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Dan Murphy's – Policy Explanation

Mr HIGGINS to CHIEF MINISTER

You have accused the media and Dan Murphy's of not telling the truth. Given that you went to the election with a commitment to restore trust, will you once and for all tell Territorians the truth about the Dan Murphy's saga?

ANSWER

That is a very broad question, Leader of the Opposition. We are very comfortable for Dan Murphy's to come to town. We have said that consistently; however, we want Dan Murphy's to comply with the same rules as every other Territory business.

We have a very consistent public health policy position which recognises that alcohol is our major issue in the Territory. Unfortunately and tragically, alcohol is behind many of the health presentations at the hospital. It harms individuals and their families.

We also know that alcohol underpins a lot of the antisocial behaviour, crime and other problems we have in the Territory. It puts pressure on our health system, court system and police. We have a policy based on how we can restrict the supply of alcohol, especially to problem drinkers.

We recognise that the more shops we have and the bigger they are, the more alcohol they can sell and the more harm that is caused in our community. We also have the Banned Drinker Register as a tool for dealing with those who have a problem with alcohol. You have to have a problem with alcohol to be on that register. You are also welcome to volunteer to go on the register.

There are some people who get humbugged and want some control over pressures presented by ...

Mr HIGGINS: A point of order, Madam Speaker! Standing Order 110: relevance. The question was about accusing the media and Dan Murphy's of not telling the truth. I want you to tell the truth to Territorians about that saga.

Mr GUNNER: My policy explanation will not change because it is why we are here. It is why, as a government, we have always acted in the best interest of Territorians. We have a liquor review because we are happy to have our policy tested. Former Chief Justice Trevor Riley is chairing that independent review. It is a very strong review that has all the powers of independent inquiry into alcohol in the NT. Our policy is being tested there.

We recognise that going into the election we had a simple but robust policy. We are happy with the resources of government to empower the independent inquiry to see if there is a better way of doing it. That is what the independent inquiry has been tasked with and we are very happy to see those results.

We recognise there are issues with the size and density of liquor outlets in the NT. We look forward to having a positive review that helps us further tackle the problems which exist in the health sector—unfortunately, it hurts a lot of people in the Territory and affects their health—or in the area of crime and antisocial behaviour.

As police minister, I genuinely look forward to getting more advice on how we can further tackle the problem of alcohol in the NT. That is why we are here with this policy, and it will be our motivation when it comes to public policy—how we can put Territorians first and work for them.

Senior Concessions

Mr HIGGINS to MINISTER for TERRITORY FAMILIES

Prior to the election, Labor released a paper titled Respecting Seniors, Labor's Plan to Support Older Territorians, in which a statement is made that Labor will reform the senior concession scheme to provide more benefits to more senior Territorians. These additional benefits were not evident in the original fact sheet you released. Can you please elaborate what they are? Will you guarantee that no seniors will lose any concession they currently receive in the review?

ANSWER

Leader of the Opposition, it is nice to talk about an area we seem to agree on. I welcome all the seniors in the gallery today; it is lovely to see you all here, participating in the debate, because that is what we want to do.

We want to have a conversation with senior Territorians about what they want from this scheme. I do not want to pre-empt the debate, but I am looking forward to talking about it. The Member for Casuarina, who was the shadow minister, will talk about what our position going to the election was about.

We were very clear—I think that the review into the Pensioner and Carer Concession Scheme has been very broad so far. I look forward to formally responding to the petition that was tabled today.

I thank all the volunteers because they sat down and gathered those signatures. I hope they also encouraged people to do the survey that has been put out to the community. Many of the issues that are addressed in the petition are addressed in the survey. Who should be eligible for the scheme is one of the questions in the survey. Questioning whether the power and water concession should be capped is also in the survey.

We want to hear from senior Territorians about what is helpful for them. It is disappointing that there has been some scaremongering around the cuts to the scheme. I think it is clear; we put more money into the scheme. We have been very clear that we need to make it sustainable into the future and make sure it is fair.

I was disappointed last week, Leader of the Opposition—I have a lot of time for you, but I answered a very similar question last week, and within 15 minutes you said that we were making cuts. It was the complete opposite of what I told you in Question Time.

It is disappointing that there has been scaremongering around this issue from a small number of people.

I thank my Caucus colleagues. They have been talking to senior Territorians about what they want, encouraging them to have their say.

I want to thank the electorate staff, who are in here today undertaking further training. They have been on the phones, making thousands of calls to senior Territorians, asking them what they think. We are committed to taking that on board and making genuine decisions about this scheme. We deeply value this scheme and look forward to working with senior Territorians toward a really strong outcome.

VISITORS

Madam SPEAKER: Honourable members, I advise of the presence in the gallery some visitors from Belgium, Alexia Lescart and Florian Delporte. Diem Tang is our Chief Financial Officer at the department, and as Belgian people predominantly speak French she is assisting with translation about our important Assembly and what we do here. Welcome to Parliament House.

Members: Hear, hear!

Dan Murphy's in Darwin

Mr HIGGINS to CHIEF MINISTER

On Channel Nine News yesterday you repeatedly said, 'We were not advised in that meeting about Dan Murphy's coming'. Were you deliberately making misleading statements or were you misinformed?

ANSWER

Madam Speaker, I confirm again, we were not advised in that meeting about Dan Murphy's coming. I said that yesterday and I am happy to say it again; we were not advised in that meeting that Dan Murphy's was coming.

**SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION
Dan Murphy's in Darwin**

Mr HIGGINS to CHIEF MINISTER

What do you have to say about Dan Murphy's, which said it did advise you? Were you misinformed or is Dan Murphy's misleading?

ANSWER

Madam Speaker, I am being very clear. We were not advised in that meeting that Dan Murphy's was coming.

Pensioner and Carer Concession Scheme Debit Card

Mr HIGGINS to MINISTER for TERRITORY FAMILIES

Minister, your government has previously released a fact sheet stating you had already decided to introduce a debit card to replace all concessions under the Northern Territory Pensioner and Carer Concession Scheme. How do you propose to eliminate the so-called utility rorting and fraud that you claim existed, and importantly, the real risk of elder abuse that has been raised time and again by senior Territorians?

ANSWER

Madam Speaker, we have had discussions about a debit card and how we can best deliver a concession to people in a flexible way so they can choose how to use it, because we want a scheme that is flexible.

The feedback has been very clear; people have many concerns about having a debit card. We wanted to put it on the table as an option and put it out for consultation. We have heard loud and clear that they do not want it, and we will take that on board as we move forward.

I thank the Leader of the Opposition for his question. We want to make sure this system is not able to be defrauded in the future. That has been a significant problem with this scheme. We do not want a scheme where millions of dollars are taken out of senior Territorians' pockets by unscrupulous businesspeople. We want that money to be there for the benefit of senior Territorians.

Whatever scheme we go forward with, we need to make sure it can be audited easily and that any fraud activity can be picked up easily. We have asked a firm to look at that so Territorians have absolute surety that whatever scheme they are using, unscrupulous businesspeople are not taking advantage of them.

Victim Liaison Officers

Mr MILLS to MINISTER for POLICE, FIRE and EMERGENCY SERVICES

Crime and antisocial behaviour remain a threat to good order and are a serious discouragement to struggling families. Most are convinced that the system is weighted way too heavily in favour of offenders and too many victims of crime are left wondering what happened after the event, like shop owners in my own complex who helped apprehend some young offenders but still have heard nothing.

NT Police do a pretty good job but are under great pressure. Victims of Crime NT help, but they are spread thin. Victim-offender conferencing is not for everyone. Your government boasts of spending nearly \$20m to fund an armoury of youth engagement workers; can you spend a little to employ some victim liaison officers?

ANSWER

Madam Speaker, I appreciate the question from the Member for Blain. We recognise there is a broken system dealing with youth, and we have taken some significant steps towards fixing it. We really want to make sure victims have more of a say; it is very important their voices are heard.

We have heard some success stories already through the victim conferencing and have put extra money into victim conferencing in Palmerston. You recognise that not everyone wants to go through victim conferencing, but it is important that option is there. It has a powerful impact on the offender and a powerful sense of closure for the victim and can lead to some very good outcomes.

I can talk with the Territory Families minister about youth engagement officers' capacity to work with victims as well, and I can follow up to see if your suggestion works into what we have already done or if it needs to be considered in a different way.

I am happy to talk about how we can keep making sure we put victims first, ensuring they feel that they have a voice in the system and that we do everything we can to make sure there are fewer victims.

Much of our work goes towards early intervention. I have had many conversations with the Police Commissioner, amongst others, about how we can intervene early to reduce crime and not always talk about the consequence. Obviously, victims are a consequence of crime and we want to make sure there are fewer victims. Breaking the cycle and stopping the reoffending is a big part of that. We know that victim conferencing, victim statements and victims talking directly with the people who committed the offence goes a long way toward breaking the cycle and reducing reoffending.

We are putting extra money in—and I am happy to keep talking with the Jesuits who are doing the programs in Palmerston. I assume you are talking on behalf of Palmerston constituents.

Mr Mills: It is a general issue, but yes I live in Palmerston.

Mr GUNNER: The issue is obviously broader than Palmerston, but the Jesuits in Palmerston are doing the victim conferencing across the Territory. Police also do a lot of work on that.

The Attorney-General is reviewing Victims of Crime NT and how it works, and maybe your suggestions can be worked into that as well. I believe there is a capacity for us to talk about that with the youth engagement officers. I still think the most powerful thing for victims to do is the victim conferencing, because it provides closure. It can help break the cycle and lead to some creative outcomes that go towards restitution. I think that is really important.

There is also the body of work in relation to how we review Victims of Crime to provide better and more attention to victims. My main priority remains, how can we have fewer victims. Everyone has a right to be safe.

Housing in Araluen – Mokari Units and Keith Lawrie Flats

Mrs LAMBLEY to MINISTER for HOUSING and COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

I have two unit complexes in my electorate of Araluen which are old, dilapidated and in a disgusting state of disrepair. The Mokari units in Nicker Crescent and the Keith Lawrie flats in Bloomfield Street are uninhabitable by most people's standards. I have approached you many times regarding these two unit complexes over the last 12 months.

What will you do with these two eye sores? Will you bulldoze them, refurbish them or sell them off, like so many of these older complexes?

ANSWER

Madam Speaker, I thank the Member for Araluen for her question and for her recent correspondence, and for the valuable meeting we had in Alice Springs together.

This is a complex issue, and no doubt all Territorians would agree on that. As a government, we are seriously developing a five-year strategy for urban housing. At the Keith Lawrie flats there are 23 units in the complex, and four of these are vacant. There have been no reported issues of squatters at either vacant unit, which is good to hear. That is not the best outcome, but we can assure you we are monitoring that situation.

As our public housing safety officers are doing the regular foot patrols, it is important the community understands they are the first point of contact. Reporting is essential in these issues because the public housing safety officers work very closely with Northern Territory Police and other stakeholders in the area of supporting vulnerable Territorians and antisocial issues. Please continue to report, as I can assure you that our public housing safety officers are an effective measure to addressing antisocial behaviour in supporting the tenants who are affected by such antisocial behaviour.

There is also the Poeppel Gardens issue. There is some good dialogue around that, and we are progressing that issue. I am pleased to say negotiations are currently under way to transfer that property tenancy management. We are looking towards the Central Australian Affordable Housing Company.

At the moment we are in negotiations about the agreed scope of works. Our community housing model is articulated by this government. I have been very clear; this is an area the government believes will deliver better outcomes. It will be a good way forward in the Northern Territory—the promotion and development of our community housing sector; the government's push for the \$10m economic stimulus to look at upgrades and developments in conjunction with the development sector and contractors; as well as shifting 750 public housing properties into the community housing sector.

All this work is taking place. I know you are very concerned about it, as are other Territorians. We are working towards good solutions and outcomes. I will continue to update you on any developments.

Pinelands Intersection Upgrade

Mr WOOD to MINISTER for INFRASTRUCTURE, PLANNING and LOGISTICS

Minister, your government has said it will provide better vehicle access into Pinelands through an intersection upgrade at McKinnon Road, at a cost of \$5.9m. More development is planned for that area, plus a new bottle shop has just opened nearby, and industrial traffic from Pinelands has more difficulty accessing the highway. What type of intersection upgrade are you talking about? When will work start and when will it be completed?

ANSWER

Madam Speaker, \$5.9m has been allocated in the budget for the Pinelands area and ensuring we have better heavy vehicle access, access for businesses and safer roads for everyone. It is an area that has experienced growth. The transport corridors around McKinnon Road have changed over recent years.

We do not have a set date for the start of construction because we need further consultation on this. Next month a formal process will start in which we will have further discussion with the businesses, heavy vehicle traffic users and the community about the best traffic solution for that area to ensure we get the best investment for that \$5.9m budget.

There will be further work, with a particular focus on McKinnon Road and how it interacts with other major transport corridors, particularly Marjorie Street, the Stuart Highway and Tiger Brennan Drive. It is important that we get the infrastructure planning right. Once the infrastructure is invested in, it is meant to be there for some time. There is a particular amount of growth through that corridor and in that area, and it will continue growing.

More people will be moving down the road to the Berrimah north area and Northcrest. There is also further expansion in Palmerston, and the rural area has been growing over the years. It is important that we get it right and have the right traffic conditions around Pinelands, so there is more investigative work to be done.

Member for Nelson, I will make sure that, as part of the consultation, they advise you so that you can have your say on what you think would be the best solution. We will continue consulting with key industry as well. Any other members who would like to be involved in that process and have their say, please let me know. But there is more work to be done.

Tourists in Darwin

Mr WOOD to MINISTER for ABORIGINAL AFFAIRS

You said today that you want tourists to be comfortable coming to the city. On Monday night I sat at Salvatore's with some Tiwi ladies and we had a pleasant meal together. On Tuesday I sat outside and saw tourists continually harassing people—physically harassing them in some cases—by shouting and swearing. There was no sign of police or night patrol. Last night it was not as bad, but a local couple having dinner with me said they were sick of it and find it upsetting, especially when they are told they are a 'white you-know-what'.

I asked, 'Where are the police?', and the diners said they went to see the police on Mitchell Street, and the police said, 'Go and see a politician'. So I am asking you, what is your government doing about this? Surely this kind of behaviour cannot go on. It is bad for Aboriginal people like my Tiwi friends and the locals, and it is uncomfortable for tourists. For me, it is a shame job.

Please do not use the 'poor bugger me' excuse or the BDR excuse; this has been going on far too long. What will you and your team do to change things for the better?

ANSWER

Madam Speaker, I appreciate the question from the Member for Nelson. This goes to a very important issue and we have a number of things to respond to. One is the Banned Drinker Register, which is not the only thing, but it is important and will come in on 1 September. We have seen mobility issues in the Territory. Police have talked about this in the past, regarding the pressures put on Darwin and Palmerston. Alcohol has been available and we have not had those same measures relating to controlling supply as we see in Alice Springs, Tennant Creek and Katherine—the police outside the front of bottle shops.

That was a patchwork approach that saw good results in some areas but no Territory-wide approach. It is not the only measure but is an important measure. It means we have some control in Darwin and Palmerston where there has been no control before, and it tackles the mobility issue in the Territory.

As Chief Minister, and with my department, I have been working with Larrakia Nation, which has stepped out of the administration of what they do with the night patrol program. We are working with them on expanding the night patrol and day patrol, seeing what we can with the sobering-up shelter. Does the sobering-up shelter work at the right hours? Some of this has been included in the work we are doing with the BDR and the wraparound services.

We recognise there is an issue, and we are in active negotiations with people working in this area about how we can expand these services. There is a night patrol, so we have those police—but clearly we need to do more, and we recognise that. The Banned Drinker Register will make a difference. We will not solve it from 1 September, and that is very important to know. The Banned Drinker Register is not a silver bullet; it will make a difference and lead to greater improvement over time as more people are put on the register, but it will not solve the problem entirely.

More work needs to be done in this space. I believe our conversations about how we expand the sobering-up shelter and wraparound services—we need to be more responsive to the needs of police. Police get taken off the road—with regard to how they handle the issue of the location of sobering-up shelters. Did that location work? That is the feedback from Palmerston, for example. The issues are not unique to Darwin. The sobering-up shelter in Coconut Grove puts significant pressure on Palmerston police and how they deal with the issue of transit time.

We are working through these issues to make sure we have a better way of handling the effects of alcohol, the impacts on the person who is drinking and the community living with it, to reduce the pressure. It leads to a vibrant CBD. This problem is not only in the Darwin CBD. As the Member for Fannie Bay, I am very aware of the hotspots around my electorate, and as Member for Nightcliff is aware of the hotspots in hers. The members in Palmerston, Tony and Eva, have discussed this issue with me as well. This issue is not unique to the Darwin CBD.

We need a comprehensive response. I am happy to talk more about it if you want to ask again.

Arafura Games

Mr MILLS to MINISTER for TOURISM and CULTURE

I have been advised that NT Government officers are currently in Malaysia promoting the Arafura Games. Is this the case? I was also advised that local stakeholders, including the Chamber of Commerce, say the wider NT community have received very little information on arrangements for the games. What steps can you advise the House of today to correct this view?

ANSWER

Madam Speaker, bringing back the Arafura Games is a significant commitment of this government. We were all very disappointed when the former government scrapped the Arafura Games, and with it a range of relationships built over a long period of time.

As somebody who has volunteered and worked as part of the workforce for the Arafura Games, I recognise how important that is, not only for the local economy, but also for the local community, who often volunteer, and the importance of those international relationships.

There are currently representatives of the Northern Territory Government at the Southeast Asian Games. We have representatives from the Department of Tourism and Culture and also from Asian relations and trade, talking to people about the fact we will be bringing back the Arafura Games in 2019.

We have an assistant minister for bringing back the Arafura Games, who has done an incredible amount of work in community hearings, talking to sport clubs about their readiness and telling tourism stakeholders to talk to local businesses about how we shape the games into the future. There are many decisions that need to be made. I thank the assistant minister, the Member for Sanderson, for undertaking a huge amount of work, such as the public hearings in Parliament House to help shape that.

A significant amount of work needs to happen in regard to international engagement. In many respects it has been resetting the relationship. There has been a significant gap between games, so it is important we get the message out that the games are coming back.

There was a specific component for the Arafura Games on our Have Your Say website allowing the public to have their say, and a number of people participated in that process. Work is well under way. This is an interagency project; it is a huge undertaking for us and we are committed to it.

The Chief Minister and I are very happy to arrange a briefing with you, Member for Blain, and all relevant people on how it is tracking to make sure you can be actively involved. We want the community to be actively involved, as they always have been, in what will be a significant sporting event for the Territory. It is not only a sporting event, but it is an art and cultural event as well. We want to make sure people come here and have the very best opportunity to compete, but also to enjoy the best of the Territory.

Youth Facility in Alice Springs

Mrs LAMBLEY to MINISTER for TERRITORY FAMILIES

You have established a youth facility on the corner of the Stuart Highway and Wills Terrace in Alice Springs. There seems to be a lot of confusion about what that facility will be used for. There is speculation that it will be used for emergency accommodation, a drop-in centre, recreational activities, and case management and counselling of youth who come to the facility.

Could you please clarify for the people of Alice Springs what that facility will be used for?

ANSWER

Madam Speaker, that facility has long been used as accommodation in Alice Springs. It was used to support young mums and teenagers. I went to the opening about seven or eight years ago. It is a long-term youth accommodation facility.

We have refurbished that facility in the last six months as part of our youth justice reforms. We have put that property up as part of proposals from the non-government sector, and we have done the same with Yirra House in Darwin. Both properties are available for non-government organisations to make a tender for bail accommodation.

We have asked for proposals of how they may use those facilities. There are parameters for those proposals, but we have left it up the NGO sector to use their expertise to come up with the best model on how to deliver bail accommodation for young people. As we know, we have a significant issue with young people on remand in detention centres. These are young people who the courts do not necessarily think need detention, but they have nowhere safe to bail them to. This means we have people in there for short periods of time, often for an average of eight days, while their defence lawyers and other services look for suitable accommodation.

Having a bail accommodation service will be a much more suitable situation where we can provide wraparound services for those young people, making bail more accountable and making sure we have the right supports in place to prevent them from committing further crime. We also know that if we reduce young people's contact with the youth justice system we are more likely to have better outcomes for them.

This is one of the steps forward as part of our response to the Royal Commission. We have been working alongside the Royal Commission and expect a report in March. We know the situation is so urgent that we have started to step out those recommendations—talking to the Royal Commission the whole time about reforms.

I am very excited about this. We are the only jurisdiction in Australia that does not have these facilities. We are well behind the eight ball in relation to the rest of Australia. The NGO may decide not to use that property, but we have offered properties in both jurisdictions. We are leaving it to the NGOs and their expertise to come up with the best way of supporting young people in the Northern Territory.

Dan Murphy's – Meeting with Chief of Staff

Mr HIGGINS to CHIEF MINISTER

I find it implausible and unbelievable that Dan Murphy's did not raise its multimillion-dollar development plans during its October meetings with your Chief of Staff—a meeting they took months to organise. Can you please advise the House what was discussed during this meeting if it was not its multimillion-dollar development application?

ANSWER

Madam Speaker, as I said yesterday, Woolworths, which arranged the meeting, discussed Woolworths' interests in the Territory. We were not advised at any stage in that meeting that Dan Murphy's was coming to Darwin.

Pensioner and Carer Concession Scheme

Mr HIGGINS to MINISTER for TERRITORY FAMILIES

On a fact sheet released in March regarding the NT Pensioner and Carer Concession Scheme, people on carer's payments were listed as eligible, but those on a carer's allowance who are eligible now were not. Will people on a carer's allowance become ineligible to receive the Northern Territory Pensioner and Carer Concession? If they are not, why not?

ANSWER

Madam Speaker, I thank the member for the question. I am feeling a lot of love from the other side of the Chamber today with all the interest in my portfolio, which is fantastic.

First of all, the difference between a carer's pension and allowance—a carer's pension is means tested, and a carer's allowance is not. Someone can be working and be on a good wage and receiving a carer's allowance.

It is my understanding, Leader of the Opposition, that when you made the changes that excluded a large number of people ...

Mr Higgins: Not us. We are talking about your fact sheet.

Ms WAKEFIELD: No, you want to know who is eligible. One of the groups you said were no longer eligible for the scheme were people receiving a carer's allowance. There was then an error by the department that included them, despite the Cabinet decision. Maybe the Member for Araluen was no longer the minister by then, but it was when the other side was in charge.

We discovered that as we have been going through. Again, it is one of the messes we uncovered as we kept going through this scheme. It was poorly administered. We have to reform it because people with a carer's allowance should have not been excluded. We have decided to keep them in until further conversation and consultation happens and then they will be part of the eligibility review.

I want to be very clear; we want to ensure that more Territorians are eligible for this scheme. At the moment it is not fairly spread. We want to make sure we have a sustainable scheme. The carer's allowance was a decision of the previous government, not this one, and we have allowed people back into the scheme until any further decisions are made.

Dan Murphy's – Media Coverage

Mr HIGGINS to CHIEF MINISTER

Just so I am very clear, Territorians and I have a complete disregard and disrespect for people who do not tell the truth. My question relates to Labor's October meeting with Dan Murphy's. Either the Director-General of Licensing; Shane Tremble; the *NT News*; and Channel Nine are not telling the truth, or you and your staff are not. Can you clarify to this House who of all those listed are not telling the truth?

ANSWER

Madam Speaker, I can only advise what we were told at that meeting. As I said before, we were not advised in that meeting Dan Murphy's was coming to town.

Northern Territory Infrastructure Development Fund

Mr WOOD to TREASURER

The previous Treasurer announced the Northern Territory development fund and I will quote from the budget paper:

A major part of the government's diversification plan has been the implementation of the Northern Territory Infrastructure Development Fund. As the House is aware, the government seeded this innovation fund with \$200m from the TIO sale proceeds. Budget 2016-17 strategically invests a further 100m from the port lease into the fund. This investment takes the total Territory contribution to \$300m. This government investment will be the cornerstone in targeting an additional \$1.2bn from external investors. This \$1.5bn investment fund should generate more than \$4.5bn in private sector infrastructure investment.

Can you please give an update on this fund and is it attracting external investors as hoped?

ANSWER

Madam Speaker, the Northern Territory Infrastructure Development Fund was formed under the previous CLP government. I think we all remember how that came to be. The former government sold TIO and, from those funds, determined that it would put \$200m into the Northern Territory Infrastructure Development Fund with the hope of being able to attract more private investment to bring the fund up to the tune of about a billion dollars' worth of investment.

TIO was sold, and from some of the proceeds the Northern Territory infrastructure fund was put together by the previous government. When we were in opposition we said we would support the fund, which we have, and it has been operating. Ultimately, the aim is to attract private sector capital investment for infrastructure projects that will benefit the Territory. It is an important point we are making here; Territorians lost TIO. We need to make sure we will get the best bang for the buck out of the money Territorians lost out on from the sale of TIO.

The fund has continued to work. It is now being managed by the Infrastructure Capital Group, which has established an office in Darwin, and there are two full-time staff working it. The fund manager reports to the board, which includes representation from the Northern Territory Government.

The board has met seven times. It includes Mr Les Fallick as the chair of the board; Mr Bill Moss, the former Macquarie Bank executive; Mr James Paspaley the Executive Director of Paspaley Pearls; Jodie Ryan from the Northern Territory Government; and Mr Mark Burgess, former managing director of the Future Fund.

The board members have spoken to about 20 prospective projects, and they are doing a lot of work to look into those projects' viability while being very careful to ensure the money is invested wisely. We want to make sure they exercise due diligence and that the Territory gets a very good return on that investment. Given what Territorians had to sacrifice for this fund to be opened and operational, you expect good value for any investment made from this fund.

A total of \$200m that was ceded into the fund. We did not go forward with what the previous government wanted to do, which was put another \$100m dollars into it. This is a very new scheme and a very new fund. We felt that \$200m was the limit to start this.

I have met with Mr Fallick on numerous occasions and made it clear that we expect that the projects in which the fund chooses to invest will benefit the Territory. Frankly, when you look at the context—we had to sell TIO to get here—it is important that we get the best value for Territorians going forward.

Political Donations to Northern Territory Labor Party

Mrs LAMBLEY to CHIEF MINISTER

As the leader of the Labor Party of the Northern Territory, can you please provide a list today of all political donations received from people and business connected to the alcohol industry of the Northern Territory to the NT Labor Party?

Can you also please provide proof that you have a policy to restrict the takeaway liquor outlet floor space to 400 square metres prior to April 2016?

ANSWER

Madam Speaker, I am advised by the Territory Labor Secretary that to the best of the party's knowledge, all donations that fall into the category the Member for Araluen has requested to be released are already on the public record.

The party has been approached about this and had answered—it has been reported. After checking my records, I believe the donation that was disclosed early this year is the only one that falls into this category.

I say this in good faith, as I do not know the exact membership of the AHA, nor do I know the full interests of who have donated, but I believe that there are no others. As I said yesterday, I believe this has already been answered on the record. That is the advice I was given from the party secretary. We have been open and transparent in this space. We provided the information regarding that donation well ahead of the legal requirement to disclose; we provided a copy of our letter nine months ago.

In stark contrast with openness and transparency, I do not think the CLP has disclosed its donations yet. We have been open and transparent. We provided a copy of our letter nine months ago; the CLP provided it yesterday. Our advice was given months ago.

Mrs LAMBLEY: A point of order, Madam Speaker! Standing Order 110: relevance. I thank you, Chief Minister, for what you have just provided, but could you please disclose who and how much?

Mr GUNNER: That has already been answered; it is on the public record. It has been reported on. It is in the paper. I encourage the Member for Araluen to read the *NT News*. I think that was the first place it was reported. I encourage reading the *NT News*; it is a local paper. Support your local media outlets ...

Mrs LAMBLEY: A point of order, Madam Speaker! Standing Order 110: relevance. Reporting in the *NT News* is not reporting in this parliament. I asked you to disclose this information in the Northern Territory parliament.

Madam SPEAKER: Member for Araluen, that is not a point of order.

Mr GUNNER: It was answered months ago.

Mrs Lambley: Not in parliament, Michael.

Mr GUNNER: It has been answered already.

Madam SPEAKER: Member for Araluen, please refer to members by their electorate.

Mr GUNNER: It has been answered already. I refer the Member for Araluen to the public record.

We have gone one step further than any other parliament in Territory history by creating an independent inquiry led by former Justice Mansfield, which can look at all donations in the Northern Territory. This is critical. We established the Northern Territory's first ever independent political donations inquiry to restore trust that the decisions made by the government are in the public interest, not the private interest.

As a government we have recognised the need to restore trust. We created the independent inquiry so that it had the power to look into all issues relating to donations ...

Mrs LAMBLEY: A point of order, Madam Speaker! Standing Order 110: relevance. The second part of the question was to provide proof that you had a policy to restrict the takeaway liquor outlet floor space to 400 square metres prior to April 2016. Could you answer that section of the question, please?

Madam SPEAKER: The Chief Minister has time to answer.

Mr GUNNER: Our integrity measures include the ability for the independent inquiry to investigate donations received by the Labor party. As I have said before, our policies were decisions by the shadow Cabinet in opposition, and we made that decision as a shadow Cabinet before the AHA wrote to us in April.

QuickSmart Program

Mr WOOD to MINISTER for EDUCATION

Minister, the prime purpose of the QuickSmart program is to reverse the trend of ongoing poor academic performance for students who have been struggling at school and who are caught in a cycle of continued failure. This program has operated successfully in the Territory for a number of years in more than 100 schools as well as being used in our prisons. It has also raised the level of students who were being left behind in academic performance, which is reflected in better NAPLAN results during that period. This program has proved over many years to be successful and has the results to show it.

Is the government supporting this program? Will it reintroduce the program where it has been taken away? If not, please say what better programs you have in place, and can you back it up with verifiable results?

ANSWER

Madam Speaker, first of all, I have often said there are no silver bullets when it comes to education. As far as I am concerned, we do not need shiny baubles that schools attach themselves to or that attach themselves to schools. It is about having quality teachers in every one of our schools that follow the curriculum, teach in explicit ways and do a great job with their teaching rather than looking for these individual programs.

QuickSmart has not been used in schools in the Northern Territory since about 2012. It has been used in the prison system, but not in schools. It came in to education at one stage and was being used in some schools, but it was resource intensive. It required quality teaching and the need to have people trained.

From my point of view, it is all about having quality teachers in every one of our schools, good leadership and directions for the schools rather than having a one-off program.

Mr Wood: It is not a one-off program; it is a continued program.

Ms LAWLER: QuickSmart is a maths program, but it is not an ongoing program. It needs considerable professional development. It can be used in the prison system, but we have not seen it getting the results that are needed. We need things that are integrated and part of the school program.

Donations to Labor Party

Mr HIGGINS to CHIEF MINISTER

When did you become aware of a substantial donation to Territory Labor by figures closely associated with the AHA?

ANSWER

Madam Speaker, as the Leader of the Opposition knows, I do not receive the donations. I do not handle the donations.

Members interjecting.

Madam SPEAKER: Opposition and crossbenchers, the Chief Minister has time to answer the question. Let him answer it.

Mr GUNNER: As the Leader of the Opposition knows, I do not receive or handle the donations. I was aware of that donation when it was reported in the paper by the party secretary.

Education – Teacher Numbers

Mr HIGGINS to MINISTER for EDUCATION

In the first six months of this government 280 teachers were separated from Northern Territory schools. There were 272 recruited, of which nine commenced permanent employment. This is a net loss of eight teachers from the Northern Territory.

There is still a high turnover, one that supersedes the number of teachers recruited. Why is this government continuing to say it is delivering more teachers when it clearly is not?

ANSWER

Madam Speaker, as we said many times, the previous government made substantial cuts to the Northern Territory—cuts of \$114m. We have put \$20m back into school budgets, and schools have been working hard to recruit extra teachers and staff. As of 9 August the teacher numbers increased by 125. I am not sure where you got your figures from, Opposition Leader.

Schools have also looked at having school counsellors, youth workers and additional teacher assistants in remote communities. It is about putting more teachers back into the system, and that is what our government has been doing. Our schools have an extra \$20m in the budget this year.

Members interjecting.

Mrs WORDEN: A point of order, Madam Speaker! Standing Order 20; the Leader of the Opposition asked a question. He might not be interested in listening to the answer, but we are.

Madam SPEAKER: Please keep the noise down, because I would like to hear the answer too.

Ms LAWLER: If you speak to any teacher or principal they will tell you the CLP cut teacher numbers from our system. Schools are very grateful to have additional dollars in their global budgets. There are 178 more full-time equivalent positions in our schools, and 125 of those are actual teachers in our classrooms.

It is about making sure we have great leaders and principals in our schools, and that schools are engaged in their communities so they can keep staff. Teaching is a tough job. One of the key things we are focusing on is principal wellbeing and support for our teachers. Another one of our election commitments was providing mentoring to early career teachers to keep them in the system.

Across Australia, teachers often leave in their first few years of teaching. How do we support our young or new teachers into the system to keep them there? We have a plan for that, which we are working very hard on. We have extra teachers already in schools across the Territory.

Leader of the Opposition, if you actually spoke to teachers and got out on the ground, you would hear that as well.

Pensioner and Carer Concession Scheme Survey Results

Mr HIGGINS to MINISTER for TERRITORY FAMILIES

My question is for the Minister for Territory Families, someone who gets out on the ground and listens to people, like I do. She is someone who can tell the truth and answer questions.

Minister, will you promise that the results and responses of the surveys, submissions from the public and submissions from representative groups regarding the Northern Territory Pensioner and Carer Concession Scheme will be made publicly available prior to changing the scheme?

ANSWER

Madam Speaker, I thank the member for his support. It is great to be working in an area where we have so much in common, unlike the previous question about education, where our policies are very different.

In regard to seniors we are very much on the same track, wanting to support our senior Territorians. We want to give them the support they deserve, as well as acknowledging the cost-of-living pressures in the Northern Territory.

I am pleased with the number of surveys coming back. I have seen piles and piles of them on people's desks as they enter them into the database. We are more than happy to provide the generalised outcomes of those surveys. They are non-identified, so people do not need to be worried that their details will be made public; I want to be clear that any information we share will be de-identified because some of it is sensitive.

We are more than happy to transparently share that information, as is our commitment. As we have done with many other parts of government, we will be very clear with Territorians about what decisions we make and why we are making them.

National Indigenous Arts and Cultural Centres

Mrs LAMBLEY to MINISTER for TOURISM and CULTURE

You have allocated \$20m to the national Indigenous cultural centre, yet we hear nothing about it. We hear plenty about the national Indigenous art gallery, which is fantastic and we are all excited about that, but nothing about the cultural centre. Have you dumped this? I think you may have. My speculation is such. Can you please inform the House of where you are up to, who you have engaged on this important initiative for Alice Springs, and what progress you have made?

ANSWER

Madam Speaker, we have had this question before, and I have answered it in this House. I am very happy ...

Mrs Lambley: Not very well.

Ms MOSS: Yes, I have. I provided you with an update.

We have a \$100m arts trail commitment, of which the \$20m for the Indigenous cultural centre is a part of, as is the \$50m for the arts centre. As I have previously put on the record, we are leading the process for the national Indigenous art gallery. We are working with Nganampa, which is leading the development of the cultural centre. There is \$20m on the table for that development.

Nganampa has undertaken recruitment for a position to assist with the consultation plan. That is funded by government. We are also providing funding to Nganampa to undertake consultation.

Nganampa Anwernekenhe is the combined Aboriginal organisation leading that process and is undertaking consultation. It has been involved in the development of this concept for a long time. It has held discussion with the community and presented to the steering committee for our national Indigenous art gallery so it can explore the links which are very strong between the two cultural institutions.

It is progressing, and I am very happy to put you in touch with the organisation that is leading that process. I am confident about how both are progressing in Alice Springs. Our working group for the national Indigenous art gallery has met for the third time. They have had meetings with a number of stakeholders, including Nganampa and Tourism Central Australia, plus a range of others. I expect them to report to us in the next couple of months with their recommendations for the national Indigenous art gallery, which will then go out to community consultation.

These are really complex projects we are embarking on. I think they will be incredibly important and game-changing for Central Australia in regard to showcasing our art and culture, which is important to us all, and transforming the visitor experience in Central Australia.

I am very proud of the work that is being done and I am not going to apologise for taking the time to get these projects right. There are a number of stakeholders involved and we are telling a very complex and important story.

I am very pleased with the work that is being done and am very happy to be supporting Nganampa in its work with the cultural centre. We have put the investment on the table and are serious about this as a government. I am very pleased to be part of a government that supports the art and cultural sector in the Territory and supports telling Territory stories not only here but to the world.

Youth Facility in Alice Springs

Ms WAKEFIELD (Territory Families): Madam Speaker, I wish to make a correction to my answer to the Member for Araluen. I misheard which property you were talking about and I apologise. I am very happy that we are investing so much money into infrastructure in Alice Springs. There are several new buildings that were just refurbished.

You were asking about the new youth outreach offices where we have our youth outreach team based. It is an office space. It is designed as a service centre not a drop-in centre, but we expect young people to go there to seek services and support.

I am more than happy to organise a tour for you if you want to look at it, because it is a remarkably well-designed building and is well set up for young people to access services.

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