a for-profit organisation but lacked a number of facets that were required by the new national legislative requirements, simple things like sink numbers for washing up and more complex matters such as reduced child-worker ratios and qualified early childhood teacher numbers. I was not sure at the time that such things should be the responsibility of a school council, which was predominantly full of well-meaning parents, but, oh boy, did we start to get our act together and focus on getting the standards met. At the same time we were ensuring our budgets were adjusted and tailored to ensure childcare would continue to provide a strong early engagement program for local children. I believe that continues with the Jingili school council.

Jingili Primary is a strong community-supported school in the heart of our northern suburbs, with a focus on early childhood engagement. My colleague, the Member for Johnston, would agree with that.

I will now turn my attention to the four schools of the 189 the minister spoke about in her statement. Those in my electorate of Sanderson are Anula Primary School, Wulagi Primary, Wagaman Primary and the magnificent Sanderson Middle School.

All three primary schools were built in the 1970s, with Wagaman Primary School being built pre-cyclone in approximately 1972 and then rebuilt, with students being transported daily to Tiwi during the rebuild period. Anula and Wulagi Primary Schools were commissioned by the Darwin Reconstruction Commission following Tracy, and Sanderson Middle School, which was Sanderson High School before the introduction of the middle schooling system, is a relatively new school, being built in 2008 as part of our northern suburbs expansion.

Apart from Sanderson Middle School we have some ageing education infrastructure which will require attention in future budgets to ensure it can support contemporary learning.

I acknowledge the infrastructure funding given to all three primary schools in my electorate by the former government. It was a good time for them to get major upgrades, so well done to the former government for recognising that. The schools did not put that money to waste. They have all undertaken, in partnership with their school councils, some exciting projects, and this government is ensuring they are being delivered properly.

Wagaman is just about to receive upgrades to its assembly areas with an overdue \$1m, which is exciting. Over the last year, with the close guidance of a very capable school council, Anula has undertaken a massive \$1.3m restructure of the car park and drop-off areas, which is known as safe access works. If you drive past the school you will be pleasantly surprised at the reconfiguration of the drop-off zone and how it has added to student safety.

I want to put on the record big congratulations to Frank Brown from Anula primary, who has commenced his second year as school council chair. He is a fierce advocate for sustainable projects within the school. I look forward to continuing to work with him and the new council during the school year.

Wulagi has undertaken transformational infrastructure work to reorientate the front entry to the school. They have created a welcoming space. This was stage one of an upgrade program worth about \$3m. I look forward to seeing the completion of all these projects over the coming months and years.

It is important that the need for infrastructure spending does not outweigh the requirements for properly resourcing our schools and teachers. I believe that is what happened under the previous government. Whilst it provided dollars for much-needed infrastructure, this was at the backdrop of drastic cuts to the funding for teacher and support staff jobs and classroom resources. There were \$114m of cruel cuts that reduced our schools' capacity to provide a quality education for students. It is astounding to think that over four short years 500 full-time equivalent jobs were lost. It is unfathomable that the previous government members could enter this Chamber and talk about our economy when they took such appalling actions to reduce jobs in our education workforce.

Our government is addressing that short-sighted and damaging policy approach by investing in our schools so they can meet the needs of our students. Our \$124m funding boost to education over the next four years is nothing to sneeze at. It is a significant investment in our future, our future leaders and our workforce. This funding is backed up with an evidence-based and practical approach to ensure we get best return for this investment, targeting areas of most need that have been proven to get the best outcomes for students.

All the schools in my electorate have expressed significant gratitude towards our investment decisions as they relate to resourcing in their schools, especially the \$20m that has already been allocated to schools in the budget. Schools will decide how they will use additional funding. We know schools are best placed to make local decisions that will achieve the best outcomes for our kids.

The schools in my electorate have benefited from this government's \$100 000 increase in the base funding rate to students and increases to funding for preschool and transition students—I may have gotten that wrong, so I will need to check it.

As part of this year's \$20m investment, Anula primary received more than \$12 000; Wagaman primary received over \$30 000 to expand targeted support for students through focused professional support to staff and students; and Wulagi has received more than \$60 000 to enhance student engagement and wellbeing, and to manage extreme behaviours, which we all know can have an impact in the classroom on

the kids who do not have those issues. They have targeted programs and additional hours for classroom support.

Sanderson Middle School has been recognised for its diverse student cohort. It is an important school that is one of the most multicultural in the Territory. It has received over \$400 000 in funding that would not have been generated under the CLP's funding regime. The school principal, Liz Veel, is very appreciative of this support and excited by the certainty of funding being offered by the Gunner government.

I will touch on funding for Namarluk and Henbury, as some local families from my electorate have children attending those important specialty schools. I have been providing them support as their local member. Just over a month ago I was happy to assist them with a Bunnings sausage sizzle and fundraiser through donations of bread and time. I visited them for their Harmony Day celebrations recently. They are fantastic schools.

Both Henbury and Namarluk have been allocated additional funding. This funding will provide both schools more flexibility to support the special needs of their students and give them every opportunity to reach their potential. It would be great if everybody could get behind Namarluk's latest fundraiser to put up what they are taking to the sky. They have a great initiative where they are getting private funding to build a new playground that will expand opportunities and make it more inclusive for all the kids.

I look forward to the review of the global school budgets. This will identify where further improvements can be made to the way funding is distributed among schools. Our education system needs to remain agile and maintain best practice in all areas, not just teaching. The additional funding does not include the extra \$300 000 that schools can access as part of the Building Better Schools initiative over the next four years to address minor new works or repairs and maintenance issues. This initiative has generated discussion around the school council table as it prioritises the school's needs and wants, and it can now plan ahead, which is exciting.

Some of the schools in my electorate have already received acknowledgment that they will receive funding this coming year, but others are content to take more time and work out the projects they want the most and that serve them better in the long term.

The \$5m rooftop solar system program is also generating much discussion among school councils. They are looking at ways to reduce their operational costs. I look forward to several of my schools accessing that program in the next few years to reduce their environmental footprint.

I will highlight a couple things happening in schools in the Sanderson electorate that I believe set them apart. The Wulagi school's early years program is particularly impressive. The school has chosen to focus on the early years and early investment, which is very much in line with this government's agenda for Families as First Teachers and the early engagement of new parents. It is a real joy to walk through that school and watch the skills translating between old parents and new parents, and that is what it is all about, supporting them in an important journey that starts before the birth of their child.

Wulagi is ahead in this area by bringing new parents and their young children into the heart of the school very early and allowing new and experienced mothers to come together in their playgroup so they are supported through the life cycle of their children's schooling. This also allows new parents to see and learn early supportive parenting techniques in a safe and non-judgemental environment—a community-led parenting skills exchange, if you like.

This early work is an investment that increases the likelihood that when a child enters Wulagi Primary School as a transition student they are ready from day one, year one. It is a very smart investment.

Wagaman Primary School has always been a trailblazer. In 2006 it trialled the age for the early entry program, in which children who turned four before 30 June could start preschool that year. This is a program we now all take for granted, but Wagaman was brave enough at the time to take up the challenge. Interestingly, this happened under Principal Michele Cody, who still holds that important position today, although I now know from recent discussions at a barbecue at Bunnings that she is planning towards a well-deserved retirement. She will be very hard to replace.

Wagaman also has a very active and engaged playgroup, which experiences a high level of enrolment each year, bringing parents of young children into the school environment as soon as possible. As the minister found out a week or so ago, Wagaman has a sister school program with Maubara school in Timor-Leste, which actively engages students in a cultural exchange of knowledge, teaches students about one of

our close neighbours and encourages them to undertake fundraising activities to address the hardships experienced by students in Timor-Leste in simply accessing education. It is a great program that teaches relativity and equality to students from a young age. I look forward to visiting them when they next connect over Skype.

I am very pleased to hear from the minister that Wagaman has achieved an increased result in reading and numeracy from students who progressed from Year 3 to Year 5. I am not surprised by that. It is something to be celebrated, and it was in the *NT News*. Both Wagaman and Wulagi have active breakfast programs, which is nothing new. They are used to ensure students can stay focused all day. They are also used as a family engagement activity to bring the community together so families can feel like part of their children's education and be supported as parents.

Anula Primary School has been engaged in a robotics encoding program for some time. It recently outlined to its incoming school council the pathways for student learning across that area. The school has invested significantly in iPads and new technology to support those programs within the school's curriculum. Both these areas will provide students with skills that will keep them in step with the world and how it is changing. It will provide them with skills to make them competitive in the jobs market or enable further study to access a massive range of IT-based jobs, which are beginning to dominate our jobs market.

Anula Primary School is also one of the few schools in the Territory that offers an intensive English unit. There are more than 23 different languages spoken by the IEU students, who come from 25 countries. All teachers but one in the school are either bilingual or multilingual. The school is attracting students and teachers for whom English is a second language, each from across the Darwin area, and provides a positive learning environment for kids from a rich diversity of multicultural backgrounds.

Last, but by no means least, is Sanderson Middle School. Since coming to this job eight months ago I have continually been pleasantly surprised by this school. It has possibly the most multicultural cohort of students in the Territory. It is a melting pot of cultural difference, and while it might be tempting to focus on the difference, Principal Liz Veel actively focuses on what unites the students. There is no tolerance for bigotry, only inclusion and valuing difference. The rules apply to everyone, yet all students are celebrated as individuals.

Sanderson is an extraordinary school that has been through many ups and downs, but I believe it is now at its best. Liz has a tough but fair approach; the students know where they stand and the staff have respect for her leadership—real proof that investment in our school leaders, which we heard the minister talk about in her statement, is worth every cent.

I commend the school on its Clontarf program and the Neighbourhood Activity Centre. These two programs are, in different ways, attempting to engage students who might otherwise have been disengaged from our education system. Both programs focus on keeping kids active so they can choose a better pathway in life.

Our schools are so much more than places where maths and English are taught; they teach life lessons of tolerance and fairness, and inclusion and creativity. As the minister rightly said, a good education from the very early years has the potential to change the lives of kids and their parents.

Mr KIRBY: A point of order, Madam Speaker! I request an extension of time for the member, pursuant to Standing Order 43.

Motion agreed to.

Mrs WORDEN: It needs to be flexible responsive, consistent, safe and equitable.

It has been brought to my attention that a former teacher at Wagaman Primary School was also the youngest member of this Legislative Assembly. I am talking about Elizabeth Andrew, the Member for Sanderson in 1974, at the ripe old age of 26—a nice little fact I wanted to share with you all today. I thank the Parliamentary Library Service for providing that.

That creates a nice segue into my next point. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander history and culture is important in our schools and has a strong place in our learning. It gives us a true context in regard to where we have come from and what opportunities lie ahead. I was pleased to launch the Indigenous language and culture plan at Sanderson Middle School last week—alongside the Minister for Education—which is setting a footprint and gives the opportunity to other schools to follow the good work occurring there. It is an important cross-curriculum priority across all stages of schooling. This knowledge and understanding will

enrich all young people's ability to participate positively in the ongoing development of Australia through a deepening knowledge and connection with the world's oldest continuous living culture. It is also a key way to foster respect and understanding in a country that continues to grapple with such issues as constitutional recognition and treaty. I look forward to working with the minister in the time we have in this Assembly on this important aspect of our education system.

I thank the minister again for bringing this statement to the House. It forces us all to take stock and look at the great work of our teachers in taking care of the educational needs of our students and our next generation. There can be no more important job.

I commend the statement to the House.

Mr KIRBY (Port Darwin): Madam Speaker, I support the education statement. This government was elected on a pillar of putting kids first, and education is paramount to that, giving kids the best chance in life.

We made clear and unmistakable commitments to investing in children through schools and education. We have backed that up with \$124m in additional funding over the next four years, as well as \$100m-plus of programs for school infrastructure investment.

I was shocked, as most people were, at the statistic that 64 of the most 100 disadvantaged schools nationally are within the Northern Territory. We need to invest heavily and put a lot of work into turning those figures around. To have funding removed from those schools over the previous few years must have been devastating, especially to people who are trying to give our children the best education and therefore the best start to life possible.

I had the benefits of publicly-funded schooling, not in the Northern Territory but country South Australia. We had the benefits of an agricultural education centre to make sure people understood the importance of paddocks, crops, crop rotations, animals, incubators, vegie patches and a host of machinery. It was a fantastic space to work in. The entire school was spread over many acres. It had numerous sporting ovals and cricket nets, and there were great woodworking and metalworking facilities. It was a pleasure to grow up and be schooled there. When I see some of the spaces Territory schools are confined to I realise how lucky I was to be afforded that education.

As a young adult working my way through two apprenticeships, the long-term benefits of knowing the principles of grammar, understanding maths principles and being able to comprehend English principles has been a gift to me and thousands of other people.

The high-end training that this government is ensuring for principals and senior teachers will make them well-equipped to run schools as they need to, with the students at the forefront of decision-making, and not by reducing funding.

For students and teachers there will be leadership programs with high achievers' programs to ensure everyone in the Territory is given the best opportunity to get to the highest level possible. With alternative education programs that have already been mentioned, young people with additional needs will be given the best chance of achieving their full potential and having maximum opportunities through life.

With the support of this government, schools will have the ability to implement a contemporary curriculum, including a focus on social and emotional learning. I am fortunate to have the St Mary's Catholic Primary School and the Larrakeyah Primary School in the electorate of Port Darwin. They are a couple of the best learning institutions in the Territory. I take my hat off to the hard-working teachers and staff there. They both have outstanding teachers and boards who all live, eat and breathe the values that their schools aspire to.

This government has been in the spotlight from the very start among some heavy negotiations with Kormilda College to make sure it was able to stay afloat, within weeks of the election last year. Everybody quickly saw our commitment to education. I commend the Chief Minister and the Education minister for their approach to working through some of those tough decisions very early in their tenures.

I am immensely proud and have enjoyed visiting these schools a number of times, and I have been invited to the Northern Territory School of Distance Education at Bullocky Point. That facility is very much state-of-the-art. It was a pleasure to be given a tour through there to see some of the classes being run. It was amazing to see the IT facilities of the day and age we are in, and how quickly and easily students are able

to pick up on lessons. They can see over the teacher's shoulder with cameras to see what is happening on the pages in front of them and have their questions answered in real time. It was a treasure to go through there. For those students to be based in their communities, sometimes many hundreds of kilometres away from Darwin, and have access to screens where they can interact with their teachers is of huge benefit to their learning. The students and staff are rightfully very proud of those facilities.

There is much work to be done. It was a pleasure to attend the Ntaria School at Hermannsburg a few weeks ago with the Education minister and a number of my colleagues. The first thing that struck me was the space that the school was set out across and the effort that has gone into constructing fences around it to allow the children to play without interruption. It was interesting to find out that one of the key drivers behind that fence and the infrastructure that supports it was to make sure dogs did not come through at lunchtime and pinch lunches off the schools kids as they were sitting and eating. Necessity is the mother of invention.

The whole school was proud of the amenities. The metal workshop was something a lot of schools in the Top End would be proud of. They were being used to make the steel ovens which are used at school camps. There were leather and saddle-making facilities. Learning about the Anzac ride the students proudly do every year was amazing.

There is a local elder who helps these students to catch their own brumbies. He teaches them how to break the horses in. They take a number of students on the Anzac ride, which lasts a number of days each year. It is fantastic to see a blending of mature and new-age teaching whilst including some of their ancestral teachings as well. To see this type of education pathway in remote communities was a heartening experience. It gives me a great deal of faith in our education system in the Northern Territory.

Another issue I found interesting was how they tried to get local teachers involved in the recruitment of new teachers. The principal explained this was necessary for a number of reasons. They were best placed to know if an applicant had the capacity to last in the community, which is one of the significant challenges they would face over the few years of staying in a remote location and school. They knew best if the applicants would fit in with the community and school life.

The high priority given to making sure every student understands the necessity to attend school every day was clearly reinforced. It is a priority in the bush schools. In my local electorate, to be able to attend board meetings and gain a better understanding of how the school is tracking has been an enlightening experience. I have been fortunate enough to donate book vouchers, attend assemblies and learn more about the school's use of those book vouchers and how they include the community. It has been a pleasure to learn more about how the school utilises the classrooms—the constrictions of space. They have to think outside the square to deal with restrictions on a regular basis. The professionalism with which these schools are run is a testament to the people.

St Mary's Catholic Primary School is an example of the complex and often emotional matters that schools deal with on a regular basis. It has been an enlightening experience to see how they have respectfully acknowledged and supported the families who have been through traumatic times in the last few years. How that has been handled and how those families have been supported is a credit to the school.

The school takes an inquiry approach where students are active participants, and units of work go across learning areas. They are based around topics of relevance and interest to students. They are setting students up with the skills they need for the future. The school has specialist programs for students, including Greek, Mandarin, physical education, music and science. It highlights the multicultural aspect of the Territory lifestyle.

The government school in my electorate, Larrakeyah Primary School, is an example of a high-achieving school in the Northern Territory. In the 2016 NAPLAN, students in Year 3 achieved above the national average across all test areas. Students in Year 5 are above the national average in reading, writing and spelling. They offer the Cambridge curriculum and have a strong focus on global citizenship through the sister school relationship with the Avondale Grammar School in Singapore.

The school offers Japanese for Year 6 students, and in partnership with the Confucius Institute it teaches Chinese for students in Years 2 to 5. Both the schools in my electorate are looking forward to receiving the benefits of this government's reinvestment in education, most notably the \$300 000 Building Better Schools grant that will be available to all government and non-government schools to upgrade their facilities over the term of this government. It is clear that schools in towns and in the bush will continue to need vast amounts of support into the future, which our Education minister and the government are planning for.

Poorly-conceived adjustments to our system have devastating long-term effects. We have called them 'thought bubbles' over the last few months—things that were done by the previous government. That is what we are trying to fix. The effort required to reinvigorate the momentum after funding and service cuts—it takes some time to enact, and we ask Territorians to be patient with us as these measures are being enacted.

Repairing the damage caused by the loss of 500 teaching and support staff positions along with millions of dollars of funding will take years, but we have already shown that we are here to put children first and make the tough decisions. With the majority of public schools being in the remote Northern Territory, these cuts have hurt the people who can afford it least. Investment in education is at the heart of giving our children their best opportunity, and it must be evidence-based to have the ultimate effects.

My family is invested in early learning. My daughter has worked as an early learning educator for the last six years and has furthered her qualifications in the field. Such is her dedication to early learning that Alana now has a Certificate III and a Diploma in Children's Services. I am extremely proud of how hard she works at it, and the reaction that she gets from the young Territorians she looks after.

I remember the first time I had the opportunity to visit Alana at the learning centre. To see her sitting quietly in the corner with what could only be described as mayhem going on around her, with a young student sitting on her lap quietly reading to her and another student brushing her hair brought much joy to me. I am sure she brings much joy to those students. I realised Alana had found something she was very well suited to. Keeping calm in those environments is not everybody's career choice. Perhaps people in this House can relate to that. Sometimes at Question Time it takes a special person to be able to block all the calamity out.

I might be a little biased, but I have always known Alana is blessed with a steady composition to be in charge of these children's first years of learning. It is a comforting thought for the parents of the children she works with. It is a lovely feeling to be out in the community with Alana, as we were at the weekend, and have little children that she has been involved with excitedly run up and say, 'Miss Alana, Miss Alana!'

This is where education has a human face—in small communities like those in the Territory, this is where we have our best results. When children go to school, want to learn and be a part of a good learning environment, and when we have good role models, that is where we achieve our best results. We will strive to continue to improve those results across the Territory.

As the Member for Nelson highlighted recently, as with most portfolios there is no endless bucket of money for education, but with the people involved in the decision-making process and the way we empower them to control their destinies—it is critical to achieve good educational outcomes.

There is some fantastic work happening with the Families as First Teachers programs, and this will provide genuine learning improvements across the Northern Territory. I am sure there is a genuine connection between giving children their best start in life through education and changing some of their generational problems through getting the Northern Territory on the front foot.

From health to employment opportunities to understanding and appreciating strong family structures, the early years of learning are critical to improving conditions for hundreds of Territorians across this vast space. My children have been fortunate enough to receive a great education in the Top End, from Anula Primary School to O'Loughlin Catholic College. I give thanks to everyone in those fine institutions and all our education centres throughout the Northern Territory for what can be a thankless task.

One thing that struck me during my visits to those schools was the effort, energy and passion of the teachers and staff. I have always been impressed by the focus placed on treating other students with compassion and respect. With my children's upbringing, it helped to sharpen their focus and understanding of why it is so important to treat others with respect. I am extremely grateful for the learning opportunities they have had.

The Member for Nelson highlighted these issues in his speech—some of the pillars we need to cement in our society if we are to improve the society our Territory children grow up in. I applaud the Education minister for her fine work thus far and look forward to working closely with her and my other colleagues to improve learning outcomes through my electorate of Port Darwin and right across the Northern Territory over the next few years.

Madam Speaker, I commend the statement to the House.

Debate adjourned.

VISITORS
Nightcliff Primary School

Madam SPEAKER: Honourable members, I do not want to interrupt the presentation by the Treasurer, so I wish to acknowledge now that we will have some Year 4/5 students attending from Nightcliff Primary School, accompanied by their teacher, Selina Chan. They will be coming in very soon.

SPEAKER'S STATEMENT
Media Coverage of Budget

Madam SPEAKER: Honourable members, I advise that, pursuant to standing orders, as is the usual practice each year, I have given permission to media outlets and the Chief Minister's photographer to take video footage and still photographs of the Treasurer's delivery of the budget.

VISITORS
Chris Burns and Kon Vatskalis

Madam SPEAKER: Honourable members, I also acknowledge the presence in the gallery of past members Chris Burns and Kon Vatskalis, and guests. Welcome to Parliament House.

Members: Hear, hear!

APPROPRIATION (2017–2018) BILL
(Serial 20)

Bill presented and read a first time.

Ms MANISON (Treasurer): Madam Speaker, I move that the bill be now read a second time.

Budget 2017–18 is a budget for those who believe in the future of the Northern Territory. It is a budget for optimists, not pessimists. It invests in our future, in jobs, in children and in the community. It is a budget for people who believe in our cities, our towns and our bush communities. It is a budget that delivers swift and decisive actions for Territorians when it is needed most.

We have developed Budget 2017–18 with clear principles:

- creating and sustaining jobs for Territorians
- implementing our election commitments
- providing services to Territorians in a smart and efficient way, reducing costs to government.

This was the clear message coming to us from the Territory's economic summits and from Territorians in general. We have listened and acted on this.

The economic environment the Territory finds itself in is very challenging.

There has been a cost to the chaos of the last four years of CLP government. Despite knowing that the construction of the Ichthys liquefied natural gas, LNG, project would come to an end, there was no plan in place for the Territory economy.

Despite the CLP's sale and lease of public assets, it still left a deficit of almost \$900m and rising debt levels.

The previous government failed to have plans in place for either private or public investment, preferring instead an ad hoc approach to public policy-making that saw the Territory chasing one shiny object after another.

Our predecessors left a legacy of a slowing population growth and a loss of people interstate.

Worst of all, the previous government destroyed the confidence of our business community and the trust of Territorians in the processes and responsibility of government.

Since being elected, our government has worked overtime to change this story. We have opened up government to restore trust. We have ensured the money is still flowing through the community and delivered a focused Buy Local framework. We have stimulated the economy by bringing forward \$120m of construction work; continuing and expanding the Home Improvement Scheme; introducing the steel industry plan; and bringing forward funding for repairs and maintenance to keep as many tradies and subbies working as possible.

We have begun the task of addressing population loss by increasing our first home owner stamp duty discount and offering funds for renovations.

We have set about restoring certainty.

We have consulted and listened through our economic summits, community Cabinets and business round tables.

We are putting in place the critical building blocks that will drive our economy going forward, creating jobs and bringing on economic growth.

We recognise the government cannot do this on its own. We are building new confidence in the economy that will leverage greater levels of private investment that in turn will create more jobs, more growth and more wealth for the Territory.

Slowing population growth and the slower growth of the national GST pool were already cause for alarm for the Territory. But nothing could prepare us for the devastating change to the Territory's GST revenue announced just over a month ago.

The \$2bn GST cut over four years is the single biggest blow to our budget and is unprecedented in the Territory's history. This will have a deep impact on the Territory's fiscal position over the forward estimates. In fact, it increases our deficit for this budget to \$1.3bn and our debt to \$3.6bn in 2017–18.

Frustratingly, had it not been for the GST cuts, given the decisions and discipline that we have delivered in government and in this budget, we would still have been on track to achieving a surplus in 2019–20.

The GST cuts have had a huge impact for the Territory, and we will continue to fight for our fair share of funding from Canberra.

The Chief Minister and I will continue to push the Territory's case for investment by the Australian Government through their own agendas—Developing the North, Closing the gap on Indigenous disadvantage and the Defence White Paper. Through this co-investment we will see more jobs created and economic growth in the Territory.

While this work starts to have an impact on the economy we are likely to face a very tough 2017 and 2018. Private investment is expected to decline by 13.1% in 2017–18, and 18.2% in 2018–19.

The slowdown in private business investment is one of the main factors weighing on our economic outlook for growth, employment and population.

State final demand will contract in 2017–18 to minus 2.8%, and in 2018–19 to minus 5%. Employment growth in the Territory is expected to rise by only 0.5% in 2017–18 and 0.6% in 2018–19. For the first time in 14 years, population growth in the Territory is expected to be negative, at minus 0.3% in 2017.

Construction, which is one of the largest employers in the Territory, is slowing; household consumption and retail conditions are moderating; housing prices have been declining; and inflation is unusually low at 0.4% forecast in 2017–18, coming off 0.1% in 2016–17.

We also know that the largest single project in the Territory, the Ichthys LNG project, is transitioning from the construction to operation phase. This will see thousands of jobs come to an end. This, as I have said, is the challenge facing Territorians in 2017.

In this situation government can do two things. It can take to the budget with an axe, slashing and burning services and jobs until all that is left is rubble and shattered dreams, or it can build a bridge to better economic times.

This government will build that bridge to a better future for the Northern Territory. It will be built on the principles of creating jobs, keeping our election commitments and delivering smarter and more efficient government services. We will invest in the Territory, and we will give kids a better start in life and build stronger communities. We will invest to keep more Territorians here, and we will actively seek to bring more people to the Northern Territory.

Budget 2017–18 creates and sustains thousands of Territory jobs. It does so through the single largest financial investment ever in infrastructure. In 2017 the government will invest \$1.75bn in infrastructure across the Territory. Our infrastructure investment includes a \$250m stimulus package over the next two years. This will deliver job certainty and job-creating infrastructure for Territorians. It will ensure critical infrastructure is improved and more opportunities to grow and open our economy are delivered.

Of this record investment, \$279m in cash will be invested in repairs and maintenance works, the most any Territory government has ever spent. This will cover work right across the Territory, from repairs to our roads, hospitals and health clinics to the maintenance of our historical sites and sporting and recreation facilities.

Repairs and maintenance provides the quickest injection of cash into the economy to support jobs. Projects are smaller, have shorter lead times and get started more quickly so the cash flows more quickly.

We have deliberately targeted this work as repairs and maintenance supports the Territory's small contractors, tradies and small businesses. We are deliberately investing in keeping as many skilled Territorians and their families here as we can, in work and in our community.

We are investing in our hard-working tradies with an extra \$10.8m for the Home Improvement Scheme in 2017–18, taking it to \$16.2m, and an extra \$5.7m for the first home renovation grants program for a total of \$7.9m.

We have also invested an additional \$20m in the Immediate Work Grants program, which will help improve community facilities for all Territorians, bringing it to a total of \$30m.

The 2017 budget further supports small business with:

- \$6.9m spent on small business development programs
- \$5m for security assistance grants for businesses to improve security on their premises
- \$1m in additional business innovation support initiatives grants each year to enable local business to undertake research and development
- a focused Small Business Champions unit created by government, aimed at assisting small business through the processes of government.

And to support the tier one business community, the government has already announced \$120m of larger construction projects brought forward and fast-tracked to 2017–18.

To fulfil our commitments of creating certainty for the business community and to build confidence into the future, the Chief Minister has outlined the major projects this government intends to invest in over the rest of this term of government. Budget 2017–18 provides the first down payment on these projects.

These projects are

- revitalise the Darwin CBD
- build a shiplift facility and marine business park
- create a vibrant Alice Springs CBD
- develop Katherine logistics and agribusiness hub

- develop Tennant Creek as a mining and mining services centre by assessing the feasibility of studies such as a common-user mine processing facility.

These projects will help transform the Territory as we know it, creating jobs, building confidence to invest and building a better future for Territorians for generations to come.

The revitalisation of the Darwin CBD is backed by \$100m of investment by this government, placed in the budget this year. Additionally, the government is negotiating with the Australian Government to include Darwin in its city deals and provide co-investment into our future. The Darwin CBD revitalisation will see the Waterfront and Cullen Bay clearly linked, anchored at each end, by a redeveloped State Square and a new museum of the Northern Territory.

Importantly the government will seek to transform the vitality of the CBD by working with Charles Darwin University to bring students and some of the schools of the university to the centre of the city.

The Territory government, in partnership with the Australian Government and the City of Darwin, will also deliver the \$39m Barneson Boulevard to create an iconic new entry into our capital city.

Alice Springs is also a focus of this government. It is clear that the town needs a major injection to upgrade tourism facilities and to revitalise the CBD. This is a critical part of the government's plans to create Alice Springs as the nation's inland capital. To this end the government is allocating \$20m to a program of CBD works over the next few years. We are also seeking to include Alice Springs in the regional city deal with the Australian Government.

We have committed to invest in the nation's most iconic national Indigenous art gallery, which will position Alice Springs nationally and internationally as the place to go if you want to see Australia's amazing Indigenous art history.

Budget 2017–18 also contains a commitment to the development of an Alcoota megafauna fossil exhibition in the Alice Springs mall to boost tourism experiences.

The major projects program also includes the start of work on a logistics and agribusiness hub in Katherine. This project will be master planned and led by the Department of Infrastructure, Planning and Logistics with final funding to be determined once the planning is in place.

This government is also determined to develop Tennant Creek as a place of mining and mining services. To this end we are undertaking a feasibility study into building a common-user mineral processing facility in Tennant Creek. This study will determine the viability of the project, which would allow smaller mining operations to get under way without the cost of major investment in their processing facilities.

We will invest in Darwin and Palmerston as a major player in marine engineering and services and have allocated \$100m towards the shiplift project. We will also develop a master plan to create a new marine business park.

This major projects program will not only transform the Territory, it will create and sustain thousands of jobs. It supports the government's infrastructure investments and our efforts in the regions, such as creating Palmerston as our families' city and the \$1.1bn investment in remote housing.

The government cannot tackle the economic headwinds alone. A clear message from the economic summits is that we need the private sector investing in the Northern Territory. To help make this happen the government has announced investment aimed at leveraging private investment in the economy.

Budget 2017–18 delivers \$10m to get the Darwin luxury hotel development project kicked off. This hotel development is worth over \$200m and is expected to commence this year and create more than 500 jobs and hundreds of jobs ongoing.

We are encouraging private investment in retirement accommodation, with \$500 000 allocated towards expressions of interest and market testing for the Darwin CBD, its rural area and Alice Springs, and \$500 000 to facilitate market testing a feasibility study for a private sector development of a Darwin CBD major water park.

Further expressions of interest will be put out to encourage the development of the old Katherine sports club site and encourage the development of commercial land in Alice Springs.

With the Australian Government, the Territory has also committed to supporting an exciting major project in the private sector, Project Sea Dragon. We will invest \$57m to upgrade the Keep River Plains Road. The \$1.5bn large-scale aquaculture farm has the potential to deliver about 1000 jobs.

The government believes that the opportunities created by investment in Defence in the north are very significant. It is estimated that \$8bn in Defence funding could come to the Territory over the next 10 years, and up to \$20bn over the next two decades. This can provide the sort of investment in our construction industry that is required to create thousands of jobs and ongoing jobs. That is why we are working with the private sector to draw attention to the capacity and capability of local industry and their potential contribution.

This is not easy work. We have worked at both a political and bureaucratic level, and the local industries themselves are now regulars on the Canberra circuit, constantly drawing attention to Territory business.

To support this effort, Budget 2017–18 is investing \$1.5m over the next three years for a Defence advocate based in Canberra.

ConocoPhillips is investigating the feasibility of a second train for its Darwin LNG facility, which could open the door to hundreds of millions of dollars of investment and thousands of jobs.

The mining industry is confident about the Territory's future; \$1.6bn worth of resource plans was recently given major project status by this government. The \$850m Mount Peake vanadium iron mine north of Alice Springs and Verdant Minerals' \$750m Ammaroo Phosphate Project near Tennant Creek are expected to create thousands of jobs. Just last month, KGL Resources' \$190m Jervois copper-silver-gold project was also awarded major project status. It has the potential for 650 construction and operations jobs.

The pastoral industry is also headed in the right direction. This government has granted \$4.1m to the NT Livestock Exporters Association to upgrade the Berrimah export yards so it can meet future demand.

Our pastorals and miners, and the people they employ, will all benefit from the \$733m invested to upgrade roads and transport infrastructure in Budget 2017–18.

The critical infrastructure investment in jobs by the government will be backed up by a rigorous Buy Local program to ensure jobs and money stay in our community. Already the government has:

- extended the 30% Buy Local weight into all government procurement
- required groups receiving government capital grants to comply with our Buy Local program
- directed Power and Water Corporation, Jacana Energy and Territory Generation to apply Buy Local principles
- created a new criteria of value for the Territory, removing value for money as a weighting
- directed that the weighting for price in any procurement cannot be more than the local content weighting of 30%
- started breaking up some contracts to ensure the money is spread around a number of contractors.

Today I can announce that the government is taking this further with a major restructure of procurement. We will appoint an industry advocate to support local content. This advocate will be backed up by a reformed procurement review board and new, more detailed, auditing procedures from agencies. This government is determined to make the culture of procurement as one focused on buying local.

Jobs in the bush will be given a major boost through the government's \$1.1bn investment in remote housing. This is an historic level of commitment and, more importantly, it is backed by a commitment to local decision-making, which will see much of this work delivered by local Indigenous enterprises. I will provide more detail on that investment later.

We are also investing to keep jobs through \$7.9m to continue the Indigenous jobs development fund for regional councils to support core local government service delivery.

This is a government that plans ahead for economic opportunities, which is why we will invest nearly \$10m over four years into the Mapping the Future program. This will allow scientists to identify productive land for future use in regional areas, opening up new opportunities for the agriculture sector.

Tourism is also an important part of the Territory's economic future, and we have provided \$43m to market the Northern Territory, including an \$8m injection for promotion, supporting tourism products and sharing our stories with the world. We are showing people that the Territory is a great place to visit.

In addition, an extra \$4m, for a total of \$5m, has been invested so the Territory can attract more tourists from India and China, two of the world's fastest-growing markets.

Budget 2017–18 invests in children for the long term. Giving every child the best start to life is the right thing to do and the smart thing to do. We know investing in the first 1000 days of a child's life can change their future for the better.

Preparing children from birth to make them ready for school on day one, term one, year one will allow that child the best possible chance to be the best that they can be. More than anything else we do today in this budget, investing in children will transform the Territory over the next 20 years.

If we want to seriously tackle the long-term issues of antisocial behaviour, poverty, poor education and poor health outcomes, we have to start here today through our investment in children.

The government has convened the first ever Northern Territory children's subcommittee of Cabinet. We will finalise our first ever whole-of-government Northern Territory early childhood development strategic plan, a 10-year plan to improve the lives and opportunities for children in the Territory to deliver long-term, generational, economic and social change.

Budget 2017–18 enables the delivery of this plan and to expand programs and services that deliver results for families right across the Territory, including:

- \$11.1m to continue the strengthen the Families as First Teachers program
- \$7.1m to continue the Back to School payment scheme
- \$1m to expand the Nurse-Family Partnership program.

All Territory kids have the right to a quality education, but in its four years of government the CLP cut \$135m from the education budget.

Between 2012 and 2016 the Department of Education workforce at one point had decreased by over 500 full-time equivalent staff, including 300 who were school based.

This government has listened to educators, to families and to teachers. This government invests in education for our future, with \$999.3m in 2017–18 to ensure schools are properly resourced to empower teachers, principals and parents to deliver the best possible education for students.

This includes:

- \$426m for global budgets in government schools, including an additional \$20m for school resourcing. A further \$63m is provided to meet centralised school costs
- \$46.3m to support the government's Indigenous Education Strategy, aimed at improving the outcomes of Indigenous students
- \$8m for early intervention to tackle challenging behaviours and to support students with a disability
- \$500 000 to upskill teachers in digital literacy and to introduce computer coding training into primary and secondary schools
- \$400 000 to commence training programs for teachers and emerging and aspiring principals.

Budget 2017–18 also invests \$141.7m in school infrastructure across the Northern Territory, including:

- \$56.4m over four years for the Building Better Schools commitment, which will provide \$300 000 to every school in the Territory for important upgrades
- \$34.1m for repairs and maintenance
- \$18m for the redevelopment of Bullocky Point education precinct, with the expansion of a new central library and fabrication laboratory at Darwin High School
- \$9m for the construction of shared facilities to support primary schools in Zuccoli
- \$6.5m for a new integrated preschool at Tennant Creek Primary School
- \$6m for stage one of the master plan for Ludmilla Primary School that includes a new early learning centre
- \$3.5m for new transportable classrooms.

It is the strong determination of this government to deliver for Territorians living in the bush. This budget is our first instalment on that pledge.

When our remote communities and regions are strong, the Territory is strong. This is the key to developing the north and closing the gap on Indigenous disadvantage. Budget 2017–18 commences an unprecedented Territory government investment to build and improve thousands of remote houses right across the Territory.

The \$1.1bn, 10-year Remote Housing Investment Package is the largest ever Territory government investment into remote housing infrastructure with \$106m invested in 2017–18, including:

- \$50m HomeBuild NT
- \$26m for Room to Breathe
- \$20m for repairs and maintenance
- \$10m for locally-recruited government employee housing.

In addition, we will invest \$24.5m for land servicing in 2017–18.

We want to build houses where families raise healthy children, because a good home leads to a good education, good health and good community outcomes.

Importantly, delivering for the bush also means creating jobs. And these houses will be delivered by local workforces that will build local economies. This will be life changing for many Territorians and will deliver long-term, generational change.

We are determined to restore local decision-making to remote communities, giving communities more say over their lives in the areas of housing, health, looking after kids, justice and education.

To help achieve that, Budget 2017–18 includes:

- \$26m to local councils from the Northern Territory Operational Subsidy grant pool
- \$5m to establish the strategic local government infrastructure fund
- \$1m additional funding for Aboriginal interpreters to facilitate the remote housing program.

We are also investing heavily and connecting people in the bush by investing in bush roads across the Territory with:

- \$78m to continue upgrading the Arnhem Highway
- \$57m to continue upgrades to the Keep River Plains Road

- \$40m for the Buntine Highway
- \$31m for the Plenty Highway
- \$25m to upgrade the Tablelands Highway
- \$12.5m for the Barkly Stock Route
- \$10m to continue the upgrade of the Docker River—Tjukururu—Road
- \$3.5m for the seal widening and pavement on the Lasseter Highway.

This budget delivers for the community, making the Territory an even better place to live. This is a critical part of our population strategy.

Assisting Territorians into their first home through the first home owner discount will continue in Budget 2017–18. This will provide stamp duty relief of almost \$24 000 to eligible purchasers. As a result of the first home owner discount, more than 420 households in the Territory have already been purchased.

We are continuing the first home owner renovation grants of \$10 000 for existing properties; the \$26 000 First Home Owner Grant for new properties; the senior, pensioner and carer stamp duty concessions; and the principal place of residence rebate.

We are also making it easier for families in the Territory by investing \$6m to continue the early childhood services subsidy for long daycare, three-year-old kindergarten and family day care services.

Budget 2017–18 invests in sports, arts and our parks. This includes:

- \$25m to develop a new home for Rugby League at Warren Park
- \$10m to construct a new indoor netball stadium in Darwin
- \$10m will be provided over years for infrastructure development at Nitmiluk National Park
- \$6.2m to upgrade sporting facilities in Alice Springs
- \$6m over three years for infrastructure upgrades to community art galleries, art centres, museums, libraries and keeping places
- \$5m for remote oval upgrades
- \$3.5m for the Urban and Regional Oval Lights Program.

We are also providing \$11.5m for grants to support schools sports in the Territory.

This government has also invested in the environment, including:

- \$3.1m for the Hydraulic Fracturing Task Force
- \$900 000 to tackle cabomba and gamba grass
- \$500 000 to establish an Indigenous carbon unit.

Budget 2017–18 improves health services to Territorians.

The Palmerston Regional Hospital is on track to open in 2018. We have committed an extra \$2.5m to build a hydrotherapy pool in 2018–19. Over the next two years \$36m will be provided to commission this hospital. This will be a major asset to the people of Palmerston.

This budget also delivers on our commitment to establish a PET scanner and cyclotron at Royal Darwin Hospital; \$18m will support this important equipment, delivering vastly improved services to help people

with cancer. In addition, \$5m will provide 12 specialist chemotherapy chairs at Royal Darwin Hospital. A total of \$12m has been invested to build the multistorey car park at RDH.

We are improving health services to people right across the Territory, particularly those in regional areas, by investing an additional \$73m to a total of \$259m to implement the Core Clinical System Renewal Program to revolutionise health records across the health system. This will lower waiting times for patients and arm doctors and nurses with better access to health information to improve care for patients.

We have also undertaken major upgrades of renal facilities to meet the rising demand, including \$9.7m for a purpose-built Darwin renal centre and \$1.4m to establish two renal-ready rooms to increase access to dialysis in remote communities.

This government is serious about making the Territory a safer place to live.

We are delivering on our election commitment to reintroduce the Banned Drinker Register to reduce alcohol-related harm. This \$17.2m investment will not only make our community safer, it will improve health outcomes as well.

Budget 2017–18 also helps our emergency services workers do their jobs, including \$26m to build a new Palmerston police station and \$8m to build a new Katherine fire station.

Budget 2017–18 sees significant investment in creating safer communities with \$5m allocated for police resourcing and recruitment, and the funding will increase to \$15.8m by 2019–20 as we work towards our election commitment of delivering an extra 120 police officers.

We have also invested an additional \$2m to expand and maintain the CCTV network and have commenced the \$44.9m Police Real Time Online Management Information System replacement project to improve the delivery of law enforcement.

To support our police force, Budget 2017–18 also sees investment of \$2.1m to trial the COMMIT program to reduce incarceration and reoffending rates, as well as \$1.8m to continue the Work Not Play program. We also have provided \$500 000 for an increase to the victims of crime fund.

In addition, \$22m will be invested to upgrade youth detention facilities and establish youth bail support accommodation.

We also want to keep families safe. We are investing \$6.2m to continue the implementation of the domestic and family violence reduction strategy, \$6m to replace the Alice Springs Women's Shelter, and \$3m to replace to create the Alice Springs domestic violence court.

The budget delivers on our commitment to restore trust in government.

The Territory government is committed to establishing a new Northern Territory Public Sector integrity framework.

Budget 2017–18 delivers \$3m per annum to a Northern Territory independent commission against corruption, which will be legislated this year and begin work in 2018.

Budget 2017–18 will also fund an inquiry into political donations. The government is determined to change the way elections are funded to help give Territorians the confidence to believe in their political system again after the last four years of the previous government.

The government believes we need to keep more people here and attract more people to the Northern Territory. These actions to attract people to the Territory include:

- creating jobs
- developing an overarching Territory brand designed to promote the Territory interstate and overseas as a place to live, do business and visit
- bringing international students to the Territory.

To ensure people stay in the Territory we are also putting downward pressure on the cost of living. Budget 2017–18 launches a multipronged attack on this challenge, including:

- getting Territorians into jobs
- supporting Territorians into homes
- supporting the Territory's young families
- keeping essential costs under control
- supporting Territory seniors.

Part of our plan to keep more seniors in the Territory is investing \$33.9m into a fairer Pensioner and Carer Concession Scheme. This government will undertake comprehensive consultation with stakeholders before the launch of the new system on 1 January 2018.

This budget provides a clear blueprint of where we are taking the Territory. But it comes with some tough decisions and heavy lifting. This government has had to show strict internal discipline over its finances to help pay for these investments for the Territory's future.

We are determined to demonstrate ongoing fiscal discipline to improve the budget bottom line and ensure future budgets will pave a pathway to return to balance.

We have asked our Northern Territory Public Sector departmental chief executives to find savings and run as efficiently as they can. They have been given a tough job, and they have found savings of \$55m into the next financial year, which will increase to \$95m the following year. They have been told to use measures such as natural attrition, cutting waste, duplication and programs that are not delivering or are non-critical.

This government values our public servants, and these savings will be achieved responsibly and respectfully. There will be no cuts to frontline services and no forced redundancies.

We will also apply a strict wages policy to better align future wage increases to CPI with no new wage increase to go beyond 2.5%, down from 3%, and that will save more than \$36m.

The public service was expecting to get a 1.5% and 2% increase to the budgets to account for CPI. That has been reduced to better align agency budgets to current economic conditions and will save more than \$31m.

All these measures are about getting the best bang for the buck for taxpayers while maintaining quality services across the Territory. But you can only tighten your belt so far; we have also needed to raise more revenue. These are not easy decisions, and we have done this in a way which acknowledges how tough many Territorians are doing it at the moment.

We have reviewed and are changing community gaming machine tax rates and thresholds. This will raise more than \$3m in the first year and \$4.6m each year after that.

We are raising stamp duty rates on high-valued properties, specifically those over \$3m, of which there are around 50 to 60 transactions a year.

There will be a moderate increase in motor vehicle registration fees, after rates remained flat since 2015. Total registration costs will increase by about 4% to 5% for small to medium cars, and about 7% for larger or four-wheel drive vehicles.

There are other minor fees and charges across government departments that have also risen, again at rates that we felt Territorians could afford, in order to raise \$2.2m. These modest and carefully considered changes are in stark contrast to the CLP government's approach. They opted for deep cuts and huge revenue-raising measures, which hurt Territorians.

Unfortunately, despite these revenue-raising measures and our savings, we will still deliver a deficit, and we will not balance the books as we had intended in 2019–20. The fiscal deficit for 2017–18 is now estimated to be \$1.3bn before moderating to \$572m by 2020–21.

General government operating expenses are expected to grow by only 0.1% per annum on average over the forward estimates. This is the lowest ever growth in recurrent government spending and shows just how serious this government is about being fiscally responsible.

Again, I will make this point, and it is an important one. Taking into account all the revenue and expenditure decisions we have made, we would have been on track to achieve a surplus as planned if not for the \$2bn GST bombshell that has rocked the Territory to its financial foundations.

Today's budget marks another stage in our government's plan to create certainty and confidence in our economy. Over the next few weeks we will be delivering our broad Economic Development Framework as well as the election commitment of a 10-year infrastructure strategy.

Our central message to the business community and Territorians in general is straightforward. Despite the unprecedented headwinds facing our economy, this government will create and support jobs, implement our election commitments and run a smart and efficient government that keeps costs down.

The Territory has an amazing future. We are a young, agile, skilled and resilient community.

We have an abundance of natural resources and environmental wealth. We are right next door to the world's largest economic growth region. We remain the place of opportunity for all Australians.

We will overcome the economic challenges we face, and we will do so in a way that keeps Territorians here, attracts more people to join us and enriches us all. We will do it equitably, not leaving people behind, and we will do it with short-term outcomes and long-term fundamental change built into every decision we make.

I know the next 12 months will be tough, but we will meet this head on, push through and be a stronger Territory for the future. That is why Budget 2017–18 invests in the future of the Territory, in jobs, children and our community.

Madam Speaker, I commend the bill to the House.

Debate suspended.

The Assembly suspended.

APPROPRIATION 2017–2018 BILL (Serial 20)

Continued from earlier this day.

Mr GUNNER (Chief Minister): Madam Speaker, I congratulate the Treasurer on her budget for all Territorians, which is investing in our future, jobs, kids and the community. I thank my parliamentary colleagues for the work they have done, the advice they have given and the campaigns they ran going into the election. They have all helped shape this budget.

I am proud of this budget. I thank business, industry and the everyday Territorians we consulted, up and down the track and across the Territory. This budget is the culmination of all those meetings and conversations and that hard work. I thank Territorians, colleagues and stakeholders.

This is a budget for all Territorians, shaped by Territorians for Territorians. It makes tough calls on revenue and savings measures but also invests in Territory infrastructure projects that will create jobs now and for many years beyond this budget. This is a down payment on future prosperity. This is the beginning of the economic revival of the Northern Territory.

The CLP failed to plan. It left a legacy of population decline and business uncertainty. This budget delivers certainty for business. It restores confidence in the Territory. It is an investment in place of the CLP's chaos and dysfunction. There is a cost to chaos, and Territorians are paying it.

We are keeping faith with all the Territorians who are fed up with the politics of chaos, the broken promises and the irresponsible and calamitous governance. The failings of the CLP were compounded when we learned the Territory stands to lose \$2bn of Commonwealth GST revenue over four years, an unprecedented hit to our budget's bottom line. Taken together, we are left with fiscal challenges that require strong and responsible leadership.

We are rising to these challenges because we know the great natural, geographical and human potential of this place. This budget is stepping up and investing in that potential. Our challenges require that we move

diligently and fairly, but also decisively and boldly, to keep families in the Territory and keep Territorians in work. From the fire of some of the Territory's most challenging economic conditions, from four years of fiscal neglect and ego-driven politics, we have forged a budget for Territory prosperity, jobs, kids and the community.

In Canberra we will continue to push the Territory's case for investment with the Australian Government through its own agendas of Developing the North, Closing the Gap and the Defence White Paper.

At home we will continue to stimulate our economy through job-creating and visitor-drawing infrastructure. Budget 2017–18 begins with jobs because jobs are the foundations from which everything else can grow. Jobs drive our economy, keep families in the Territory, put meals on the table and break intergenerational cycles of welfare dependency and crime. For an individual, jobs instil purpose, pride and confidence.

Investment in infrastructure means jobs. That is why we have kept the infrastructure money flowing—no 180-degree turns for political purposes. Of this \$1.75bn in infrastructure works, Budget 2017–18 includes a record \$297m for repairs and maintenance, a \$70m increase. We have gone even further by fast-tracking \$120m worth of these projects. While these projects load up, we are pumping \$42m through the economy as part of our Immediate Works Stimulus Package. This not only improves community group facilities and infrastructure and how those community groups help Territorians, but it also gets money in the hands of tradies and steel manufacturers now.

We have continued and expanded the Home Improvement Scheme. We are fighting back against population loss through the first home owner subsidies and the additional \$10 000 each for renovations.

We should be concerned about population. There is a population plan in these budget books—0.3% in 2016–17; minus 0.3% in 2017–18; and 0.3% in 2018–19. These are concerning population figures. We have to tackle them. The first step in tackling them is creating jobs. We need jobs to keep Territorians here and to attract people to move here.

We have beefed up government buy local principles so that more contracts land in the hands of Territory businesses, particularly those which will use the contracts to create jobs and drive our economy. We have listened to business. To keep tabs on our buy local reform we will appoint an independent buy local industry advocate.

Budget 2017–18 provides a down payment on major projects to enliven our centres, make locals proud and visitors awed, and to create and sustain countless local jobs. We have provided \$100m to rejuvenate the Darwin CBD through the State Square redevelopment project, including a new art gallery and museum at Myilly Point, and we are looking at an art gallery at the State Square end.

We are progressing with the shiplift project and developing a master plan for a marine business park.

We are creating a vibrant Alice Springs CBD through the Alcoota megafauna fossil exhibition, which is basically dinosaurs in the mall. It is fantastic. We are beginning a major \$20m CBD facelift and designing the iconic national Indigenous art gallery.

I want to talk about those dinosaur bones for a little bit longer. There is a fascinating and interesting collection at the Araluen Arts Centre, which I found to be a bit tucked away. As a local born in Alice Springs it was not something I was fully aware of. The dinosaur story we have in Central Australia—we want to create a point of interesting conversation in the mall, where the tourists are, that will drive them out to Araluen or other parts of the Territory to explore our fascinating history.

We have to create more activity in the mall to encourage tourists to go there and then go out and explore. We have fascinating dinosaur stories in Alice Springs, including a crocodile story—the biggest crocodile. It did not live with the dinosaurs; it ate them. That was once on the front page of the *National Geographic*. Crocodiles are bigger in Alice.

That is an example of the creative and innovative things we can do to make use of the Alice Springs mall and create a vibrant CBD that ties in with the other investments we have around Araluen and into the broader Central Australian areas.

We are progressing the Katherine logistics and agribusiness hub—I prefer to say inland port. It is turning this great Territory town into an inland port of national and international significance. Look at the Katherine region and the Douglas Daily area; the potential of that place is exciting. We are investing \$10m into soil

mapping to make sure we are getting ahead in regard to what that area can deliver to build business cases for investment in that area. The Minister for Primary Industry and Resources is doing a fantastic job with us in that area.

We are investing in and creating a greater purpose for Katherine that builds on what it already does well and acknowledging the reality of what is in the region already—two major highways, the railway line, direct access to the deep-water port of Darwin and the markets of the south. This is the future of Katherine. It is built on the reality of the present.

A common-user mine processing facility for Tennant Creek is an exciting idea. Through small mines, deposits and tailings—it recognises the potential. Those things do not necessarily stack up individually, but provide a common-user facility to process gold. It is a fascinating proposal for Tennant Creek, and it will deliver jobs for people there. It is practical to the realities of Tennant Creek. The future of so many places is built on their heritage and the reality of their present.

We are delivering \$10m to kick off the Darwin luxury hotel development project, and finishing off the vision for the Waterfront as we try to finish the State Square project. We have a clumpy CBD at the moment. It does not all work well together. We have to make sure everything joins up. We have a bit of a lifestyle precinct forming at the Waterfront. We are also conducting a feasibility study for a Darwin-based water park.

This is how we, as a government, want to leverage our land to realise sustainable, commercial projects. It is about using our land to leverage our private sector investment and operation, much like what has happened with the luxury hotel—using our land to spark private sector investment.

We are encouraging development of the old sports club site in Katherine and facilitating the development of commercial land in Alice Springs. We are taking land and leveraging it to get commercial investor return to unlock private sector investment, all done through the summits process.

The market testing for retirement villages in the Darwin CBD, the rural area and Alice Springs came up at the Alice Springs and Darwin summits I attended, and other summit meetings up and down the track—investing in our seniors and the importance of retirement villages. It came up strongly through the summits process.

We made a deliberate effort with the summits to build community consultation with the NGO sector and the social side of it. It was not a straight, dry economic conversation. It was about recognising the importance of the Territory economy, the breadth and depth of it. It goes beyond dry commercial transactions. You need to have a full conversation about the available social services to reflect different elements that make our economy work. The social economy is huge. We want to keep grandparents here so we can keep their grandkids here.

As the Minister for Trade Business and Innovation I am proud this budget contains \$1m to support innovation in small business to reward ideas. Many people, when they think about innovation, think about apps or start-ups. Sometimes innovation can come from existing businesses, and it can be in a breadth of areas. We will make sure we are supporting Territory businesses and their ideas. It can be start-ups and apps, but it is a lot more than that.

We have restarted and expanded the focus of the Small Business Champions team to provide case management support and to help businesses navigate government regulations and processes. Budget 2017–18 invests \$7.9m for this important initiative. We have committed a further \$5m in business security systems assistance grants to keep businesses safer.

I am proud that this budget invests \$18m into future scientists, doctors, engineers, artists and mathematicians through new, modern classrooms, workshops and state-of-the-art laboratories at Darwin High School. That is part of an overall \$42m development at the Bullocky Point Education Precinct. There are more than 2000 students at that campus. The number of students between Darwin High and Darwin Middle Schools, who we are educating in the city, is extraordinary. A lot of them have a car. I did not have a car in high school.

Many parts of Darwin High School building are quite old. It is a very old facility, which is sometimes forgotten. The students, their parents and the teachers know it, but many people do not recognise the age of Darwin High School. This is a timely investment, done against a very well-considered and thoroughly-

consulted master plan that has been two or three years in the making and is led by Darwin High and Middle Schools, and now the school of distance learning.

Because of our initiatives to support and stimulate business, my department of Trade, Business and Innovation will enjoy a budget boost of close to \$40m on last year, taking its total to \$190m, recognising the focus we are putting on investments in that area.

We know the potential of the Northern Territory, our proximity to Asian markets, our natural environment, our soils, our largely untapped human and land capital, our young and enterprising population and our unique Indigenous and cultural heritage. We believe in developing the north, for which I am the responsible minister, and we believe in the Territory's potential.

Budget 2017–18 invests in this potential by providing \$9.9m over five years to accelerate land and water resource mapping so we can better understand what we have available under our feet. This is not just about de-risking public and private agribusiness investment; it is about protecting our existing resources.

We are investing \$6m to drive exploration and growth of the resources sector by providing better data to industry about what is in the ground and where, and then promoting these opportunities; \$6m over three years will go to infrastructure upgrades for community art galleries, art centres, museums, libraries and keeping places; \$0.8m will go to study grazing management strategies; \$0.4m will go to research the fertility of Brahman cattle; and \$0.4m will go to improving agribusiness certainty, sustainability and profitability through business and risk diversification. These are all very important things that support our developing the north agenda.

Without doubt, our northern neighbours have bought into it. When they see the map the federal government has designed for developing the north it makes sense to them, because we are such an underdeveloped area. They can see the potential. They see Darwin as the capital of northern Australia, as we do. That is why we have to invest in Darwin. This is how people see us. It is the future that we have to grasp.

People in China can see how their One Belt, One Road initiative ties into Developing the North. They can see how their international strategies fit into our domestic strategy. There is massive potential there. We have to keep working and delivering on it, which means working with the federal government. It means doing the best we can to get buy-in from WA and Queensland, and we will do that. Developing the North is important for the Northern Territory. It cannot be overstated. We will do what we can to support the federal government's strategy, including continuing conversations with our northern neighbours.

Every Territorian has the right to feel safe in their home and in the streets. Our government believes in early investment, education and jobs to break intergenerational cycles of crime. We know the frustration and anger coming from our fed-up businesses and families about the Territory's more immediate crime and antisocial behaviour challenges. As Minister for Police, Fire and Emergency Services I can happily report that Budget 2017–18 is supporting our hard-working members in the fine work they do, keeping us safe.

This budget includes \$26m to construct a new Palmerston police station, including a watch house, a regional emergency operations centre and a community hall. We have fast-tracked the first stage and we are now bringing on the second stage. I commend the police; they work hard and interact with the local community. The community hall they have made as part of their plan is very much a part of how they are in the community.

The commissioner and the police officers I speak with say that police are the community, and the community are the police. We have to find ways to keep working together. It cannot only be about responding to the phone call saying a crime has occurred. That is too late. Police have to do important work, but they recognise that the more work they do earlier to stop crime the better it is for everybody. Police buy into that completely, so this will be an important resource for Palmerston.

There is \$5m in 2017–18, increasing to \$15.75m by 2019–20, for police resourcing and recruitment to work towards fulfilling the CLP's broken promise of an extra 120 officers on the front line. This one worked with the Police Commissioner. I was aware of the loss of trust, the broken faith that had formed over the last four years, with the CLP's failure to deliver the additional 120 officers, and not only that, but how they explained it—and the dodgy numbers they used to try to show they had delivered on it when they had not. A lot of games were played with Territorians by the former Chief Minister and Police ministers about those 120 extra officers.

We are being very consistent. We will use the public numbers in the annual report process to deliver the 120 officers to make sure we restore trust for Territorians. We were not going to make up the recruitment year to year; I wanted the police to have a confirmed four-year recruitment plan that would deliver the extra 120 officers the CLP promised in 2012 so there would be confidence between me, the Police Commissioner, the police and the public.

They can put together a proper recruitment plan over four years and know exactly how and when the college will be used. We are maximising the use of the college. You physically cannot recruit more police officers than we will recruit over the next four years—to make sure we have a high-quality, functioning police force with the extra numbers. We very carefully work through, plan and promise to restore trust, as well as putting extra officers on the front line.

There is \$8m to construct a new Katherine fire station. Many police and fire services will have their own separate facilities. Initially this was \$5m to upgrade the Katherine police and fire station; it was combined. The local member does some amazing work there every day, talking with the people who work in that building. I met with police there, spoke with the Police Commissioner, met the fire services and emergency services and asked how we can spend this \$5m. It became clear through those conversations that the better result will come from increasing the spend to \$8m and building a fire station across the road and next to the ambulance centre.

This is a better plan that will result in a better outcome. It will provide a better facility for the fire services and create a better space for police at the station. I was asked about the state of the Katherine police station—we have put extra repairs and maintenance money into this budget across all areas. This will make sure we are looking after the Katherine police at the same time, but the fire station is a good outcome for everyone in Katherine. It is the result of listening to people who use these facilities—what they need. It is the same as what we did in Palmerston, talking with police about the facilities needed.

There is \$44.9m to replace the police force's outdated and failing PROMIS system. NT Police have asked for this for a long time, and we are delivering on it. This project should have commenced several years ago, but we will make it happen over the next four years. It is estimated that if we get this running properly, with iPads and iPhones—I have spoken directly with the police using the apps such as Winscribe and SceneDoc—it will allow them to do their job from the scene rather than coming back to the station. It saves two to five hours per shift. They will be able to do more jobs from the road. We will be able to provide this support to all our police across the Territory once we get this up and running. The programs will be seamless and attuned to what police need. This is an excellent outcome that helps police significantly.

An 18-year-old system—I think I heard Mix 104.9 have the conversation about the computer rage they get when the Internet does not load quickly enough. I think we can all understand the stress police have gone through in dealing with an old system and the joy they will have in dealing with a new system that works properly.

Having learned our lessons from previous IT projects, we are doing this carefully with the right amount of money invested up front to make sure it is delivered properly. We have taken a very careful and robust process here in full consultation with police, DCIS and the IT task force—there is a formal title for the governance group that gets together to make sure this IT project is being developed and built properly. There are constant gates, as they call them in the public service, essentially points of intervention to make sure it is on budget, on track, on time and running properly. We will deliver this system to help our police.

We are providing \$2m to expand and maintain the closed circuit television network; \$1.5m for the DriveSafe NT Remote program; \$1m for additional court support services; and \$5m in business security systems assistance grants to keep businesses safer. Overall, NT Police, Fire and Emergency Services received a total budget of \$342m, up from \$332m the previous year.

My colleagues, the Minister for Children, the Minister for Territory Families and the Attorney-General, have worked exceptionally hard since coming to government on the short- and long-term reform to foster healthier and happier kids and families. The minister for Housing is on that working group as well, making sure we do what we can on that long-term plan to address the symptoms and causes of intergenerational cycles of crimes; over-dependence on our health, welfare and justice systems; addressing the now and the future—action now to get long-term return on investment in our kids. We support kids today so they can be better adults in the future.

We have taken decisive action in this budget, which my colleagues will speak about further. Part of this reform process will be shaped by the outcome of the Royal Commission into the Protection and Detention

of Children in the Northern Territory. Our \$27m contribution to the ongoing costs of the Royal Commission is responsible for much of the increase from \$57.98m to \$84.15m of the budget to the Department of the Chief Minister. I am not entirely happy about it, as the Royal Commission said it would stick to the \$50m budget. It has now crept up over that mark. That was one of the promises behind seeking the extension, that it would manage its own budget, but we have included that money in the budget. We have done our part responsibly.

The budget includes \$1.2m for the development of the early childhood plan, for which we have brought together experts from around Australia and the NT. We have some significant experience and expertise in the Territory.

We will foster jobs and job creation in small businesses, such as construction, tourism, agriculture and resources, but we are also turning our eye to the jobs of the future. I have committed the Territory to a 50% renewable energy target by 2030. This is about more than doing the right thing by the planet; it is about creating new industries in the Territory. It is about energy security, especially for the bush, and making sure kids in schools today know the jobs of the future will be there for them. That is why we are investing in this.

The DCM budget also includes \$0.2m to develop our roadmap to renewables; \$1.5m to fund a centre for excellence in solar energy in Alice Springs; \$0.5m for research and development projects to progress the Territory's renewable energy initiatives; and \$0.5m to establish an environmental policy unit to support the delivery of government's renewable energy and climate change policies. This is about us investing in the future of the Northern Territory and taking action now.

This government is about restoring Territorians' trust; that is why there is a figure of \$3m to establish an independent commission against corruption in the DCM budget. We will create that commission. The Attorney-General is taking the lead on the legislation to establish it over the next financial year. It will be very important for Territorians to know this independent vehicle exists, and that it is there to investigate.

Some of the problems we have encountered include questions being raised and there being no vehicle to investigate them. They might be completely above board and kosher, but there has been no ability for Territorians to have confidence in a commission to investigate it and deliver confidence. They will have that under this government, which is an historic moment for the Territory.

By lifting up the bush we lift up the entire Territory. Stronger remote communities and regions mean a stronger Territory. That is why we are beginning the process of fixing our remote housing mess, restoring local decision-making, and investing in remote jobs and infrastructure. We trust Territorians, and that includes the people who live outside the city. We trust remote Territorians. We have to give them the power back to make more meaningful decisions about their lives and the direction they take. That is the only way through the problems we have had generationally in the Territory.

Everyone deserves access to decent housing, but we know that decent housing in the bush is too often the exception rather than the norm. The minister for Housing is doing significant work in this space, as are our members for remote areas. It is one of the most discussed policies we had when going into the last election. I thank all my colleagues who contributed to that, the ones who are serving with us in this Assembly and the ones who could not make it, like Lynne Walker. I thank them all for the advice they gave to help us develop this housing policy. The minister for Housing is leading a very important policy agenda, and we support him fully.

The flow-on effects of poor housing and overcrowding are felt at all levels of Territory society. It manifests in poor school attendance rates, poor health outcomes, domestic violence, unemployment and crime, to name a few. That is why we are investing a record \$1.1bn over 10 years for remote housing, and I thank the minister for his work in this space.

As Aboriginal Affairs minister I am proud that Budget 2017–18 provides the first \$106m of this spend: \$50m for the home build program; \$26m for the Room to Breathe program; \$20m for repairs and maintenance; and \$10m for locally-recruited government employee housing. I have welcomed the innovative approaches locals are taking to how we can spend that money. Some of the returns we will get by trusting and working with locals will be fascinating and creative and will deliver a better outcome.

We are working with communities on how to deliver this housing spend, because communities know their needs best. Aboriginal communities know their living circumstances better than people in Darwin or Canberra. They know more about their education needs, housing needs, health needs, law and order

needs and local government needs. We are giving local decision-making powers back to Aboriginal communities and engaging Aboriginal people in the future of their communities.

Top down decision-making has only ever stifled the bush's potential. This budget provides \$1.3m to begin implementing the local decision-making agenda; \$5m to establish and operate the strategic local government infrastructure fund to invest in remote key infrastructure; \$1m to support strong governance in Aboriginal organisations wanting to participate in the local decision-making agenda; and \$0.8m for the First Circles Engagement program to provide support for future Indigenous leaders.

To drive jobs in the bush we are also providing \$7.9m for Indigenous jobs development for regional councils; \$3.6m for Aboriginal employment programs; \$1.5m to develop and implement the Territory Aboriginal land and sea strategy, including prioritising the resolution of outstanding Aboriginal land claims; \$2m additional funding for the remote Aboriginal economic development fund; \$2m for equipment for Indigenous ranger groups; \$0.5m for establishing an Indigenous carbon unit to support rangers and groups to create enterprises, and for carbon abatement and sequestration; and, annually, \$25m for homelands.

We came to government with a plan for jobs, investing in our children, safe and vibrant communities, the bush, and restoring trust. In my speech on the year ahead I spoke about the plans for regions up and down the track in the Territory. I spoke about these plans before the last election. We have been very consistent in how we want to work with Territorians for a better Northern Territory and how we want to invest in the Territory, especially in the challenging economic times we are experiencing. Under this government Territorians will always come first; that is our promise to them. Budget 2017–18 shows how we are practically delivering on that.

These are practical and financial manifestations of our plans, the promises we have made, the speeches we have delivered and the conversations we have had with Territorians at economic summits or over a cup of tea. This is the down payment, the practical action of what we have promised Territorians. They come first.

I thank my team for all the hard work they have done to help shape and deliver this budget, and I thank the Treasurer for the significant work she has done to deliver this budget. I thank Territorians for the time they have taken and the advice they have given us to help shape this budget. It is a budget by Territorians, for Territorians that puts them first.

Madam Speaker, I commend the budget to the House.

Ms FYLES (Attorney-General and Justice): Madam Speaker, today we heard the Treasurer, Hon Nicole Manison MLA; and the Chief Minister, Hon Michael Gunner MLA, announce Budget 2017–18 to the Northern Territory.

I congratulate them both, particularly the Treasurer on her hard work and diligence over the last few months. It is an enormous responsibility that Territorians have given to us as the government. The Budget Cabinet process is intense, but it was handled in these difficult times with utmost respect.

I have the enormous responsibility and privilege of being the Minister for Health and the Attorney-General and Minister for Justice. I will complement today's announcements by providing further details on how Budget 2017–18 will deliver our election commitments to help build a safer, fairer, stronger Northern Territory with safer communities.

This is a government that is delivering on our future. This budget will create and support jobs. It delivers on our election commitments, creating a fair plan for the future of the Northern Territory.

The chaos over the last four years was highlighted by the stories we would hear about their Budget Cabinet—chaos and division came out in the CLP budget processes. We saw our economy left in a mess after the last four years. There was no plan for jobs, the community or our children—the future of the Northern Territory. There was only selfishness. They were focused on themselves and what they could do for themselves, not what they could do for Territorians. You witnessed that first hand, Madam Speaker.

The cost of that chaos was made worse by the failure of the CLP to plan for growth, particularly in the post-INPEX construction phase. We knew that was coming, but the previous government completely failed to plan, so not only do we have a significant reduction in GST from the federal government, we have been left with no ongoing plans for the Northern Territory.

In response to these challenging conditions, the budget delivered by Territory Labor will invest in jobs and creating projects. It will deliver on our election commitments and find a fair way to address our economic and fiscal challenges. I am proud to be part of the team delivering Budget 2017–18. We are going through a particularly challenging economic period. Everyone knows this and we are being up front about it.

Despite the mess left by the CLP and the cuts to the GST revenue from the federal government, we are sticking to our commitments. This is why this budget is fair for Territorians; it will deliver for Territorians.

This budget delivers on the commitments we made last year to the wellbeing of Territorians. Every Territorian has the right to feel safe in their community. We recognise that alcohol-related harm continues to be the biggest social challenge we face in the Northern Territory. Territorians who drink responsibly have a right to have a drink and to celebrate special events, but there are so many people in our community who drink to harmful levels. In opposition we made it clear we would be returning the Banned Drinker Register. We will be doing so by 1 September this year and we will cease alcohol mandatory treatment. This aligns with our core values of investing in children and families, and making our communities safer.

The CLP government scrapped the BDR in 2012, and it led to an immediate escalation of alcohol-related harm and antisocial behaviour. Overnight, the CLP government allowed 2500 problem drinkers to immediately access alcohol. The government did not put any measure in place; it turned the grog tap back on for those who cause so much harm. Its rushed policies failed to address our entrenched alcohol problems.

The AMT program failed. It was poorly integrated, inefficient and costly. We are delivering on a comprehensive, evidence-based, health-focused approach to stop the destructive path alcohol creates across our community. We will not only bring back the Banned Drinker Register—the unique identification system that turns off the tap to alcohol for those who cause so much harm in our community—but the Department of Health will be using \$15.5m to develop specialist assessment and withdrawal services; create integrated pathways to treatment services and follow-up services; expand the capacity for rehabilitation services; establish a banned drinker registrar; and employ specialist clinicians.

This funding will enable the creation of a one-stop shop, with the Stringybark Centre at Berrimah being repurposed to provide a sobering-up shelter and specialist alcohol and assessment withdrawal units which will flow on to a 40-bed treatment facility. There will be 30 beds with the sobering up shelter and 12 with the specialist alcohol assessment and withdrawal unit, as well as the 40-bed treatment facility.

An integrated approach to assessment of all people wanting to access treatment will be introduced. This will occur for the first time when you have contact with places such as the police watch house or the hospital emergency department. This will streamline processes for clients of alcohol and other drug treatment services and will facilitate immediate identification and referral to services which meet a client's needs assessment.

An integrated care plan will be developed, facilitating a seamless service. Appointments for onward service referrals are arranged immediately, rather than the client waiting to be contacted by another service provider and potentially having a gap in the service provision. It is important that when people have problems with alcohol and police have picked them up, and they have gone to the watch house or the hospital because they have hurt themselves, they have an immediate response to help them start to tackle their alcohol abuse.

The overarching care plan will identify the lead agency and appoint a case manager to ensure prioritisation and coordination of individual client care. Structured care plan reviews will be undertaken with all services and clients on a regular basis. The integrated assessment service will operate from the Stringybark facility in Berrimah and from a campus of the Drug and Alcohol Services Association Alice Springs facility.

An open tender process is now being prepared, working with non-government organisations to help provide these services. This will be an integrated approach and will provide support to people who have a problem with alcohol and cause harm to our community. It will work with their primary healthcare providers within their communities or with their GPs. It is an integrated approach to provide them with that care to help them turn their lives around.

The Department of the Attorney-General and Justice will use \$1.7m in additional funding in Budget 2017–18 to establish the BDR system and the roll-out of technology. This is in addition to the allocation committed to during the election of \$4m and \$1.2m being redirected from the Alcohol Mandatory Treatment Tribunal and Community Visitor Program. These funds will help to re-establish the BDR, and a number of

measures will need to be rolled out. There is the BDR helpdesk, compliance functions, court administration, the NTCAT administration, data and research capacity, communications and the BDR system management.

We made it clear we would not remove any measure until our measures were in place, and we have stuck to that commitment. Alcohol mandatory treatment will cease as the new BDR comes into full operation. The temporary beat locations, TBLs, or POSIs, will continue as a police resource even after the BDR has been reinstated, but the Banned Drinker Register will be a Territory-wide approach, as opposed to the patchwork approach we had under the former government, with measures in place in some communities but not others.

This will be a Territory-wide measure, and police will have the resources to provide support to the community where they see fit. You will not have politicians in Darwin telling police officers on the beat what to do. The BDR is one measure in helping to combat alcohol-related harm in our community. We are providing for that with clinical care and integrated pathways for those who have problems with alcohol.

The Palmerston hospital—we know the CLP government failed miserably with progressing the Palmerston hospital. It consistently let down the people of Palmerston, dug holes, filled them back in—there is no other word to describe it but 'debacle'. Our government is committed to the future of the Territory and the people of Palmerston and the rural area. We believe they need access to high-quality healthcare, and that is why this government is committed to delivering the first new public hospital to be built in the Northern Territory in about 40 years, the Palmerston Regional Hospital.

The construction is progressing well under our government. I was there recently and it is taking shape. We have a roof on and internal fittings are going ahead. As we progress through the Dry Season and the construction site becomes less of a construction site and more of a hospital, I look forward to sharing the delivery of the Palmerston hospital with the people, especially people of the area.

Budget 2017–18 has allocated \$36m over two years to support the commissioning of the Palmerston Regional Hospital, including purchasing furniture, fixtures, equipment and information and communications technology to ensure the provision of safe, quality clinical services at commencement.

There is \$8.8m of combined NT and Commonwealth funding for the completion of the construction of the Palmerston hospital. That is in addition to the \$40.3m revote allocation for this financial year. This is the final funding allocation for the \$170m project.

It was always planned that the Palmerston hospital would provide rehabilitation services. Despite this planning, the previous CLP government failed to plan for a hydrotherapy pool—an essential piece of infrastructure, particularly in our climate—to provide quality rehabilitation services. It is further evidence of how the CLP government completely failed to adequately plan for this hospital and to optimise health services for Territorians.

I met with local disability peak body, Integrated disAbility Action, earlier this year. They spoke to me about the importance of the hydrotherapy pool to the future of rehabilitation services. Unlike the previous CLP government, our government has listened to the concerns of the local disability advocates that a hydrotherapy pool is essential for rehabilitation services. We will provide for it at the new hospital.

We have committed an additional \$2.5m to build the hydrotherapy pool in 2018–19. I got a little excited about it in Question Time earlier today.

This is an example of the chaos and dysfunction we saw from the previous government that impacted on health services for Territorians. It failed to provide a hydrotherapy pool for a hospital that will deliver rehabilitation services. In regard to construction, if we were to put that pool in place now it would delay the Palmerston hospital's completion. We are committed to delivering that hospital as efficiently as we can. We will finish the hospital, and the pool will be rolled out as quickly as possible once the main construction is finished. That is an example of the previous government's lack of focus on what is important to Territorians, particularly a group which needs rehabilitation services.

I will continue to update the House on the Palmerston hospital project. I am very excited with the progress under this government and the budget allocation in Budget 2017–18.

The Royal Darwin Hospital car park—I have spoken about this many times, and I am very pleased to say that Budget 2017–18 delivers \$12m to commence construction of a multistorey carpark at RDH

immediately. We have an historical site that has more and more health services provided at the campus with less and less space to park. It has caused havoc. I acknowledge the hard-working doctors, nurses and support staff, as well as the patients and visitors.

We will deliver that. We are working as quickly as we can. Budget 2017–18 provides for that, so we can immediately commence that construction. We have kept to our election commitment of reintroduction of free car parking, which has been welcomed. We acknowledge that the number of car parks needs to be increased, and Budget 2017–18 will deliver that for RDH.

Every Territory has a right to access essential medical treatment. The PET scanner and cyclotron are important pieces of equipment for diagnosis not only for cancer but for other conditions. That is why this Territory Labor government has worked with the Australian Government to deliver a comprehensive PET scan service for Territorians with federal government funding. I acknowledge our federal counterparts.

As a territory government it is important to work with the federal government, particularly on health projects. That is what we have seen with this. There is \$15m from the federal government, and Budget 2017–18 will deliver \$3m from the Territory government to ensure we can deliver the PET scanner and cyclotron infrastructure works and the purchase of that lifesaving medical requirement at RDH. We expect the PET scanner to be operating in the second half of 2018, and the cyclotron will follow in a short period after that.

Budget 2017–18 is delivering health services to Territorians, particularly when they are at their most vulnerable.

I spoke in Question Time today about renal services. We will deliver \$11.1m towards replacing and expanding renal services in the Northern Territory. There is \$9.7m earmarked for a new Darwin renal centre. It will be adjacent to my electorate; it is the Nightcliff renal service, but it is just on the edge in Coconut Grove. Last week I was pleased to acknowledge our hard-working doctors and nurses.

It will be fabulous to have a purpose-built facility. People who are accessing renal dialysis have to attend many times during a week and be there for multiple hours, so it will be great to deliver a purpose-built facility that will provide for patient care and a far better functional work environment for our hard-working staff.

There is also \$1.4m towards two renal-ready rooms for remote communities. These projects will create jobs, not only in Darwin but in the bush during their construction phase, delivering on our commitment of job creation, investing in jobs across the Territory. Every Territorian has the right to have control over their lives and access to high-quality health services. Hundreds of Territorians rely on the lifesaving dialysis treatment every year, and many of those Territorians access the treatment at the Nightcliff renal centre. I believe it is the biggest renal service provider in the Territory. It is a vital community hub. It was not purpose built; it has had expansions, upgrades and patch-ups but it needs to be replaced.

Sadly, the Northern Territory has some of the highest rates of end-stage kidney disease in the world. I am pleased to announce that Budget 2017–18 has allocated an additional \$5m for the expansion of dialysis treatments across the Top End of the Northern Territory through the acquisition of additional dialysis chairs and extended hours, and \$3.4m for expansion of dialysis treatments in Central Australia, again through additional dialysis chairs and extended hours. We are supporting Territorians, particularly vulnerable Territorians who have kidney disease and require dialysis.

To give Territorians the best health they need to have the best health start in life, which is where Nurse-Family Partnerships give every child the best start in life. Investing in our children provides the best future in the long term. We are investing in the earliest years of children's lives. Nurse-Family Partnerships pair expectant mothers with professionals to offer help and advice through the first years of parenthood. Nurses form relationships with families through home visits, and they identify and intervene in potential or real family and health hazards.

If we can lift the birth weight of babies it will have huge long-term benefits. The first 1000 days, as the Treasurer outlined in her speech, provide for the pathway for the rest of that child's life. My colleagues, particularly the Minister for Education, are very focused on Families as First Teachers, but health has a vital role to play in the early days of a child's life. I am pleased that Budget 2017–18 delivers \$1m to expand the Nurse-Family Partnerships Program to additional locations through the Northern Territory to provide support, particularly to vulnerable families and their children.

In terms of providing healthcare for Territorians, not only do we need to provide primary and acute healthcare but initiatives such as housing accommodation support. Over three years the housing accommodation support initiative trial has been committed \$3m. It is a collaborative project with the Department of Health and the Department of Housing and Community Development, working closely with the non-government sector. This initiative is purposed to provide support and stability of tenancy for people with a mental illness living in our community.

Madam Speaker, you would have experienced this in my electorate, just as I know many of my colleagues would have. We have vulnerable Territorians who need support so they can live independently. If we can provide support for them and keep a roof over their head, we are protecting them and providing them with opportunities.

This service model will provide a wraparound support system inclusive of clinical services, tenancy and supports for people living in public housing in Darwin and Palmerston, and design of this initiative will be informed by the housing accommodation support initiative approach, which has been implemented in New South Wales, noting that the Northern Territory environment is sufficiently different. We feel that we can adapt this model to suit our community.

This initiative will be progressively implemented, providing support to tenants so we can help them maintain a housing tenancy, giving them the best health outcomes. Having a roof over your head plays a big part in being healthy.

I was pleased to be at Royal Darwin Hospital on Saturday announcing that this Labor government is investing \$259m over five years towards a fully-integrated health system that will transform the delivery of healthcare for Territorians. The Core Clinical Systems Renewal Program is a ground-breaking single service delivery system that invests for all Territorians' future through single digital medical records for Territorians. This enables our doctors and nurses, our hard-working frontline health staff, to focus on treating patients and to spend more time caring for them and, potentially, saving lives, rather than worrying about IT systems. This is the largest and most complex ICT systems project ever undertaken in the Northern Territory. It is a major investment in improving the public health system.

Here is another example of the chaotic former CLP government, which failed to plan for the full implementation of this important project. In Budget 2016 the CLP allocated \$160m to cover the initial phases, just enough to procure the system, knowingly leaving the project millions of dollars short of its full requirements. Our budget is delivering the full allocation of funding for the project to procure and implement the system end to end, with roll-out and ongoing system support from the vendor.

This project will give people confidence; they are getting the services they deserve, and it will help support our doctors, nurses and other medical professionals. This program will consolidate the Northern Territory public health systems into a single ICT solution and open up accessibility to allow clinicians to treat patients across the Territory, regardless of where they are located. We believe, as a government, that all Territorians are entitled to control over their life and access to high-quality services. We also know that when our remote communities and regions are strong the Territory is strong. Territorians will be able to have trust in a system that provides the latest technology.

The Territory population is highly transient. We have many people for whom English is a second language, and this is something that health professionals have raised with me. They may treat a patient who has attended a clinic in a remote community and has been brought to a major centre to receive further care. They have to access four systems; one of those systems is 25 years old. As the Chief Minister pointed out when he was talking about the upgrade to the police ICT system—well before a lot of technology we use now was around.

This system will support our clinicians to support our patients. If somebody is unconscious they might not be able to provide all the information needed. At the moment, our doctors and nurses have to log in to multiple systems to access that patient's information. It will improve our capability and provide for up-to-date patient records. This is bringing the health technology of the Northern Territory Government well forward so doctors and nurses can focus on patient care, not logging in and out of government ICT systems. The project will be rolled out through a five-year implementation plan. An open public tender process for commercial health systems solutions is in its final stages, and the successful tenderer is expected to be announced later this month.

We are going through a very challenging economic period, and we have been very up front with Territorians, but we must make this investment in our health ICT system in this budget, because if we do

not we risk significant future financial and health issues. This is a commitment; we are investing in our future, making sure we have the IT system that allows our clinicians to provide care. This is a significant project, and this government has delivered for the whole project, unlike the attempt we saw from the previous government.

There are a number of measures in Budget 2017–18 to support and strengthen our health and hospital services, which are not only delivering jobs but strong communities and a better quality of life for Territorians.

We have allocated \$800 000 to support tackling youth substance misuse in remote communities through the delivery of diversion programs; \$9.6m for the establishment of cardiothoracic and neurosurgical services; \$2.4m for emergency road ambulance and medical transportation services; \$3.4m in 2017–18 and \$4.5m ongoing to increase the capabilities of the allied health services across the Top End; \$900 000 for the Back on Track program, which aims to increase Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representation across the health workforce, including a focus on Aboriginal health practitioners.

This initiative is very important. We have made a commitment over the next four years to transition remote community health clinics from being government-run to being community-led clinics. It is equally important that we have Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Territorians providing healthcare services to their community. We need to break down barriers in healthcare delivery, and this will go a long way towards that.

There is \$600 000 for the Pathways to Community Control program, which will create the framework to support Indigenous community control as we transition clinics from being government-run to community-led. The program will help with the planning, development and management of primary healthcare and community care services.

There is \$2.3m for the expansion of service capability across the retrieval service in Central Australia. Budget 2017–18 provides for maintaining vital health infrastructure. We have hard-working health practitioners, and Budget 2017–18 will allocate \$1.73m for minor new works to Department of Health infrastructure and \$1.77m for repairs and maintenance to Department of Health infrastructure assets.

There is \$10m for minor new works and \$38m for repairs and maintenance to health infrastructure assets in the Top End and Central Australia. This is a commitment to improving the Territory's health infrastructure. It is an investment in wellbeing. These projects invest in jobs and in providing support to health practitioners.

The total health budget from the Northern Territory Government was \$1.52bn last year. It has increased by \$50m to \$1.57bn. As a government we are investing in the health of all Territorians, located in remote and urban areas.

Moving away from my health portfolio, our government is supporting an integrated, fair and accessible justice system that works to build safer communities across the Territory. The Department of the Attorney-General and Justice delivers strategic law and legal policy services to government; custodial and community-based correctional services; prosecution services; court and tribunal support services; a balanced policy and regulatory framework that supports industry, business and community; advice, education and information to businesses, workers and the public relating to legislative compliance and regulation; and supports independent integrity bodies; and provides registration services.

The Department of the Attorney-General and Justice is providing support to the government's legislative reform agenda, including reforming the justice system to reduce reoffending; modernising and streamlining licences; ensuring workers' compensation schemes are fair and equitable; and supporting workers across the Northern Territory.

Domestic and family violence is a priority for our government. Any act of family and domestic violence is unacceptable.

Mr VOWLES: A point of order, Madam Speaker! I seek an extension of time for the member to complete her remarks.

Motion agreed to.

Ms FYLES: We have passed legislation to support the use of evidence in domestic violence prosecutions where that evidence was obtained from police body-worn cameras. We have passed legislation implementing cross-border domestic violence order recognition, and our recent bail changes to expand electronic monitoring to police bail will be used as a tool for police in domestic and family violence situations.

It sits within my budget, and Minister Wakefield has the ministerial lead, but this is something our whole government is committed to. The budget commits \$3m to building the Alice Springs domestic violence court, which is an important step forward to provide a whole-of-court approach to domestic and family violence which focuses on victim safety and offender accountability through improved processes, and engagement with victims and offenders.

The physical layout of the court will be refurbished to address concerns, such as the inability to separate perpetrators and offenders in the court space, the lack of separate access to the court space for victims of domestic violence, the absence of places for children, the absence of interview rooms, and difficulties in providing for the taking of evidence by vulnerable witnesses. This will tackle those issues so we can tackle this huge issue in the Northern Territory. I look forward to continuing to work with my colleague, the Minister for Territory Families, on this issue.

We saw such chaos and dysfunction over the last four years that Territorians continuously questioned the accountability and transparency of this government. We were very clear in the lead-up to the election that we would restore trust in government by establishing an independent commission against corruption. We are working on the legislative framework that will provide for this. I am pleased that in Budget 2017–18, \$3m is provided to establish and operate the independent commission against corruption. Territorians deserve a government they can trust, a government that puts the public interest before personal interest ...

Ms Lawler: That remembers.

Ms FYLES: ...a government that remembers why it is in government—for Territorians, not for themselves.

Ms Lawler: I do not remember.

Ms FYLES: I pick up on the interjection. The former Chief Minister, as he is no longer in public office, does not feel that he needs to remember or provide comment. The ICAC will have the power to investigate allegations of corruption and establish a clear and transparent integrity framework, which the former government was opposed to. Once they had the numbers we saw them overturn an inquiry into political donations. I look forward to further updating the House as that legislation is finalised and the commission is established.

Budget 2017–18 allocates \$6.29m, with Commonwealth funding of \$6.87m, resulting in a total of \$13.16m for the Northern Territory Legal Aid Commission and community legal centres under the National Partnership Agreement on Legal Assistance Services. This funding provides vital representation and access to justice to help resolve legal problems, particularly for the most disadvantaged people in the Northern Territory.

I acknowledge the federal government, which agreed last week to continue funding community sector legal services, which my colleagues and I have been advocating for. We need to make sure people are provided with that support in our justice system for it to be fair and for it to work.

Budget 2017–18 includes \$2.1m for the COMMIT program, which is designed to reduce incarceration and recidivism rates. A trial of the program began under the former government. This program comes with evidence and has been used widely overseas, and we believe it will help in the Northern Territory context. The compliance management or incarceration program in the Territory operates on the principles of swift, certain and fair sanctions for parolees who breach their order.

Legislation will be introduced this sittings to amend the *Parole Act*, and we hope this will increase the number of offenders who apply for parole, which can provide a supportive and structured transition back into the community and help to break the cycle of reoffending.

Forty-seven per cent of prisoners who declined parole from January 2016 to February 2017 said parole was too hard and they knew that non-compliance would result in either a warning or a return to prison to complete their sentence. It was an all-or-nothing approach, but under COMMIT parolees have their conditions, and sanctions for breaching their conditions, clearly explained to them. If they violate their parole order, the Chairperson of the Parole Board will oppose a sanction, a period of imprisonment, without

revoking their parole order. This allows for a more predictable response to non-compliance. The sanctions matrix will be fixed to an instrument which will be published in the *Gazette*; this means that parolees can make informed decisions. The swift, fair and certain sanctions provide a structured framework while ensuring parolees are held accountable for violations.

47% of the prisoners who declined parole stated that the reason was due to not wanting conditions upon release or that parole was too hard.

The trial indicates that the COMMIT program helps more parolees successfully complete their parole and transition back into the community. I will further update the House, and I look forward to introducing that legislation.

Every Territorian has the right to feel safe in their home, business and community; they have a right to feel secure and for their property to be secure. That is why government is tackling the causes of crime and antisocial behaviour, but we are listening to the victims of crime. We are putting the victims of crime first. Our historic youth justice reforms, which my colleague, the Minister for Territory Families, will elaborate on—we are making sure we are hearing from victims of crime.

Victim-offender conferencing makes sure victims are heard loud and clear. In recent months, since becoming the minister, I have had meetings with Victims of Crime NT, the Crime Victims Advisory Committee and many Territorians who have been affected by crime. The Crime Victims Advisory Committee told us the previous government started a review through the *Victims of Crime Assistance Act* in 2013 but never followed through.

Victims of Crime NT and key stakeholders took time to make submissions to that review, but the previous government never made any draft report public, which is disappointing. It quite clearly shows that the previous government walked away from victims of crime in that review. The previous government removed funding from the Department of the Attorney-General and Justice budget that was set aside for assisting victims of crime. Our government will not repeat those mistakes.

Budget 2017–18 builds on our commitment to victims of crime by funding \$500 000 for the ongoing victims of crime fund, and we are focused on working with victims of crime, especially in regard to developing a new victims charter. This government is committed to putting victims of crime first and making sure we can hear from them.

The community support work program is a valuable program that provides training for prisoners and opportunity for them to provide a vital service to local pensioners and seniors in our community. This is something the previous government left unfunded, but I am pleased that in Budget 2017–18, \$500 000 ongoing for the community support program will continue.

This program assists 572 Territorians in Darwin and Alice Springs and this funding commitment from our government will enable more prisoners to participate in this program, potentially offering better pathways to employment post-release. We are supporting very vulnerable Territorians who rely on this service to stay in their own home. This is something every member in the House supports. We are focused on that program, and, as the minister responsible, I am pleased that there is an allocation in Budget 2017–18 to work out how we can drive that program to support Territorians.

Budget 2017–18 also invests in the Territory's court system with an additional \$1m for the important work provided by court support services. Investing in better court support services helps provide a more efficient administration of our justice system. This will be spread across Tennant Creek, Katherine and Alice Springs. Other Budget 2017–18 highlights within my portfolios include \$3.2m as part of a new five-year funding agreement with Thoroughbred Racing of the Northern Territory, supporting jobs in our racing industry; \$3m to continue to support the Northern Territory Civil and Administrative Tribunal; and \$1.85m for the Work not Play program for 2017–18, which provides prisoners with the opportunity to develop appropriate work readiness skills as well as literacy and numeracy skills.

I am pleased to see in Budget 2017–18 that Nightcliff Middle School will receive \$300 000 for improvements to that fabulous school. I very much enjoyed being at the school last week, when the Minister for Education and I were shown around by students and the principal. It is a fabulous school with great teachers and great students. I am looking forward to providing resources to support that school.

I am looking forward to the Minister for Tourism and Culture's announcement of the urban lights project. I have been very passionate about this. We have a fabulous oval in Nightcliff at which lights would go a long way to providing more sporting opportunities for our local community.

We believe Territorians deserve a government they can trust, one which puts them first. We are developing jobs, restoring trust in government, investing in children and building safer, fairer and stronger communities across the Northern Territory.

Mr VOWLES (Primary Industry and Resources): Madam Speaker, I am pleased to respond to the Treasurer's 2017–18 budget.

Primary industries and resources are critical parts of the Northern Territory economy, particularly in rural and remote Australia, and rural and remote Northern Territory. The primary industries sector combined makes up approximately 20% of the Territory's economy and provides a wide range of employment opportunities for all Territorians. The sector also provides economic opportunities for the businesses that support these industries, from transport to repairs and maintenance, construction and legal and accounting services. The list can go on forever.

As Minister for Primary Industry and Resources I am focused on a key objective, which is to facilitate investment that will create jobs for Territorians. Primary industries such as pastoral, mining, agriculture, forestry, aquaculture and fishing are the pillars of the communities and opportunities in the bush. When our rural and remote communities are strong the Territory is strong. We made a number of commitments to Territorians, which fall within my portfolio areas. Under my stewardship as Minister for Primary Industry and Resources we will be focused to achieve these in 2017–18 and beyond.

We are honouring our election commitment to invest \$50m in recreational fishing infrastructure. This investment will enhance the unique fishing experiences on offer in the Territory not only for visitors, but for Territorians as well. This is an unprecedented opportunity reinforced in the Northern Territory's enviable reputation as a world-class fishing destination, and we are determined to ensure the outcomes of the best value to the community possible. Six-million dollars has been allocated in the current financial year, and a further \$5m has been allocated for the coming financial year, with a balance we allocated over the following three years.

The \$6m work program in 2016–17 has been finalised, and the \$5m program for the next financial year, 2017–18, will be finalised in the coming weeks, following further consultation with recreational fishermen, through AFANT and the Recreational Fishing Advisory Committee.

Our government is already well advanced with community consultation, approval and design stages to install toilets and security cameras at Dinah Beach boat ramp, the Territory's most popular boat ramp. These additions are critical to enhancing this community facility and providing recreational fishermen peace of mind that their vehicles are more likely to be secure when they return from having a ripper day on the water.

Planning is also well under way to seal the car park at the Middle Arm boat ramp at the end of Middle Arm Road in Darwin Harbour, with work commencing this Dry Season. This upgrade is vital to offering enhanced local fishing infrastructure for residents in the rural area. It is also important to note that enhanced boat ramp facilities are a proactive measure of dispersing recreational fishing pressures along the fishery. Spreading the effort helps to sustain our magnificent resources in the Northern Territory. Both of these projects were election commitments and will be delivered this Dry Season.

Another key infrastructure upgrade set to take place this Dry Season is the sealing of the remaining dirt section of the road in to Corroboree Billabong. This commitment was made by the previous government, though we acknowledge the value in completing these works to provide better access for the fishing community.

The boat ramp facility at Dundee, commissioned by the previous government, has had issues since its opening, and I am committed to seeing these issues rectified. The issues with this critical piece of recreational infrastructure have already been felt by fishermen who have not been able to use the ramp or have encountered difficulties in doing so. We are committed to fixing the issues we inherited and making it right for Territorians. A space at the site especially for car parking is at a premium, and achieving the right outcomes will require ongoing engagement with local residents.

This government also acknowledges there is a significant proportion of the recreational fishing community who do not own a boat. Many are families with children. Because of this we are committed to delivering on our commitment to increase inland-based fishing platforms. We will seek expert knowledge to determine the most suitable and safest locations that provide best value for all Territorians.

Another project already endorsed by the Recreational Fishing Advisory Committee, RFAC, includes improvements to launching and retrieving access at Shady Camp. This project was placed on hold due to insufficient funding by the previous CLP government, but the current government has committed an additional \$970 000 to ensure the project is completed.

Consultation is under way into artificial reef design and surface fish aggregating devices, in a manner that enhances, preserves and promotes healthy fisheries.

Replacement of the 20-year-old containment net at Manton Dam will ensure the 100 000 barramundi stocked into the dam by this government this year continue to provide recreational fishing opportunities for Territorians.

As an Indigenous member of this Assembly with experience in remote community development, I am proud that this government has continued its important program to improve the lives of people in remote communities through participation in the seafood industry and through resource protection.

The Indigenous fishing program is going from strength to strength. At least one Aboriginal coastal licensee in the Territory, at Maningrida, in the electorate of Arfura, is now selling their catches in their community, which is a fantastic outcome for any government.

This provides opportunities for small-scale, sustainable fishing businesses that provide employment, income, skill acquisition and training on country. Should participants decide to move away from country, these skills will allow them to compete for a job or set up their own enterprises. Let us hope other remote communities will follow the lead of the mob in Maningrida.

Uptake of training programs is gaining momentum, with an increase from providing only one fisheries compliance course to marine rangers each year to delivering multiple courses, not only in fisheries compliance but also in commercial fishing practices, which is helping Aboriginal coastal licensees to fish safely and productively.

Soon this government will issue the first authorisations to Indigenous marine rangers to become fishing inspectors. This exciting development has been a long time coming. These marine rangers will now be able to put the compliance skills they have learned into practice. They are excited, and so are we as a government, as am I as the minister. The meaningful, long-term advancements are happening for remote communities, with real power to change lives and open career paths on country for Indigenous people.

The potential for a vibrant aquaculture industry in the Territory has been identified through the Humpty Doo Barramundi experience. Humpty Doo Barramundi is Australia's largest barramundi farm and a testament to the innovative potential in the Northern Territory.

There is massive potential for a highly-competitive farmed barramundi industry with lucrative export market potential. This government supports the growth of a vibrant farmed barramundi industry that creates opportunities for employment and community prosperity.

Good things are happening on Goulburn Island. After many years of research into the ranching of sea cucumbers, the Waruwi community has now started to harvest sea cucumbers on its doorstep. This is the result of a long-term and beneficial partnership between private industry, the community and government. The coming year will see this program continue to grow in strength and scope.

This government is actively contributing to the development of Project Sea Dragon to help deliver this important project. Seafarms Group's Project Sea Dragon is a \$2.1bn integrated, staged tiger prawn aquaculture development that straddles the Northern Territory and Western Australian borders.

Under stage one in the Northern Territory the project will deliver around 200 jobs. At full production, more than 1000 jobs will be created. The project recently reached a significant milestone when the NTEPA issued environmental assessment reports for stage one of the growth facility on the Legune pastoral lease and for the core breeding centre and broodstock maturation centre in Bynoe Harbour.

In fisheries management, sustainability underpins everything. The Northern Territory has access to some of the nation's healthiest and most desirable resources. Harvest strategies are critical to preserving these fisheries. Organisations such as the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization and the independent sustainability certifier, the Marine Stewardship Council, recognise harvest strategies as a cornerstone to responsible fisheries management.

Work is taking place in consultation with industry to roll out new and contemporary harvest strategies in accordance with best practice management to protect the sustainability and economic viability of our fisheries. When completed, harvest strategies will provide clear and measurable objectives and performance indicators for each fishery, creating biological stock condition reference points that allow for predetermined management decisions to be made, protecting the fishery.

I am pleased to inform Territorians that the mud crab fishery is leading the way, and a draft harvest strategy for that fishery has been developed. I am informed that the catch rates have improved significantly and are very strong in the Gulf of Carpentaria this season, and the new harvest strategy will help ensure the future sustainability of this important fishery.

The offshore snapper fishery also has a draft harvest strategy under development which will improve the contemporary management of the Territory's most valuable wild capture seafood industry. Under my stewardship our fisheries will be managed with a focus on long-term sustainability and intergenerational equity.

Since coming to government I have made several trips to Katherine and have been looked after by the Member for Katherine. I have had many discussions with many stakeholders in the area. The pastoral and horticultural industries are large contributors to the Katherine economy. With some of the Territory's most productive cattle regions to the west and southeast, and some of the most productive mango orchards, Katherine is already a significant service centre.

Pastoralists in the Katherine region are also turning their minds to opportunities presented by pastoral lease diversification, where good soil and water resources can be developed into high-value horticultural broadacre cropping.

Investment in soil and water studies conducted by the Department of Environment and Natural Resources has seen new land identified with development potential and the investment of \$9.9m over five years to continue these studies, including Aboriginal land where traditional owners are seeking to research whether agriculture can be developed in the regions.

The Northern Territory Government signed a Memorandum of Cooperation with the Japanese Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries to conduct trials in the NT to determine the commercial viability of new tropically-adapted crop varieties developed by the CSIRO. Under the terms of the MOC, my department and MAFF are in discussion to establish a soy bean trial at the department's Katherine Research Station, to be followed by an asparagus trial. This is a tangible demonstration of our election commitment to develop Katherine as an agribusiness hub of the Northern Territory.

The investment by the sandalwood company Quintis has seen thousands of hectares planted in the Katherine, Mataranka and Douglas Daly regions. Sandalwood is a high-value product with pharmaceutical applications in addition to cosmetic and perfumes. Discussions about continued expansions in the Katherine region are ongoing.

I want to stress that sustainable and equitable natural resource allocations are a key point in these discussions. The issues regarding water allocation under the previous government are well known, and Labor came to government with an iron-clad commitment to be an open and transparent government, and we will not deviate from that.

As a result of the location of Katherine and its access to road and rail, in opposition Labor committed to developing Katherine as an inland port. We continue to focus heavily on Katherine and unlocking the agricultural potential in the area.

Turning to the pastoral industry, which is a pivotal cog in the Northern Territory economy—in recent years the pastoral industry has seen solid market returns from live cattle exports. An estimated 235 625 NT cattle were exported from Darwin port in 2016. This has knock-on positive impacts on regional economies. Good market return sees money reinvested in local economies, creating jobs and vibrant communities for Territory children to grow up in.

When rural and remote communities and regions are strong the Territory is strong. This Territory Labor government continues to work closely with the NT pastoral industry to ensure the supply of high-quality, healthy cattle to our key markets. In November last year I announced \$4.1m in grants to the NT Livestock Exporters Association to improve animal welfare and enhance the useability of the Berrimah export yards throughout the year. The project will ensure there is sufficient covered accommodation for 4000 head, which is the capacity of a modern, purpose-built, G-class livestock vessel.

Enhanced facilities can only promote supply chain confidence in the eyes of the market we service. The upgrades are conditional to the government's buy local commitments and will provide significant business to the local roll formed steel industry.

The Territory Labor government places a high value on the Territory's plant industry. The plant industry research program focuses efforts on increasing industry profitability and sustainability, maintaining and expanding market access, keeping strict biosecurity standards and enabling industry partners to adapt to change.

Research priorities across the Territory and plant industries are being identified in collaboration with individual grower groups. Expertise within the Department of Primary Industry and Resources is being deployed to carried out research and activities into the following areas by developing a strategic plan for mango research and collaboration with NT industry stakeholders: investigating mango crop manipulation to enable the expansion of the mango production window in the Northern Territory; evaluating a new mango root stock and hybrids; evaluation of fruit fly population dynamics to enable to potential elimination of post-harvest infestation; treatments of mangoes destined for domestic or export markets; conducting research into nitrous oxide emissions from Territory horticulture and forage cropping systems; and research into Fusarium wilt affecting watermelon and bananas.

We are exploring new termite management options for agricultural and horticultural uses. We are developing a new variety of passionfruit with enhanced productivity and consumer traits, such as visual appeal and flavour. We are improving nursery production systems with tropical ornamental gingers as potted and cut flowers. We are evaluating management options for the mitigation of the cucumber green mottle mosaic virus in watermelon, rockmelon and other cucurbit crops across the Territory.

We are expanding horticultural development in Central Australia by matching market development opportunities for natural resources and cropping systems. We are developing intensive agricultural cropping options, including peanuts, Lucerne, chia and quinoa to support pastoral diversification. We are evaluating the international Australian rice varieties under lowland paddy systems and upland rain-fed and centre-pivot irrigated systems. We are evaluating the new pasture species for improved pastures to increase weight gains in cull cows.

The Territory has significant resources of valuable metals and minerals that are used in high-technology and clean energy production around the world, such as rare earth, vanadium and lithium. This presents a wealth of opportunities for the Territory into the future. The fact that the NT has a diverse mineral sector that is not dominated by iron ore or coal means we have not seen a dramatic boom and bust cycle that other parts of Australia have.

We also have very large phosphate deposits that have the potential to make the Territory a key source of fertiliser commodities to support continuing agriculture productivity in Asia. Our diverse mix of commodities located so close to the rapidly-growing Asian market suggests that, notwithstanding the inevitable fluctuation of commodity prices, the Territory's mining sector should continue to grow and expand its role in our economy.

The Northern Territory has several major projects under way seeking to mine these resources, which include the TNG's Mount Peake vanadium-titanium-iron project near Barrow Creek and the refinery in Darwin. This project has potential for more than 1700 construction jobs and 600 jobs during the operational phase. KGL Resources' Jervois copper project has the potential to create over 600 jobs during the construction and operation. Verdant Minerals' Ammaroo Phosphate Project has the potential to create over 500 jobs during construction and operation. These projects have signed project facilitation agreements with our government and are progressing through their environmental assessment process.

Other major projects in the resource sector include Arafura Resources' Nolans Bore rare earth project and Tellus Holding Chandler salt and storage project, which the Member for Namatjira is very excited about. We also have Vista Gold's Mount Todd gold mine. These are only some of the great projects being worked on at the moment.

Sixteen of the 18 major projects come out of the portfolio of Primary Industry and Resources. The development of these projects will see major economic benefits right across the Territory, particularly the Barkly and Central Australia regions. This activity is a major component in why this government has a focus to develop Tennant Creek as the mining services hub in the future.

On that note, after being in Tennant Creek last month and seeing firsthand the potential growth area for small-scale gold exploration in the region, I am proud this government has made a commitment to conduct a feasibility study into a common-user mill and a processing facility. This study will determine the viability of this project with the aim to allow small mining operations to get under way without the cost of a major investment in their processing cost. This impediment is preventing small companies and mining efforts from getting under way. I thank the Member for Barkly for all his work in this area. He is an avid supporter and a voice for the people of the Barkly region and Tennant Creek.

This government is continuing to support the work done by the NT Geological Survey. The NT Geological Survey is currently working under the CORE initiative, which is creating opportunities for resource exploration with the CSIRO and Geoscience Australia, with a focus on giving the Northern Territory a competitive advantage in attracting exploration investment. Towards the end of last year Geoscience Australia, in collaboration with the NT Geological Survey, announced that the Barkly ridge between Tennant Creek and Mount Isa would be the focus of major investigations into resource potential as part of the Commonwealth Government's Exploring for the Future program. This work is scheduled to commence this month.

The Territory government also recognises that foreign investment in our resource sector is vital to provide the necessary capital to fund large-scale exploration and mining developments in the Northern Territory. We continue to provide the stable government required to promote investment confidence in this highly-competitive market in which we operate. We are committed to maintaining and growing our relationship with existing investors in key markets, such as Japan, South Korea, China and the US, but we are also looking to begin engagement with major new markets for resources, such as India.

We are entering an exciting period of major new data acquisition interpretation to unlock the potential of poorly-understood areas of the Territory. This work also relates to the Territory Labor government's commitment to work with industry to make Tennant Creek a mining logistics hub.

In 2017–18 we have funded \$750 000 of collaborative grants for the Geophysics and Drilling Collaborations Program. Applications for the next round closed last week and will be assessed in May and June this year so successful applicants can commence work in the 2017–18 financial year.

There is \$3.25m for regional geoscientific studies to assess the resource potential in key areas in the Northern Territory. A further \$300 000 will be provided for the promotion of the Territory's potential in assisting explorers in the NT to attract investment from international markets. We are maintaining and growing the Territory's current relationship with potential and existing investors in key markets, but we are also looking to begin engagement with new major emerging markets for our resources.

A total of \$1.65m will go towards enhanced management and delivery of geoscience exploration data to the industry. This includes providing further reports and data to the geoscience exploration and mining information system, and a focus in 2017–18 on the capture and delivery of the industry drilling and geochemistry data from legacy statutory exploration reports.

Moving on to legacy mines, over 2017–18 we will finalise the Legacy Mines Unit's five-year strategic plan, which has set the framework for prioritising legacy mine sites for rehabilitation using funds in the Mining Remediation Fund. This initiative demonstrates an ongoing commitment to address the long-standing environmental issues caused by past mining practices. We live in an age of greater environmental consciousness, and rectifying the deeds of the past is how social licence is earned to further develop the mining exploration industry into the future. This will benefit Territorians through jobs, quality health, education, vibrant communities and all the other spinoffs that come with economic prosperity.

Since 2005 the Northern Territory has been a leader in Australia in requiring security bonds to cover the estimated cost of remediating mine sites after they close. From 2014 we have required from operators a non-refundable annual levy of 1% on the total calculated rehabilitation costs applied to each mining operation authorised under the MMA.

As of 31 December there was more than \$12.1m in the fund. Whilst the previous government had good intentions in setting up the fund, it did not develop any strategy or plan on how the fund is to be used. This

government will address that deficiency. This government will develop an expenditure plan that will incorporate a diverse range of projects, ranging from major site investigations to site management activities and safety works across the Northern Territory, providing local employment opportunities.

Only one-third of the levy collected is required to be paid into the fund; the rest goes into a consolidated holding account. There has recently been some public discussion about this, and it was identified that whilst some of the money paid into the consolidated holding account is appropriated back to the department for mining-related activities, some also stays there.

I am very pleased to advise Territorians that from 2016–17 none of the funds collected by the 1% levy will remain in the consolidated holding accounts. This will mean millions of dollars extra per year going into the fund to allow works to directly address a legacy issue, the intended purpose of the 1% levy. Over the past two years a focus has been on legacy sites around Tennant Creek and Hatches Creek. Work has included making open pits and shafts safe, dealing with chemical residues and identifying opportunities for new tourist trails around historical areas.

The unit has been able to achieve high percentages of local content and Indigenous employment in awarding these contracts so far. A detailed project plan across estimates for verification works at Rum Jungle and the maintenance on the cover system at Rum Jungle Creek South, or Stage 2a, has been developed, the funding of which is subject to negotiation between the Commonwealth and the Northern Territory governments. This new agreement, once signed, is expected to deliver \$10.048m in Commonwealth funding over the next two years with approximately \$6m in the 2017–18 financial year.

This project seeks to deliver a leading practice rehabilitation strategy that will create a long-term sustainable solution that addresses environmental impacts, is consistent with the views and aspirations of the joint traditional owners and facilitates a recommencement of negotiations on the Finnis River Aboriginal land claim.

Primary industries and resources represent such a massive piece of the Territory economy and span the full spatial breadth and width of the Territory's geographical footprint. As a result the prosperity of these industries is critical to the prosperity and the strength of the Territory economy, which in turn facilitates the high social standards Territorians expect from government.

As the Minister for Primary Industry and Resources in this Territory Labor government, I will continue to work towards the strongest primary industry and resources sector possible for the benefit of all Territorians with a clear focus on investing in jobs and creating projects.

I thank the Treasurer for all the work she has done over a long period of time. Budget 2017–18 is challenging, but I can assure Territorians that we have a plan. It is about investing in Territorians; it is investing in our future.

I thank the Treasurer for the budget.

Ms MOSS (Environment and Natural Resources): Mr Deputy Speaker, I am proud to speak about Budget 2017–18. It is a budget that delivers for Territorians despite tough economic times.

I, too, commend my colleague, the Treasurer, for delivering such a positive and forward-looking budget despite the enormous economic and fiscal challenges the Territory faces, and I thank all government members for their hard work over this period.

The Treasurer said today:

It is a budget for optimists, not pessimists.

We must work in partnership for the future of the Territory; that is critical.

The Gunner Labor government has been open and honest with Territorians that we are facing tough times. Four years of chaos and incompetence has left the economy in a mess, and that comes with consequences. The previous government tried to cover for its poor economic management by getting rid of the Territory's public assets, but, with no plan after the INPEX boom, Territorians have been left with a huge deficit and a slowing economy. As has been well publicised, that is not the end of the bad news.

A few weeks ago we discovered the Territory will also be hit with serious cuts to our share of the GST revenue, courtesy of a slowing Australian economy and poor population growth under the previous government. Despite the setbacks, I am very proud of the positive, future-focused budget the Treasurer delivered today and the forward-looking focus of this government. It is a budget that invests in the Territory's future and our kids, puts jobs and job-creating projects front and centre, locks in our election commitments and navigates a fair path through difficult economic and fiscal challenges confronting the Territory.

This is a budget that delivers for our children and our communities, urban, regional or remote.

This is a budget that delivers for the people in my electorate of Casuarina, especially children and young people. That is something we can be very proud of. I am exceptionally pleased that Budget 2017–18 provides for our schools with one-off \$300 000 grants to improve their learning environments and facilities. Dripstone Middle School will benefit as part of the first round of these grants under this important initiative. I commend the Minister for Education for her leadership in investment into education.

Dripstone is a beautiful school; it has educated generations of Territorians in the northern suburbs and it deserves this critical injection of funds. The funds will allow the school to upgrade its local area network to ensure students have reliable and efficient IT connections throughout the school, and it will use the grant to upgrade shade structures around the school grounds.

These school enhancements are on top of an injection of an additional \$124m over four years into education. This investment will, undoubtedly, change young lives for the better. It will give schools the resources and capacity they need to provide supportive, quality and accessible learning that meets the diverse needs of Territory students.

Royal Darwin Hospital is another incredibly important community asset in my electorate, and I am very pleased that Budget 2017–18 includes those first steps towards the PET scanner and cyclotron, which will mean better cancer care for Territorians and will reduce the need for people to travel for treatment—and the 12 specialist chemotherapy chairs.

Anyone in this Chamber or in the community whose family has been touched by cancer will appreciate the difference this will make to people during their treatment.

This budget also includes fast-tracked funding for a multistorey car park at the hospital, which will relieve the stress of people having to find a car park when attending the hospital for treatment. It is a good solution not only for my constituents, but for people across the Darwin area who visit this vital piece of health infrastructure. It is a more appropriate solution and is more forward thinking than some of the car parking solutions we saw under the previous government.

Turning now to my portfolio areas, I am pleased and proud that there are many positive stories to share about how this government is supporting jobs and job-creating projects, creating connected, vibrant and strong communities, and restoring trust in government.

The Gunner Labor government recognises that the environment is one of our greatest assets and that we must protect it for future generations of Territorians and the ongoing sustainability of job-creating industries. This includes our tourism industry, which is a key economic pillar across the Territory.

In Budget 2017–18 the government is investing almost \$10m in Mapping the Future. I was pleased to hear a number of my colleagues speak about this initiative. It will open up opportunities for economic development across the Territory with a more scientific and evidence-based understanding of our precious land, water and biodiversity assets.

The investment will allow us to gather crucial data to underpin land use plans in regional growth areas, identifying areas that are most suited to land uses such as agriculture. It will inform our natural resource-based economic development opportunities and assist in attracting private investment in natural resource industries based on accurate scientific data.

Most importantly, this improvement in our data will inform the ongoing protection, management and health of our drinking supplies, and the sustainability of our groundwater dependant ecosystems. It is an exciting and important project that will be undertaken by the Department of Environment and Natural Resources, with knowledge that will benefit communities the width and breadth of the Northern Territory.

The significant benefits to flow from this initiative cannot be overstated in regard to supporting jobs and job-creating projects, providing certainty and clarity for decision-making about future development, and protecting and preserving the natural assets that underpin and support our communities.

This initiative will support the significant body of work already under way to deliver a more transparent and accountable environmental assessment and regulatory framework.

Good environmental policy makes good economic sense. Our ongoing reforms will better protect the environment while delivering certainty and clarity to allow sustainable development to proceed, delivering jobs and economic benefit to communities across the Territory. This also supports our commitment to make data more open and accessible to the community, and I will talk more about that later.

Noxious weeds can wreak enormous havoc on the environment and our communities. Budget 2017–18 includes \$900 000 to support the Department of Environment and Natural Resources to eradicate cabomba weed near Darwin River Dam, and to support mitigating high fire risk through proactive and strategic control of gamba grass.

Our weed control officers are among the unsung heroes of the Territory. The work they do to identify and mitigate the potentially devastating impact of weeds often goes unnoticed, but it is invaluable.

Through Budget 2017–18 the Gunner Labor government is recognising the critical role of our Indigenous ranger groups by providing \$2.1m for essential equipment to support and extend their work protecting land from risks such as pests, weeds and fire. A further \$2m will go towards a land management and conservation fund to improve conservation practices on Aboriginal land and sea country.

A discussion paper is available to Indigenous ranger groups so they can provide input into the roll-out of these grants, as well as the land and sea management issues they face on a regular basis and how they might be addressed. Expressions of interest for funding under the grants program will open from July 2017. The grants are about supporting jobs and economic development on country as well as returning decision-making and control back to communities when it comes to their own land.

The Gunner government is also supporting local control and economic development opportunities on country with a \$500 000 per annum investment for an Indigenous carbon unit. The unit will guide the development of the carbon farming industry on Indigenous land, including the development of carbon offset and abatement programs as part of creating and extending a carbon economy. Consultation is already under way on this important job-creating initiative, and I am pleased to see some of these innovative initiatives happening already.

There are strong and important links between the Department of Environment and Natural Resources and the Department of Tourism and Culture. Both portfolios are integral to the identity and the heart and soul of the Northern Territory. They are charged with protecting and preserving all that is unique and wonderful about the Northern Territory, our beautiful parks, landscapes and wilderness as well as our stories, culture and heritage.

You need only look at the mystery and majesty of our natural environment to understand why our patch of the world has inspired so much breathtakingly beautiful art. It is also unsurprising that our environment and the arts and culture that draw so heavily from our natural beauty are the major drawcards for visitors, whether they are from just across the border or around the globe.

We are continuing to invest in our arts and culture because it is bound to our identity and uniqueness. The \$100m Gunner Labor government investment in developing and enhancing a globally significant arts trail throughout the Territory has been warmly welcomed across sectors. Our arts trail projects will create construction jobs throughout the Territory and, importantly, ongoing jobs for artists, arts administrators, curators and others involved in the arts sector.

Budget 2017–18 kicks off an investment of \$6m over three years into an arts trails regional stimulus grant program, with applications for the first round having already opened last month. Through the program, arts and cultural organisations can apply for small grants of up to \$10 000 or larger grants of up to \$100 000 to improve access to promote and upgrade their facilities—projects that provide benefit to the broader community. This program will develop important links between our cultural organisations across the Northern Territory, improving visitor awareness and experience and ensuring these important cultural organisations can continue to tell our story in improved facilities.

The \$50m Northern Territory Government contribution to the national Indigenous art gallery and \$20m to the cultural centre both sit against the 2020–21 financial year, but work on both of these projects is well and truly progressing. We have a steering committee of eminent Australians with decades of art, cultural and tourism experience between them. It has convened once already in Alice Springs to guide the early stages of the early art gallery's development. The second meeting is in June, and it will continue to consider the siting, governance, curation, design and other key decisions about what will become an incredibly important national and international artistic institution.

The immense energy, enthusiasm and excitement that is building around this project, not only in Alice Springs but around the country, is encouraging and heartening. There is no doubt that the Red Centre, the beating heart of our country, is the rightful home for this significant facility. Meanwhile, early project planning is under way for the national iconic cultural centre, also to be built in Alice Springs.

Early consultation on this project will be led by Nganampa Development Corporation, with input sought from organisations and cultural institutions around the country. Recruitment is currently under way for a project manager to advance the centre concept and consultation, with initial business planning by the organisation being largely complete. This position will be funded by the Territory government.

We were very happy to stand by the Chief Minister and the Member for Port Darwin, as well as representatives of the Stolen Generations, Eileen Cummings and Maisie Austin, last month to announce plans to build a pre-eminent museum on Myilly Point that will come to represent and showcase the many diverse and incredible stories that make up the Territory.

I am pleased this project will pay respect to the Stolen Generations' history of that site, the previous home of the Kahlin Compound. This will include a place of healing for living members of the Stolen Generations and a place for them to share their stories, as they see fit, with Territorians and visitors alike. A tender for the design of the museum, including consultation with the community, will be let in June, and we intend forge ahead with this important project so that once and for all the question of what happens to that large and strategically-placed block on Myilly Point is settled in a way that honours and reflects the history of the amazing place we call home.

That does not end our vision for cultural offerings in Darwin; it will be one part of a broader 10-year museum master plan for our tropical city. Consultation will start very soon for the community's vision for the museum and art galleries in Darwin. This process will include further consultation on a fine arts gallery in State Square, announced by the Chief Minister as part of the \$100m rejuvenation of the Darwin CBD. The museum and art gallery master plan will be an important document as we plan for the future of Darwin, including investment and strategic job-creating projects and building stronger, more vibrant communities.

These are crucial projects that will deliver significant benefits across a number of sectors in our economy, including our arts and tourism industries, our hospitality sector and our regional and remote communities. These investments are not just about short-term construction jobs but ongoing arts, tourism and hospitality jobs. This is about investing in our children's future. It is about standing up and saying we are proud of who we are as Territorians and sharing our important stories with the world.

What came out loud and clear from the recent economic summit process, as well as my conversations with the tourism sector, is that new offerings and experiences are crucial as we compete on a global scale for visitors and tourism dollars. Figures from Tourism Australia show that 89% of international visitors to Australia incorporated an arts, heritage or Indigenous cultural activity into their trip. We believe that there is nowhere else in the world where you can enjoy such a rich artistic, cultural or Indigenous experience than here in the Territory. That is why we will continue to invest in and promote our unique cultural offerings.

We are not just focusing on freshening up our arts and cultural offerings; we are also delving back eight million years to showcase our incredible prehistoric times, something that excited quite a few members of the House. Back then there were herds of large wombat-like marsupials that roamed Australia, and giant thunderbirds were in abundance as well as giant kangaroos, crocodiles, bandicoots and possums.

As Australia cooled and dried, these giant creatures died out. There are an incredible number of fossils now lying packed tightly together at Alcoota Station outside Alice Springs, and fossils dug up from the Alcoota site are stored in various sections of the Museum of Central Australia, including in the dance rehearsal space of Araluen Arts Centre. It is well and truly time that this space was returned for community use and dance performances and that these important fossils see the light of day.

We intend to reimagine the Miocene era, when these creatures roamed Central Australia, by investing in a new Alcoota megafauna fossil exhibition in the Alice Springs CBD. Budget 2017–18 includes \$1.5m to fit out the first stage of the exhibition along with operational funding to get it up and running. The Member for Brailling and I cannot wait to see those fossils come to life in 2018.

Mountain biking has become another important visitor attraction in Alice Springs, and I was really pleased to wave off riders in the recent Easter in the Alice mountain bike event, which was a huge success. Budget 2017 will continue to invest in developing our mountain biking trails, particularly in the Red Centre.

These are just some of the ways the Gunner Labor government is investing in existing and new tourism product to lure visitors here from interstate and overseas. We also recognise how important it is to support the more than 2000 small and medium-sized tourism-related businesses by actively marketing and promoting the Territory. That is why we have confirmed the continuation of an \$8m investment injection into tourism marketing and associated activities to make sure we are effective in selling the Territory to our key national and international visitor markets.

On coming to government the Gunner Labor government brought together tourism, arts, museums, heritage, sport and recreation, major events and parks and wildlife as one agency. We did this to forge the already strong alignments across these key areas of government but also make sure they were more strongly tied together so they are working closely and cohesively to create a vibrant and exciting Territory and to attract more people here, helping to grow the economy and deliver more jobs.

We know that tourism is one of the Territory's more important and consistent economic drivers, directly or indirectly employing some 15 000 Territorians. Despite facing tough economic times in the Territory we are continuing to invest in our tourism industry, and our tourism marketing investment in Budget 2017–18 includes \$4m additional funding for Tourism initiatives that are aimed at attracting more visitors from China and India, on top of an additional \$1m in 2016–17, meeting a Territory Labor government election commitment.

We are continuing to support our strong traditional markets, including the east coast of Australia, the US and key European countries like Germany and the UK, but we do need to begin positioning ourselves to make the most of attracting and taking advantage of emerging tourism markets in countries like India and China. Our target is to build Chinese visitor numbers to 30 000 a year by 2020, and we want to get ready to attract our share of a growing market of Indian tourists and encourage them to step off the beaten track and spend some time in the Territory.

As part of supporting crucial marketing activity our \$8m injection into the tourism budget will support premier sporting games in Darwin and Alice Springs as well as increased investment in our screen industry. We need to make sure we are activating our sporting and other major events to attract as many people to the Territory as possible. We will look carefully at how we can make premier NRL and AFL games played in the Territory more attractive to interstate visitors.

Our screen industry delivers jobs to hundreds of Territorians and plays a crucial role in getting our unique stories out to the rest of the world and ensuring we are leveraging off them to attract more visitors. We are pleased to be providing an unprecedented level of funding to our screen industry to share our stories and support our visitor economy, as well as creating more jobs and supporting the growth of that important industry.

Over four years we will invest \$9m into developing our screen industry; supporting our local film makers to tell our stories to the world; building their skills and capacity as film makers; and continuing to grow this important job-creating industry.

Our parks, heritage, arts and museums and sporting events are integral to our identity and to ensuring our communities are strong and vibrant. They are vital to our tourism industry, acting as major drawcards to those looking for a unique experience. This is the place where you can explore art that has been exhibited in London in a remote community, wander the landscapes that inspired it and then talk to the artist who created it.

As well as our arts trails we are also investing in enhancing and upgrading important tourism infrastructure in some of our key parks. I was pleased to stand with the Members for Arnhem and Katherine a few weeks ago to confirm our investment of \$10m into upgrading infrastructure at Nitmiluk National Park over the next four years—work that will be done in close consultation with the Jawoyn traditional owners. It was great to have Lisa Mumbin there from the Jawoyn Association.

Budget 2017–18 includes a boost of \$8m for repairs and maintenance as part of our economic stimulus program. This injection will be used to support tourism-related infrastructure, including our parks, heritage sites and sporting facilities. It represents a significant injection into freshening up tourism and related assets.

The Territory Wildlife Park is dear to the heart of many Territorians and visitors. We are fortunate to have a team of dedicated staff who work around the clock to care for the incredible diversity of wildlife at the park and make that place accessible, enjoyable and educative for the community. However, it is well beyond time for the park to be given additional love to make sure it is providing visitors with a contemporary wildlife experience. Budget 2017–18 confirms this government's ongoing commitment to the park's operations, as well as providing additional support for the team to undertake strategic planning for the future of this important conservation, education and tourism facility. There is \$150 000 in the budget for this work.

A further \$200 000 will go towards trialling a transport link to the Territory Wildlife Park to increase visitation. Current arrangements can make it difficult for visitors to access the park if they do not have a car, so this will help determine whether a transport link will make a difference to visitor numbers and make the park easier to access for the community and visitors.

Some of the injection of funds will go towards a refresh of the park's website, aimed at boosting visitor numbers. A further \$1m will go towards much-needed repairs and maintenance work at the Territory Wildlife Park and the Alice Springs Desert Park. This is on top of the \$8m repairs and maintenance economic stimulus boost in this budget.

Our sporting facilities are an essential focus of many Territory communities, contributing to the health and wellbeing of Territorians, young and old. I am pleased that this budget contains an additional \$1.5m in 2017–18, over and above our election commitment of \$2m per year, for urban and regional oval lights.

Over the next four years we will spend \$13m upgrading lighting at urban and regional sporting ovals. We already have a number of commitments to lighting projects, such as Nightcliff Oval, and we will be working with local governments and from existing audits to install and improve lighting at a number of community ovals.

This will extend the playing time for a diverse range of sports, keeping our kids and communities engaged in healthy and safe activities. This commitment will include a \$600 000 contribution towards lights at Albrecht Oval in Alice Springs, allowing more cricket and footy to be played in the cool of the evening.

I am pleased to announce that Budget 2017–18 will include a \$6.2m investment in community sporting infrastructure in Alice Springs. Territorians love their sport. It is integral to building safe, fair and vibrant communities, and it is an important investment for our kids.

How this money will be spent will be driven by the community, and we want to make sure that in these tough economic times we are getting the most value out of our investments by putting them towards projects that deliver the greatest benefit for the greatest number of people.

The Alice Springs Town Council will use some of these funds to upgrade its sports master plan in consultation with the community, and we will use that in determining priority sporting projects that deliver for the community now and into the future.

This \$6.2m commitment comes on top of the \$5m for upgrades to Purkiss Reserve sporting facilities in Tennant Creek. I thank the Member for Barkly for taking me there to meet with the committee a few weeks ago.

Budget 2017–18 includes a further \$5m for remote oval upgrades. This is part of our four-year, \$14m commitment to breathe new life into sporting ovals, which are an integral part of Territory community life.

This budget is all about investing in our future. It is about new and exciting ways in which we can promote and better use the assets we have and look at the ideas and infrastructure that will be game changers for the Territory.

Our creative industries do not only refer to our art sector but also encompass our emerging ICT sector. It is becoming all the more pressing that government responds to the digital revolution and ensures our communities are not left behind—that they are connected and ready to take advantage of the enormous job and economic opportunities that digital communication is making possible.

It is becoming all the more pressing that government provides its services by traditional and digital methods to cater for our diverse community and deliver these services efficiently and effectively. It is becoming all the more pressing that the community has a strategy for growing our participation in, contribution to and share of the digital economy. This budget includes a redirection of funds within the Department of Corporate and Information Services towards establishing an office of digital government that will look across our services and policy areas and provide digital leadership across government.

The Labor, Gunner government understands that smarter use of ICT is critical to restoring trust in government, creating jobs, helping our children and building safer, fairer and stronger communities across the Territory. The Office of Digital Government in DCIS will incorporate the functions of the government's Chief Information Officers and drive our digital advancement agenda, fulfilling an election commitment.

Following consultation on the establishment of the office, we will begin recruitment for a person with the skills and expertise to head that office and drive our ICT leadership agenda. The office will also play an integral role in delivering a whole-of-government digital strategy, which will provide a clear view of where we are now in relation to ICT and the direction and vision of the ICT opportunities available to our communities, businesses, industries and kids into the future.

The department is also a vital partner in delivering the Core Clinical Systems Renewal Program, CCSRP, for the Territory. This will be a groundbreaking service delivery system that will deliver a single digital medical record for all Territorians, improving healthcare across the Territory and freeing up medical staff to focus on patient care rather than administration. This project was started under the former CLP government, but it was not fully funded. This government has done the work to ensure it receives the level of investment required to ensure it is fully implemented. Our health workforce and Territorians deserve a system that better supports quality service delivery, and that is what CCSRP is focused on.

Budget 2017–18 is one that invests in the future of this great place that we call home. It focuses on our kids, creating jobs now and into the future, supporting, strengthening and connecting our communities and restoring the public's faith in government.

Mr Deputy Speaker, I commend Budget 2017–18 to the House.

Ms LAWLER (Education): Mr Deputy Speaker, I congratulate the Treasurer on her first budget. The Member for Wanguri is a professional. Delivering a budget is one of the toughest jobs there is, along with delivering a baby. It has been wonderful to see such an amazing job done by the Member for Wanguri, let alone all the lead-in work. Congratulations to Nicole Manison.

Budget 2017–18 is all about children, jobs and community. This budget delivers on our election commitments and is a fair plan for our future. As I said during Question Time, I am very proud to be the Education minister who is part of a budget that delivers \$1.1bn for education in the Northern Territory in 2017–18. It continues our investment in children and young people, because we know this is the key to the Territory's social and economic prosperity. Education is one of the largest areas of recurrent expenditure commitments made by our government. This is not to be taken lightly as the Territory is facing some challenging economic times.

Despite the cuts from the federal government, the Treasurer has delivered a budget that honours our commitments. This is important for the economy, but also for ensuring that the community can have confidence in this government, that we do what we say we will do so families and businesses can have certainty for their future. That is why this government has put together a plan to ensure we are supporting the community through job creation and investing in children and families.

A good economic plan invests in education even when times are tough, and that is what we have done. By investing in children we can lift the Territory's social and economic development, turn around long-term issues impacting on crime and antisocial behaviour, and create more jobs and greater economic growth into the future. We will continue to invest in education because it is the right thing to do for our children; it is the smart thing to do for the Territory's future.

The total operating budget for the Department of Education is \$999.3m with over \$734m of this being directed to government education outputs. This budget delivers on our commitment to an additional \$31m per year into education. It continues existing programs that were achieving results and provides over \$141m for improving infrastructure across government and non-government schools.

A total of \$489m is being directed into 2017's school resourcing to ensure students get a great education. This investment is helping schools to employ more teachers and support staff, and more resources to support student learning. Funding to schools ensures every child is supported to reach their full potential. Our commitment was to provide an additional \$20m directly to schools, and we have delivered that.

The 2017 budget allocation for school expenses is an increase of \$41m from 2016 and includes funds for an increase in government school enrolments this year. It is lovely to see about 900 more students enrolled in government schools in the Territory. This is great news for students, their families and staff in our schools. In the last eight months I have visited nearly 60 schools across the Territory. I have heard about how this additional funding will support students and alleviate the pressures staff have been under due to the cuts imposed on them by the previous CLP government.

I recently visited MacFarlane Primary School in Katherine. The staff there told me that with their additional funding they were able to employ a new staff member to help with some of the most challenging students there. Within a few days of their new employee starting they witnessed the benefits for the students, staff and school by having an extra pair of hands to help out in the school and focus on challenging behaviours. It is lovely to hear those stories as you visit the schools.

You cannot tell me that more funding for schools does not have an impact; it does. I know it, as do the members of this House, parents, teachers and, most of all, students, because they get additional support in their classrooms. While there are programs and support services that all students need to access, some of our young people have additional needs that cannot be met through mainstream resourcing and approaches. Budget 2017–18 includes this government's commitment of \$8m to provide extra support for children and young people with challenging behaviours and disability to improve outcomes for these students, their families and communities.

We are developing a five-year interagency strategic framework to support a holistic service delivery model for students with additional needs and to improve student outcomes. This framework will be developed in consultation with key stakeholders during 2017. While this long-term plan is under way we are improving student access to allied health professionals and expanding multidisciplinary specialist support teams to grow school capacity to appropriately support teachers to meet the needs of students.

This includes more speech pathologists; occupational therapists; psychologists; speech, language and communication teachers; and a new conductive hearing loss education adviser. We have established a positive learning centre and an autism spectrum disorder intervention program at the early intervention hub on the old Henbury School site. These programs are already supporting some of our most vulnerable students with additional needs.

From next semester these services will be complimented with the 20 scholarships being offered for teachers to undertake studies in special education. This will strengthen teacher and school capacity to provide quality education to students with additional needs. It is important that every student is able to achieve their full potential, and having teachers with specialist skills in special education is vitally important to achieve that.

The additional \$8m will also support the expansion of the Territory-wide social and emotional learning program, and a systemic approach to positive behaviour. This program has commenced in 24 schools, involving 471 staff and nearly 2900 students. By the end of 2017 these programs will be expanded to at least 70 schools. Students are saying that because of this program they are better able to resolve conflict. This curriculum is equipping students with the social and emotional tools they need to be resilient and positive members of our community.

We also need programs that engage students in learning and keeping them at school. This is especially important for young people who may have been disengaged for long periods of time. Palmerston students will be able to access a much-needed re-engagement centre, which will provide supportive and flexible learning options for secondary students. The program will cater for up to 40 students initially. Engaging can be particularly challenging in our regional towns where low student numbers limit the range of subjects and pathways that can be offered sustainably. This government is delivering on its election commitment to provide \$2m per year to implement a new Healthy Life, Creative Life program.

The program will provide alternative education pathways for middle and senior year students in the Barkly and Katherine regions. Two weeks ago I was in Katherine talking to the regional director about their plans for the re-engagement and Healthy Life, Creative Life program. It is sounding very positive.

This will be through increased access to arts, sports, social and emotional learning, culture, language, learning on country and vocational education and training to ensure young people are engaged in learning and are job ready in their local communities. Work has commenced on establishing these programs for students in the Barkly and Katherine regions. Budget 2017–18 will provide an investment of \$1.2m to continue to improve educational outcomes for middle year students and support the effective transition of students between primary, middle and senior school to better prepare students to succeed. A total of \$7.1m will provide for nationally-accredited vocational education and training programs and support for employment pathways in our schools.

There will be \$300 000 for the expansion of enterprise education and innovation programs within schools. This will ensure students across the Territory are able to access advice and training in new technologies and emerging industries. We are continuing to support families by providing the \$150 per student Back to School payment. That is \$7.1m for the Back to School Payment Scheme. That was an initiative of the Labor government a few years ago, one which I was pleased to see the previous government continue. I know how valuable those additional funds are for families at the start of the school year when you are just getting over Christmas and all those expenses.

We also need to focus on our youngest and most vulnerable so they are ready for day one of school. A total of \$11.1m will be invested into the Families as First Teachers program to improve the development and learning outcomes of vulnerable and disadvantaged children from birth to five years of age in remote and urban sites. This year we are already expanding the program in two urban and three remote sites: Ludmilla; the early intervention hub in Darwin; Jilkminggan; Minyerri; and Melville Island.

A total of \$6.5m will enable construction of a new integrated early learning centre at Tennant Creek Primary School to support some of our most vulnerable children and their families. The facility will include a new preschool catering for up to 88 children, meeting rooms and specialist rooms, amenities for food preparation and the delivery of nutrition programs. It will be a wonderful building, and I cannot wait to see those programs in place; it will be outstanding. Construction for the project is expected to commence in August, with the new facility due to open in February 2018. We know how important it is for families to be able to access affordable childcare services so they can engage in employment or study.

Budget 2017–18 will provide \$6m to continue the early childhood services subsidy for long daycare, three-year-old kindergarten and family daycare services to offset the cost of childcare for parents and families. That is often a forgotten investment in our budget, but I know how important it is for families to have those subsidies. It is a great government initiative that has been around for many years and is not usually fully acknowledged in the budget.

Once children start their formal education at school we need to make sure they have a quality learning environment with great teachers and support staff, and services and programs that support all students to engage in learning. We are investing \$2.3m into professional development and accreditation for Aboriginal assistant teachers. These support staff work with some of our most disadvantaged students. We need to make sure we value their contribution and support these educators, who are a vital part of the learning equation in our remote schools.

I have heard many schools say they like having greater autonomy to make decisions, but this comes with greater responsibility for finances and human services, which schools have not been well supported in. A total of \$1m has been allocated in Budget 2017–18 to support and develop school business managers through training and other support mechanisms to help alleviate some of the pressures schools have been facing.

We are also delivering on our election commitment to introduce coding to primary and secondary schools, with \$500 000 in Budget 2017–18 to upskill teachers in digital literacy.

There is \$400 000 for mentoring and development of early career teachers and aspiring principals. These programs are vital so that we can grow and retain quality teachers and leaders in the Territory, so we can have a quality teacher in every classroom and an exceptional leader in every school. We know this will have the greatest impact on educational outcomes for Territory students.

I am very proud that in Budget 2017–18 there are dollars for infrastructure. We all like to see upgrades for our schools. They are the things you can see, and they will be a legacy in the future when we talk about school buildings. This government is putting additional dollars into professional development of teachers, scholarships for special education and other key things for our most disadvantaged students. It is lovely to see the balance in Budget 2017–18 between infrastructure and teaching and learning programs.

Schools are central to our communities. They not only provide a place for student learning, but they are often used after school hours and on weekends by community groups. I think most of us would like to see that improve. That is why it is important for us to have quality learning environments that meet the needs of students and are safe and welcoming. This can affect the performance and attitudes of students and teachers as well as families and community members.

Budget 2017–18 delivers over \$141m for education infrastructure, including \$104m for capital works. The repairs and maintenance program for government schools in Budget 2017–18 is \$34.1m. This includes new funding of \$1m for upgrading remote homeland learning centres, some of which are 30 years old. More than 100 students in Yirrkala Homeland School will be the first to benefit from this funding. This is great news for seven of our remotest communities in the Arnhem region. In the coming weeks I will head out there. I look forward to visiting some of the homelands schools in Yirrkala. There is Biranybirany, Boruwuy, Dhalinybuy, Gangan, Garrthalala, Rorruwuy and Rurrangala.

This is a budget for all, not just for our urban centres. We have increased the minor new works program to \$17.6m for government schools. This investment will see the first round of Building Better Schools projects delivered to 45 government schools, as well as small infrastructure projects and upgrades needed for education facilities.

The increase in budget for minor new works will also ensure there is capacity for unseen projects in addition to the Building Better Schools initiative, which will give 45 government schools and nine non-government schools \$300 000 each this financial year. We will continue to roll that out. It has been very well received in our schools, but there will also be money set aside for any unforeseen projects in the minor new works area.

Budget 2017–18 has delivered \$18m for redevelopment of Darwin High School. This was an election commitment and will provide flexible learning spaces and a new laboratory, which will enhance students' learning and development skills for future employment in science, technology, engineering, the arts and mathematics.

Darwin High School is one of our largest but also one of our oldest schools in the Territory. Much of the facilities are the same as when I attended the school. When I was walking along the corridors the other day, those memories came flooding back. The only things that had changed were the lockers. This upgrade will benefit not only Darwin High School students but over 2000 students who access the Bullocky Point site, including students from remote areas enrolled in the NT School of Distance Education.

I was pleased to recently announce that we will invest \$6m for stage one of Ludmilla Primary School's master plan. This redevelopment will include a new early learning centre and integrated areas to support a play group and other services. This project will create local jobs, support students and their families, and revitalise and renew Ludmilla Primary School as a vibrant school in a growing community.

This is an investment for the future as more families move into the area, including the 100 new houses at Eaton on the RAAF Base. Parap, Larrakeyah and Stuart Park and other schools in the greater Darwin area are pretty much full. We have a great resource at Ludmilla, but we need to revitalise that school because it can take many more students than are currently enrolled.

It is great to see our funding going strategically to an older school that needs to be revitalised; the same goes for Darwin High School.

We will also allocate \$3.5m for transportable classrooms so we can respond to the changing needs of schools. These will provide the department with another option to accommodate additional students whilst managing the capital works program.

Our government is honouring the investment in capital works projects already planned for schools such as Taminmin, Acacia Hills, Braitling primary, Ramininging and Wulagi Primary School. I know those school communities are grateful to see those works rolling out.

Last week I attended the ground breaking for the new Mother Teresa Catholic Primary School in Zuccoli, and I am sure the school staff will be pleased to learn that we will invest \$9m for the shared school facilities in Zuccoli. The master plan for this site includes a future government primary school, and whilst that plan is still a few years away these works will benefit students at both schools and will avoid duplicated services and unnecessary costs.

Through these infrastructure projects we will continue to support jobs in the Territory and build education facilities that meet the learning needs of students now and into the future.

I am the minister for all Territory schools, and I know the importance of all schooling sectors working together to provide families with choice. That includes Catholic education, non-government schools and independent schools, and this government has a great relationship with all those sectors. I am proud to be the minister for all Territory schools, not just government schools.

Non-government schools are also benefiting from Budget 2017–18. Over the next four years, every school will receive a grant of \$300 000 for upgrades and refurbishments. The first nine non-government schools will soon receive their grant. Just like the government schools, they are grateful for those additional funds.

Peak non-government organisations are working with their schools to determine who will receive the first round of grants, and schools are eager to get this money to make improvements that will benefit their students.

This year we honoured the previous government's \$21.2m capital grant to the Catholic Education Office Northern Territory for the construction of the new Mother Teresa Catholic Primary School in Zuccoli. As I mentioned earlier, Budget 2017–18 includes \$9m for developing the shared facilities on the site, which will benefit both sectors. Under the per-capita funding model for government and non-government schools, they will also see future funding increases as a direct result of our government's increased investment in government school budgets.

Budget 2017–18 provides a fair budget for education that is a significant increase on the CLP's 2016–17 budget and delivers on our election commitments. The NT has stepped up to provide more funding for government education.

I will continue to lobby Simon Birmingham to secure a fair and equitable deal on Commonwealth funding for the Territory, both in relation to funding for schooling and for early childhood. I had a conversation with Senator Birmingham today; information is coming through, as we speak, about federal funding for the Northern Territory. At this stage it is not looking extremely positive; it is looking reasonable, but it is not what we would have asked for. I will be looking closely to see what the Australian Government's budget is like next week.

As we all know, four years of the CLP left the economy in a mess. This is made much worse by reductions in the GST revenue. We are going through a challenging economic period. Everyone knows this and we have been very up front about it. Despite this, we are sticking to our commitments in education. We are all in this together. We all have a part to play in addressing these challenging economic times. That is why I spoke to some of education's key stakeholders over the weekend about how we can continue to work together and support each other.

Under the CLP cuts to education, 500 full-time equivalent staff lost their jobs, including over 300 staff, teachers and support staff. We cannot let that happen again.

Times are tough, but we need to continue investing in education to grow the Territory's future. For education to play its part in these challenging economic times, efficiencies will total less than 1% of the overall budget. I want to reassure staff, students and families that this is not about cuts to jobs. These savings will be made through the government's wages policy and by refining policy programs and funding arrangements.

As I have said many times, I am keen to put an end to any special deals in education. Now is the time to ensure there is equity and efficiency in the way the budget is allocated. I am proud to be a member of this government, a government that is putting people first by prioritising jobs to grow the economy and support families. This government made a commitment to put children at the centre of our decision-making, and this has been a key feature of Budget 2017–18.

Budget 2017–18 is \$1.1bn worth of good news for education. We are delivering on our commitments. We are putting children, jobs and communities first.

Mr Deputy Speaker, I commend the budget to the House.

Debate adjourned.

PAPERS TABLED

Travel Reports – Members for Fong Lim and Arnhem

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable members, I table travel reports from the Members for Fong Lim and Arnhem.

CONSIDERATION OF COMMITTEE REPORTS, ATTORNEY-GENERAL'S REPORTS AND GOVERNMENT RESPONSES

Auditor-General's Report to the Northern Territory Legislative Assembly March 2017—consideration deferred.

ADJOURNMENT

Ms MOSS (Environment and Natural Resources): Mr Deputy Speaker, I move that the Assembly do now adjourn.

Mr GUNNER (Fannie Bay): Mr Deputy Speaker, I acknowledge the passing of senior Nunggubuyu and Wamindilyakwa woman, Mrs Lalara. She was a senior traditional owner of lands in East Arnhem Land. She lived most of her life among her Anindilyakwa speaking relatives of the Groote Eylandt archipelago. She was born in 1946 and raised in a newly-opened church missionary society at Angurugu on Groote Eylandt. She was educated there and was early identified by the missionaries for her linguistic proficiency in Anindilyakwa, her natural teaching ability and, most importantly for the church, her fluency in English. As a result, upon leaving school Mrs Lalara become a school teacher.

She was always a very strong and influential woman. She worked with the missionaries but always had doubts about their methods. As she said of the mission times in an old interview conducted in 2012, 'It was just rural bound, strict things. Missionaries were the bossy ones. They used to tell us what to do and they used to punish us.'

The election of the Whitlam government in 1972 had an enormous impact on her. It began a process of self-determination and the end of mission control at Angurugu by 1980. Whitlam's land rights legislation was to make Mrs Lalara a lifelong supporter of the Australian Labor Party; however, she was not blinded by the language of self-determination and saw it largely as a masquerade. As she said recently about the early 1970s:

Self-determination was handled appallingly. It's just words. You see so many white people come and go, people don't give a shit. Corrupt principal, teachers, here to bludge in the bush. The white people here are basically dead wood. They're conservative and interested in themselves. They want to earn money, get a good mortgage for a house—somewhere else. Things couldn't be worse if all the white people left. Nothing's happening because it's bludge city here.

In the late 1970s, while teaching at Angurugu School, she met the love of her life, Grant Burgoyne, a recently arrived school teacher from Sydney. They had a child, Kara, and were to spend the rest of Mrs Lalara's life together. This was mainly on Groote Eylandt, but also travelling to schools and towns around the Territory and New South Wales, including Darwin, Pigeon Hole, Hay, Casino and Nambucca Heads. Everywhere she went she made an impact as a strong, independent Aboriginal woman, including calling out racism publicly wherever she saw it.

At the first cricket test at the Gabba in 1986 she insisted on barracking for the West Indies against the Cricket Australia XI, calling out at the top of her voice; 'Where are the black players in the Australian team?' Upon returning to Groote she worked informally as an interpreter without pay for years, ensuring that her family and the community understood and accessed services. It was not until 1996 with the first trial of an Aboriginal interpreter service in the Territory that she was to be paid for this work.

She sat for one of the first accreditation tests to qualify as an official interpreter and scored one of the highest levels ever for such tests. It was no surprise to those who had witnessed her performance as an unofficial interpreter for years. The first Aboriginal interpreter service and its employees faced many challenges in the early days of the service, but Mrs Lalara's professionalism always shone through.

Colleen Rosas, the redoubtable head of the interpreting service, recalls one particular case in the Supreme Court. One of the defendants had the same last name and the prosecution lawyer tried to say that Mrs Lalara was related and, therefore, would take sides. You should have seen his face when Mrs Lalara stood up and advised that she was related to every Aboriginal person in Australia and that as a

professional interpreter she did not take sides. I am sure he had never been challenged before and he has probably not been challenged again since in such a strong and proud way.

Courts and hospitals would always make special requests to have her interpret, so professional was she in her work. Judge Sue Oliver sent a special message of condolence to Mrs Lalara's family at her funeral recently.

Mrs Lalara was always an active member of the Anindilyakwa Land Council. She had campaigned for the removal of the disgraced former CEO and always endeavoured, through the land council, to make the Groote Eylandt Mining Company keep its promises to her people.

At her funeral the GEMCO representative acknowledged this by saying that GEMCO always knew when Mrs Lalara was unhappy with them, so forthright was she in making her views known to the company. It is a fact that she did not like what mining had done to her beloved country, but she still worked constructively with GEMCO to get the best possible results for her people, especially in regard to local employment and land rehabilitation. In fact, the last decade she and her husband ran the successful cross-cultural training program for the new GEMCO employees and their contractors to ensure that new arrivals had a better understanding of the cultural mores of her people.

When the former Governor-General, Quentin Bryce, visited Groote, Mrs Lalara hosted her at the cross-cultural training course in another example of her never-ending quest to make non-Indigenous people understand something of her people, their needs and their aspirations. In 2010 a two-dollar mining company from Perth won exploration leases over 1723 square kilometres of the sea bed between the mainland and Groote. Mrs Lalara went on the offensive in strident opposition to their plans.

She gave many media interviews condemning the plans, explaining that eight major songlines crossed the affected sea bed and that people's very existence would be compromised if the mining was to go ahead. She mobilised her people and convinced governments of both political persuasions to put a moratorium on the planned exploration.

On behalf of the Australian Labor Party, I cannot conclude without acknowledging the exemplary service Mrs Lalara has provided to our party over four decades. No election passed without her manning the polling booths of Groote, Bickerton Island and Numbulwar on behalf of Labor candidates, including Bob Collins, Wes Lanhupuy, John Ah Kit, Malarndirri McCarthy and her close friend, Warren Snowdon. Even though unwell she still campaigned hard for the current member for Arnhem, Selena Uibo.

She delighted in Labor victories, celebrated hard and was devastated by the rare defeats she suffered. Future campaigns will not be the same without her. Her husband, Grant, and daughter, Kara, along with other family members, will continue her great work. On behalf of the Northern Territory Government, I send my sincere condolences to Grant, Kara, Mrs Lalara's grandchildren, her large extended family and her many friends and supporters on Groote throughout the Territory and across Australia. I always found my time with her to be warm, her passion strong and genuine. It was a very sad day when I had to talk with Grant upon Mrs Lalara's passing.

This is a difficult adjournment to give. We thank her for her time not only in the Labor Party but what she did for the government and her people.

Thank you, Mrs Lalara, and thank you to everyone who helped to contribute to the stories I have told today. Thank you for sharing this remarkable Territorian with us.

Ms LAWLER (Drysdale): Mr Deputy Speaker, the Territory has many exceptional young people, and I want to bring to the parliament's attention the outstanding achievements of one young person who was raised and educated in the Northern Territory.

Ms Francesca Maclean was awarded the 2017 Young ACT Woman of the Year on 7 March for her work promoting gender equity. A Territory girl, born and bred girl, she was the ACT Young Woman of the Year on International Women's Day this year.

Francesca Maclean was awarded the 2017 Young ACT Woman of the Year for her work promoting gender equity. The prestigious award was announced as part of the celebrations for International Women's Day held in Canberra and was one of three ACT women's awards presented by the ACT Minister for Education, Yvette Berry MLA.

Some of you may know that Francesca Maclean is Frankie and David Maclean's daughter. Frankie Maclean is the Assistant Principal of Palmerston Senior College Special Education Centre. Both Frankie and David are long-term employees of the Department of Education. I am proud to be able to talk about the achievements of their exceptional daughter tonight.

Francesca Maclean was born in Katherine and, after moving with her family to Darwin, attended Wulagi and Wanguri primary schools. She later studied at Darwin High School and Casuarina Senior College. Ms Maclean graduated from Casuarina Senior College in 2008, where she was ranked in the top 20 for her NTCET results. She was a bright, exceptional Territory student.

At school she was described as being hard-working and conscientious. Her mother recalled that she was always actively involved in the school community, assisting in the school library before school, performing in the school choir and being a member of the SRC at Wanguri Primary School. She was also actively engaged in many aspects of high school life and represented the NT at Discovering Democracy events in Alice Springs and Canberra.

In 2009 Ms Maclean moved to Canberra to complete her engineering degree with honours and to undertake her PhD at the Australian National University. Whilst studying at university, Ms Maclean identified a need for gender equity within the College of Engineering and Computer Science at ANU. She explained that although she had grown up in a male-dominated household full of NT footballers—we are talking rugby league—she had never encountered the misogyny or sexism she experienced while at ANU.

In 2015 she co-founded Fifty50 to promote gender equity in science, technology, engineering and maths, STEM subjects. Fifty50 is a student-run, volunteer organisation aiming to develop an equitable and inclusive STEM study and work environment through a range of education and awareness activities and social media campaigns for people of all backgrounds, from university to industry, regardless of gender.

In Ms Maclean's words:

Engineers solve some of the grand challenges society faces, so we need to be able to provide the best solutions, which work for everyone, not just 50% of the population.

Fifty50 grew from a team of six to a team of 30 in under six months through the passion and dedication of undergraduate and post-graduate students. The Department of Defence, Ernst and Young and the Commonwealth Bank approached Ms Maclean to be visionary sponsors of Fifty50 for 2017.

All sponsors have commended Fifty50 on the professional nature of the organisation, setting it apart from any other student groups in Australia. Ms Maclean wants the initiative to normalise equity and inclusion within STEM, and for Fifty50's activities to become national best practice within STEM university experiences.

It was lovely to hear about Francesca Maclean and her achievements. She is an outstanding Territorian and she has been able to make a difference. I hope one day she returns to the Territory to work and share her knowledge. I am pleased to stand up tonight and speak about an exceptional Territorian.

Mr PAECH (Namatjira): Madam Acting Deputy Speaker, I use this opportunity tonight to speak about a range of events that were held in Alice Springs over the long weekend.

The fantastic events which occurred in my hometown of Alice Springs were the XXXX Gold Alice Springs Cup Carnival, the Wide Open Space Festival and the May Day weekend. Alice Springs really knows how to put on a show.

Yesterday we saw the magnificent XXXX Gold Alice Springs Carnival, with the running of the featured event at Pioneer Park on Cup Carnival day, which was a huge success.

Jockey Raymond Vigar had a fantastic ride, taking out the XXXX Gold Alice Springs Cup Carnival. It was Raymond's first ride in the Alice Springs carnival, so congratulations to that young jockey, who is 22 years old and from Darwin. The Alice Springs Turf Club is a great venue and is part of many great events in the lead-up to the carnival. At the Turf Club we have the Imparja Members Day races; the Gem Cave Ladies Day; McDonalds Young Guns, which is an opportunity for the young people in Central Australia to get out to the races; the Coca Cola Family Day, the XXXX Gold Cup Luncheon; the Lasseters Race Day; and a golf tournament tied in amongst the Turf Club events.

The club showcases the best that Red Centre racing has to offer. The staff are always friendly and greet you with a smile. The Alice Springs Turf Club is about seven kilometres out of the town centre. It is in the great electorate of Namatjira, and you will not find too many similar clubs located in such a beautiful landscape. The racecourse is known to many locals as Pioneer Park and boasts top-class facilities for members and the general public. I am very proud to be a member of the Alice Springs Turf Club. The club has great facilities and hosts some very exciting entertainment throughout the year. It is a very family-friendly facility with some new playgrounds recently installed.

The park hosts about 34 or 35 days of races a year and broadcasts internationally on the Sky Racing channel. I offer thanks to Mr Craig Lambley, who is the husband for the Member of Araluen. He is the President of the Alice Springs Turf Club, so I extend warm wishes and thanks to him and the board of management for another successful carnival. I look forward to attending future events at the Alice Springs Turf Club.

I also want to talk about the weekend events at the Wide Open Space Festival in Central Australia. This is the ninth Wide Open Space festival event, and from all reports it was a fantastic three-day event of great music, workshops and artistic expression. The festival presents opportunities for like-minded individuals to come together to connect, share stories and establish new friendships and relationships. I offer my deepest thanks to the dedicated team involved in that for organising such a great festival for Central Australians to engage in.

I have been to a few Wide Open Space Festivals and have always found them to be terrific. The drive out to the festival is about 50 to 60 kilometres and is very scenic. Once you get there you are greeted by some fantastic local and international artists who make it their target to participate in the festival—not to mention all the interstate travel that is made that weekend to come to this festival.

I must not forget the Bangtail Muster, which is held on 1 May, or May Day. This year was the 56th running of the Bangtail Muster parade in Alice Springs, and it was supported by the wonderful members of the Rotary Club in Alice Springs. I offer the greatest appreciation and thanks to the Rotary Clubs—there are three in Alice Springs—for their outstanding work in pulling together such an important event for the community. The parade is a brilliant opportunity for walking groups, floats and individuals to come together and add their own special touch to promoting the great lifestyle of Central Australia.

For born and bred locals such as me, the parade is a rite of passage. Before I had the greys I have now, I attended the Bangtail Muster in my preschool and primary years. This year I was very proud to attend with the trade unions. May Day recognises and celebrates workers' rights, and the union movement acknowledges the historical struggle of workers and the pursuit to ensure we continue to improve living conditions and wages for workers.

I take this opportunity to put those three events on the record. They bring outstanding contributions, both socially and economically, to Central Australia. I encourage all members of this Assembly, if they ever have the opportunity, to participate in the Wide Open Space Festival, the Bangtail Muster or cup season—some of the outstanding events in the Alice Springs carnival.

There is a range of events that continue to be held at the Turf Club in Alice Springs, which is an outstanding venue. I ask elected members to get behind and support these organisations in Central Australia which deliver for the community.

Mr SIEVERS (Brennan): Madam Acting Deputy Speaker, I wish to speak about a great development in my electorate of Brennan. On 30 March I had the pleasure of being joined by my colleague, the Minister for Primary Industry and Resources, Mr Ken Vowles, at Sanctuary Lakes in Gunn.

We assisted the fisheries staff in releasing more than 100 barramundi fingerlings into the lower lake. On behalf of the community, I thank the fisheries staff and the Department of Primary Industry and Resources for making this happen. The barra will provide a great resource to the community, especially children.

Sanctuary Lakes is a great piece of park land that is well utilised by the community of Brennan. One of the biggest user groups is the children who fish the lake. It is great to see them getting amongst nature, experiencing the outside environment and having a go. The beauty of fishing is that it has the capacity for our children to learn character-building lessons that will serve them well in life.

Fishing teaches children respect for the natural environment and the practices required to keep it healthy for them to continue to enjoy it.

Fishing teaches children the reality of where our protein comes from, as well as the humanity and compassion required when harvesting animal resources.

Fishing teaches children the value of being patient and methodical when trying to achieve something.

Fishing teaches children the value of doing things properly and paying attention to detail, and what can go wrong if we do not.

There is nothing worse than losing a good fish because you did not put the effort into tying the knot properly. It has happened to me on a number of occasions. Would you believe it, one was when I thought I was onto that elusive one-metre barramundi.

When I see children fishing at Sanctuary Lakes I am reminded of the lessons I learned through fishing during my childhood and how I have carried them through adulthood. These are fundamental attributes that help us succeed as adults. I also see plenty of mums and dads fishing with their children at Sanctuary Lakes. Fishing is one of the most productive settings where parents can connect and engage with their children. Some dads use this time like a men's shed, but on the water, and it gives them time to connect and engage. It provides a nurturing environment where the awkward and sometimes embarrassing conversations can take place. Most importantly, that old adage in sport where what happens on the field stays on the field is equally applied to fishing; what is said out fishing usually stays out fishing.

I was lucky in my time growing up, as I always had dad or mum, or someone else, to take me fishing, or a mate or cousin to fish with. These times are great memories, whether we caught fish or not. There was always a tale to tell when we got home, plus a good laugh about the one that got away. It is these times I treasure, and I want many other families to have the same opportunities in the NT.

Brennan is a family-oriented community. It is great to see our Territory Labor government investing in our children by providing a safe place for families who do not have a boat to spend quality time in fishing. The fact you can land a barra in the middle of a suburban area like Palmerston is a testament to the great lifestyle we have in the Territory.

Initiatives such as suburban fish stocking add massive value to the social capital they create in communities, providing a safe place where children can engage in the outdoors and go fishing.

I thank Minister Vowles for this initiative, and I give notice to another colleague of mine, the Minister for Tourism and Culture, that I will be lobbying hard on behalf of the electorate of Brennan for next year's million-dollar barra to be released into Sanctuary Lakes.

Ms NELSON (Katherine): Mr Deputy Speaker, I wish to speak about my recent trip to Paris, where I attended the 2017 OECD Global Anti-Corruption and Integrity Forum.

On 30 March 2017 I had the privilege of representing the Australian branch of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association and the Northern Territory Government as a delegate at the 2017 OECD Global Anti-Corruption and Integrity Forum in the French capital of Paris.

The forum brought together 1300 elected representatives of the OECD countries, including Australia, to discuss transparency, accountability and the importance of taking integrity, especially in the public interest, to a higher standard.

As a newly-elected member of the NT Legislative Assembly, I believed it was important to attend the forum to represent a government which made a commitment to its constituents to be open and accountable, and to establish the NT's first independent commission against corruption.

Additionally, my attendance at the forum provided me with a means by which to add more value to my role as the democratically-elected representative of the people of Katherine by increasing my knowledge and skillset to make me a more effective legislator.

The content presented at the forum centred on public accountability, corruption and integrity, and was delivered via keynote addresses and high-level panel discussions that covered topics including:

- Inequality, Exclusion, Disillusionment: The Real Cost of Corruption
- (Re-)Gaining Public Trust through Integrity

- Corporate Liability for Corruption and other Economic Crimes
- Anti-Corruption in Development Cooperation
- Preventing Policy Capture and Promoting the Public Interest in Policy Making
- Engaging Government through Corporate Due Diligence for Responsible Business Conduct.

During the forum 92 speakers took to the stage to discuss and present the two-day forum on 20 topics, all of whom represented organisations and government agencies whose primary focus was the public interest, whether through strong governance, financial accountability, justice, or the relationship between private and public entities.

The full list of speakers can be found in the forum agenda, which I am happy to provide a copy of on request.

During the forum I engaged with representatives from Sweden most frequently. These representatives were Lars Erik Fredriksson, the Chair of Working Party on State Ownership and Privatisation Practices and Representative of the Swedish Ministry of Enterprise and Innovation; and Karin Lunning, the Acting Director-General of the Swedish Competition Authority, which is their version of an independent commission against corruption.

What interested me most about my interaction with them was the revelation about what an austere system of government Sweden has; 33% of the Swedish population works for the public service, yet its operational budget is less than that of the NT Government.

Another point of interest which could be investigated by the NT Government, which is done so well in Sweden, is that of centralising certain functions of the public service. Sweden has centralised its human resources and finance operations to great effect, although I am not sure whether centralising the function of Treasury in the NT—that is, individual electorates losing control of their budgets—would provide a tangible benefit to either the function of government or the strong and timely representation of Territorians. It is worth discussing.

The Swedish parliament sits by region, not by party, and I believe this has the potential to be effective in all Australian parliaments, including the NT. I note that the Member for Nelson has discussed this several times.

After speaking with my Swedish colleagues I could not help but wonder if reallocating seating in the NT Legislative Assembly based on the region the MLA represents, rather than their party affiliation, could improve transparency and the productivity of parliamentary sittings by focusing on constituents and regions rather than party politics. Maybe that is a bit idealistic.

The integrity of an institution is most vulnerable in procurement, in my view. After listening to the 31 March keynote address, 'A Bridge or a Tunnel? Preventing Corruption in Infrastructure', and further to my discussions with some of the presenters at the forum, I believe the area of procurement is one in which any developed country's government is most at risk of corruption, purely because of the scale and complexity of projects.

In Brazil, Slovenia and Sweden, any privately-owned company that tenders for a government contract must disclose its owners and beneficiaries, an example I believe the NT Government could benefit from if it is to continue regaining public trust and lead with integrity and transparency.

I think our NT Government, which was elected to power on 27 August 2016, is doing an amazing job with transparency, but implementing something like the process adopted by Brazil and Sweden would add another layer of accountability.

I believe the forum provided access to global expertise on integrity in public office and what elected representatives can learn from international colleagues about the stumbling blocks that could be encountered in the push for open, transparent and accountable government.

Two key topics I took from the forum were as follows:

1. Travelling and spending time with my CPA colleagues—Len Isleifson, from Canada, and Alando Terrelonge, from Jamaica—allowed me to compare our respective governments and how small things can make a big difference to the level of trust constituents have in their elected representatives.
2. What some governments are already doing in terms of public access to the run-of-the-mill records of elected representatives, including travel and electorate office spending.

My colleague, Len Isleifson, explained to me that in Canada any member of the public can access the 30-day records of any elected representative, including spending, to determine what the electorate office budget has been spent on. It is a process I am trialling on a micro scale in my electorate of Katherine. Any member of the Katherine community can come into the electorate office and ask to access the office finances and my diary. This is only a small effort on my part to restore trust and integrity in the office of the Katherine MLA. Canada has proved it can work on a greater, whole-of-government scale, so it is something I am keen for the NT Government to investigate. If we want the public to trust us again, we need to provide the tools for them to do this, including access to the aforementioned records.

The information presented at the forum was extremely valuable, whether it was through the sessional speakers, moderators, participants or the experiences of my fellow CPA delegates. I believe the opportunity should be offered for future events like the forum, as they provide an accurate insight into how Australia and the NT are effecting integrity and the public interest on a scale of global standards.

I was delighted at the announcement last week, made by the Attorney-General, Natasha Fyles, that \$3m per year has been committed to aid in the establishment and implementation of an independent commission against corruption. This is an initiative I have been championing. An ICAC is a crucial factor in restoring the public's trust in government and maintaining integrity within government.

Legislation to establish the commission is already being developed, with community consultations to take place this year. This follows on from the issues paper and public consultation on whistle-blower protection laws which occurred earlier this year. It is planned that the commission will be operational in 2018.

This builds on the work the NT Government has already undertaken, including:

- changing legislation so public money is not spent on political advertising
- reforming overseas ministerial travel so that details are published before travel takes place
- instigating an inquiry into political donations
- reforming parliament so it is more open.

On Tuesday 28 March I travelled to Paris as the selected representative of the CPA to attend the forum. I departed Darwin at 2.55 am on Tuesday morning, had a 12-hour layover in Singapore, which I spent at the airport catching up on work, and boarded the flight to Paris at 1 am Wednesday morning.

After a 12-hour flight, I arrived in Paris on Wednesday morning at 9.45 am. I checked in at the hotel, unpacked and had a few hours to rest before meeting with my CPA colleagues from Canada and Jamaica.

The forum was held on Thursday and Friday 30 and 31 March, with the first session commencing each day at 9 am and the last session ending approximately 5 pm.

I departed Paris on Saturday 1 April at 11 am and arrived in Darwin on the afternoon of Sunday 2 April.

As you can see, my travel schedule was short and tight, leaving me with little time for any recreational activities. However, I did have the time and pleasure of having dinner with my two CPA colleagues on the last night of the forum.

I acknowledge the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association and thank the secretariat for the opportunity to attend the forum. I look forward to more similar opportunities being made available to my colleagues in this parliament.

Ms UIBO (Arnhem): Mr Deputy Speaker, I echo the sentiments of the Chief Minister in acknowledging the passing of a senior Nunggubuyu and Warnindilyakwa woman, Mrs Anne Lalara, from Groote Eylandt, and pay tribute to her life.

The Chief Minister spoke eloquently about Mrs Lalara, who was a strong and fierce lady, and a spokeswoman for the Anindilyakwa lands across the Groote Eylandt archipelago. I am fortunate to be related to this strong woman, who in our kinship system I called grandmother, or, in our language, *Gagu*.

Mrs Lalara was married to Grant Burgoyne for over 30 years. They have a similar story to that of my parents, a tale that unravels in the following way.

A non-Indigenous teacher moves to a remote Indigenous community to teach. Teacher falls in love with local lady, who is a strong advocate for her community. Local lady is a teacher and interpreter who is not afraid to speak up. Family members on both sides are wary of the relationship, but true love prevails and the two individuals have a marriage that lasted decades.

Grant and Mrs Lalara overcame the odds and stood side by side for over 30 years. Their daughter, Kara Burgoyne, who in kinship way I call mother, is my Arnhem electorate liaison officer and a strong woman, similar to her mother, Mrs Lalara.

Kara is not afraid to speak up, ask questions and speak her mind. I am grateful that my *Gagu* lives on in Kara, and that I have Kara working hard to represent the Arnhem electorate office in the southeast pocket of the electorate, travelling around the three communities of Groote Eylandt, across to Bickerton Island and to the mainland, in the Numbulwar community.

For over a decade Mrs Lalara and her husband, Grant, ran the very successful cross-cultural training program for the new GEMCO employees and their contractors for the Groote Eylandt mine. I had heard from many people that the training program left a lasting impression on its participants and delved into many deeper issues related to the Warnindilyakwa people of Groote Eylandt and Bickerton.

Last year I was privileged to attend the morning session of this half-day training program, and it resonated deeply with me. The many cultural behaviours and protocols were presented in a way that participants could make sense of the information which had been publicly sanctioned.

As the Chief Minister mentioned, Mrs Lalara became a lifelong supporter of the Australian Labor Party through the influence of Gough Whitlam's land rights legislation. Both she and her husband have campaigned long and hard over many federal and Territory elections to ensure the people of Groote Eylandt, Bickerton and Numbulwar have their say on election day and make their vote count.

Kara and her five children, Mrs Lalara's grandchildren, who I call brothers and sister, are the next generation of political campaigners on Groote. I know that *Gagu* was proud to have her grandchildren—Travis, Cassius, Skye, Xavian and two-year-old little Kade—actively helping during election periods. These young people helped to put up corflutes around the community, sometimes bigger than their bodies, and on polling days they assisted with handing out how-to-vote cards and letting family members know where to go to make their vote count.

Sadly, in 2015, Mrs Lalara suffered a stroke, and whilst her mind recovered and remained sharp and witty, her body started to deteriorate. She was left unwell last year, but in a show of her true strength she still campaigned hard in August 2016 for the Territory election and greatly assisted me in running for the seat of Arnhem, which I now gratefully hold.

I have a wonderful photo of Mrs Lalara, Kara and me with our Vote 1 Selena Uibo red Labor T-shirts. I had this photo proudly on display in my Arnhem electorate office in Katherine; however, I put it away due to cultural protocol. I look forward to the day I can once more display the image of this remarkable, strong, fierce, outspoken and sometimes cheeky woman in my office, and have the visual reminder to showcase the contribution she made in supporting me and, in turn, our current Labor government in winning the NT election in 2016.

Mrs Lalara's and Grant's long-time friend, Hon Warren Snowdon MP, federal Member for Lingiari, was devastated by the sad news, as was their other friend, Mr Kerry Gardiner, who has a long history of friendship with Grant and Mrs Lalara. I acknowledge their support to the Burgoyne and Lalara families, and I thank them for supporting Grant in this extremely difficult time.

I thank the Chief Minister for calling Grant the day after Mrs Lalara's passing to offer his condolences. I heard that even through his grief Grant still offered political advice to the Chief. I was amused by this—Grant Burgoyne, the ever politically-minded activist, who would have had his beloved wife in his mind, telling him not to miss an opportunity to speak up and give the Chief Minister a bit of advice.

I want to share with the House my sincere and heartfelt condolences to Grant, Kara, Travis, Cassius, Skye, Xavian, Kade and our Groote, Bickerton and Numbulwar families, and the extended families across the Territory and interstate, for the loss of this amazing woman who left a hole in many of our hearts.

Rest in peace, *Gagu* Lalara, and I hope we do you proud by carrying on your legacy.

Motion agreed to; the Assembly adjourned.