ASSOCIATIONS INCORPORATION BILL 2014

Second Reading

Resumed from an earlier stage of the sitting.

MS J.M. FREEMAN (Mirrabooka) [2.42 pm]: I rise to continue my contribution to the debate on the Associations Incorporation Bill 2014. At the same time as I was speaking about this legislation earlier today, I received an email, which I probably should have received earlier, but bureaucracy being what it is sometimes in both areas, I did not. The email is from the Irish Club of WA about its concerns about the Associations Incorporation Bill and its impact on clubs such as its club. Attached to the email was feedback from Clubs WA. The parliamentary secretary would have, and would have seen, both of those documents. I think it is interesting that a lot of the concerns that I raised in the debate on this bill are in those submissions to the parliamentary secretary. One of those concerns is that the provisions of this bill are very much for the tier 2 and tier 3 organisations and that small clubs such as the Irish Club, which has a voluntary committee and operations, will find it very difficult to comply with the provisions. Indeed, page 4 of the document that would have gone to the department, the minister and the parliamentary secretary states —

> The current framework of the Bill is, in our view, suited to professional and industry bodies and large not-for-profit entities.

It goes on to state —

> For Club's such as our, this Bill does not minimise administration and compliance costs, it increases those costs.

The things that I have talked about give me some confidence in the issues I raised.

Point of Order

Mr P.T. MILES: Mr Speaker, it is very hard to hear the member on her feet, because running discussions are going on.

The SPEAKER: Members, please.

Debate Resumed

Ms J.M. FREEMAN: The member for Girrawheen is indicating that I am being very noisy in her ear, so she is questioning whether I can be heard. I was trying to talk over the noise.

The Irish Club also pointed out that the penalty system, which I also raised, going from a penalty of $500 to around the $10 000 mark, is quite onerous. The Irish Club and the Clubs WA submissions suggest a tiered system. The Clubs WA submission states —

> Is there an opportunity to range fines based on the financial tiers so that the larger fines will apply to the larger tiers?

Clubs WA also raised the issue of contacting members by email and at postal and residential addresses. I want the parliamentary secretary to confirm that a postal address equals a residential address when there is no post office box for membership. That aspect of the issue I raised is quite interesting. Other issues were raised by Clubs WA and its submission goes through some of the clauses. We can discuss that in consideration in detail.

Coming back to the issue of codifying duties and responsibilities owed by committee members, I pointed out that the current act does not have a codification of duties and the green bill did not have a codification of duties, but this new legislation will have the codification of common law duties. That increases the aspects of common law requirements on committees, and that may have an impact on small committees. Common law is established by the courts, and I want to know what particular case law the bill relies on when it codifies the duties. Is it Hazelhurst v Wright in 1991? On page 146, Sievers states that, in effect, the duties that the bill codifies are the same as those that that apply to corporations. I note that there is similar legislation in South Australia, I think— no, it is Victorian legislation. The Victorian legislation that codifies duties has footnote references to the Corporations Law, which, basically, is very much what this associations incorporation legislation does by including those high-level, business responsibilities and duties in this legislation. If the Victorian legislation that also codifies duties for members of committees has put footnote references to the Corporations Law because that is the living law or the changing law that applies, will the omission of similar Corporations Law responsibilities in the WA bill result in officeholders not being fully informed of their responsibilities?

It also prohibits certain persons from being members of a management committee of an association. People are not to be members of a management committee if they have been bankrupt or convicted of an indictable offence in relation to the promotion, formation or management of a body corporate, likewise if they have been fraudulent

or convicted of an offence in relation to the duties of officers or a management committee and members with respect to incurring debt. All these things will be very difficult for people to ascertain. What will people do when they join a committee? We have all been on management committees. Will we just have to tick a box on a form saying that none of those apply to us? The codification of duties will be put in place, and as part of a management committee it will be our responsibility to have all this knowledge about how a management committee works, so how do we ensure that someone has not misled us in this regard? This goes back to the fact that so much of the Associations Incorporation Bill focuses on tier 3 and tier 2 organisations and not where it should be focused, which involves the 90 per cent of people who are in tier 1 financial organisations. The question that must be asked is: how will small clubs and associations police this? One assumes that the criteria will be self-selecting. A person will be asked to sign a document and that will cover the committee.

The bill also removes restrictions on associations' trading, in which profits go back into activities that further the association's objects and purposes. The minister's second reading speech stated that it is —

> … important to recognise that some trading activity among not-for-profit organisations is important for their financial self-sustainability, especially if they are used for the delivery of government-funded community services.

I have been reading the book by A.S. Sievers, *Associations and Clubs Law in Australia and New Zealand*, with that in mind. In terms of trading organisations, it is generally accepted that the broad definition of not-for-profits —

> … would not prevent an incorporated association from running stalls or other fund-raising functions as a means of raising money to support its principal non-trading objects.

For example, op shops. How does this go beyond that? The primacy of this act is non-commercial associations. How do we ensure that it does not go beyond this, and what does the minister mean by "used for the delivery of government-funded community services"? Is this about large not-for-profit organisations, to which the government is privatising services, being able to reap taxpayers' money to make a profit for running and growing their own organisation? Will this allow organisations that get funding from government to take it over into the next year? What does the minister mean by "especially if they are used for the delivery of government-funded community services"?

MS L.L. BAKER (Maylands) [2.52 pm]: I feel like clapping after listening to the member for Mirrabooka. I think she covered every possible aspect. I am wondering what could I possibly add to the debate.

Mr R.H. Cook: Another hour and a half for the member for Mirrabooka to finish her speech.

Ms L.L. BAKER: Yes, I would like to hear more from her—she is still in full swing with this. I would like to talk about this Associations Incorporation Bill 2014, which has been a long time coming. Members may remember that I ran the Western Australian Council of Social Service for seven years before I got elected and moved jobs. I fondly remember the debates, consultations and the many dialogues with the Consumer Protection Division at the time over this review—initially the green paper, the white paper and all its forerunners. This idea has been long festering in the back of many government's minds. It is interesting to note that none of us in government—neither the previous government nor us—managed to get it to the point that this government has now got it to. I am personally very grateful to see it come through and I know that the sector is very grateful as well.

Along the way, the definition of "not-for-profits" has changed. I think this debate started 17 years ago and the world of not-for-profits looked very different from what it does today. However, the reason for government choosing to partner with not-for-profits remains the same in many respects. The government still looks for a cost-effective means of service delivery. It still looks for an effective partnership that is grounded in the community and it still looks to capitalise on those things that the community sector, the human services sector, the charity sector and the not-for-profit sector do exceptionally well, which is work with people on the ground to deliver services. A lot of this journey has not seen community groups focus on their corporate structures or whether they reflect good business practice. Going back 17 years ago, the debate was—and still is for some of us—about what does "not-for-profit" mean and whether it is an effective or appropriate definition of the sector. Any title that starts with a negative has been criticised many times. Why would something be called "not" anything? I remember that *Dinosaurs* program from a long time ago that used a kind of post-modernist theory and was about a little baby dinosaur that called his father "not the momma". It is kind of the same thing; if we start giving something a negative title, it puts a certain description around it and lacks a definition. The sector is really about strengthening the client base and about ploughing back through the community amazing intellectual and knowledge resources, and that is what we love about it and why we work with it. Terms such as "human services sector" and "community sector" are just as applicable; they are interchangeable, I guess. In trying to move from where the sector was, with many local community organisations delivering services, and as the

government emphasis around the economics of funding the sector has changed, so too has the demand on the sector for accountability, transparency and professionalism. I would argue that the community sector or the not-for-profit sector should not be treated like a corporation, because it simply is not a for-profit trading entity. It is myriad little agencies that all have their feet deeply in the roots of their community. They are there to do good stuff, not to have an extractive view of their contribution or to look for what they can make out of the community, but to look at what they can give back to the community.

When the consultations were being progressed around this area, one supporter of the not-for-profit sector that I worked very closely with over the years is a private business called Harding and Associates. I am sure many people here, if they have not heard of Noel Harding, would be impressed by the level of dedication and commitment that he and his organisation have shown to delivering excellent services in the not-for-profit sector. Noel has worked very closely with the various governments, departments and individuals who have attempted to reform this piece of legislation, and he has shown immeasurable patience in putting up with the changes. He is a fantastic guy and the sector owes a lot to the commitment he has shown to improving the financial practices in the community sector and ensuring that we had strong audit principles in place. One of WACOSS's core business principles is to help the sector to develop its governance practices. This was when organisations had constitutions under the Associations Incorporation Act, but did not do so much strategic planning or long-range visioning, and did not perhaps look so much at performance indicators or the kind of things that we have been able to take from the corporate sector without taking the greedy bit. Those things have developed the profile that WACOSS now offers the community sector. A lot of the governance initiatives are embedded in this legislation. I applaud that; it is very good. The way that this bill introduces or recognises the three tiers and tries to allow the small agencies more flexibility in how they report, but still demands that they report in some fashion, particularly to their membership base, is laudable.

It is a challenge working with a sector that covers a broad range of matters. I suspect that is why the legislation is so big. It deals with everything from the little emergency relief provider that works out of the neighbourhood church to Anglicare and the Telethon Institute for Child Health Research. Some of the amazing institutions in hospitals are set up as not-for-profits. Some of these entities are massive. Some of them have been around for over 100 years. I remember celebrating the 100-year anniversary of some of the charities in Western Australia in my time at the Western Australian Council of Social Service. They are very strong contributors to the economy. They employ a lot of people and they do a lot of good. This legislation will recognise their capacity to have some level of trading, but it will be wrapped in a community enterprise model. It will be wrapped in a company-limited-by-guarantee notion that that is okay, as long as the organisation is trading for the benefit of its shareholders, its membership base or the community it represents, because it is keeping the outcomes it is delivering very close to the shareholders or those who will benefit from them. I would say that this is more of a generative style of business operation than an extractive style, which would separate profit and involve shareholders, who are a very long way from the centre or heart. That is not a function of community enterprises or charities, and it never should be.

There was always a lot of debate around the reform of the federal Charities Act, and of course the church prevented that reform for a very long time because of the changes to tax laws that were threatened at the time. However, that reform was implemented some years ago. Many big charities have trading arms that are very profitable for members, and that should be recognised and supported. That model of operation does not suit everybody and it does not return a benefit to every charity, but when it operates effectively, some of these new inclusions will help. The accounting system for a tier of over $1 million is a very good system and sounds like the way to go. Self-reporting by tiny organisations will be encouraged, rather than lodging financial statements. There will also be personal privacy protections and conditions around the release of members' information.

One of my most fond memories early in my appointment as CEO of WACOSS was when an individual member of WACOSS, whom I will not name for reasons that will become obvious, contacted me to seek access to the membership database. I had just come back from working internationally, so I had to do a quick legal check on the status of such a request. I got very familiar with the legislation that preceded this bill and the issue of membership details. I found that I certainly was not obliged to hand over the membership list, and that was a good thing. However, I was obliged to let the person come in, sit in the office and read through the list, and if they had wanted to take a copy, they could have taken a copy. That particular individual had been convicted of murder and had had a severe psychotic illness for many years. I know that the Acting Speaker (Ms J.M. Freeman) knows exactly whom I am talking about. That person's sole purpose in trying to get the WACOSS membership list was to write to everybody and lobby for a position on the board. Fortunately, I was able to find out the facts of the matter and dissuade that course of action without any personal injury. They were heady days! The protection of the privacy of the membership database is extremely important, but people should have access to a limited range of information; there is no doubt about that. These organisations need to be quite

transparent. They work in the community and they need to have the trust of the community, so they need to be transparent in many ways and this is one of them.

One of the really strong points that we have been waiting a long time for is the codification of the duties and responsibilities of committee members and a description of who should not be on a committee. That is not a bad idea. Should that be embedded in legislation or put in the regulations? Governance and board roles change over the years. As I said at the beginning of my presentation, 17 years ago the role of board members would have been vastly different from their role now. It probably would have been quite offensive to apply to the role of a board member 17 years ago the language that we apply to the role of a board member now. I think it would have been more appropriate to have the flexibility of regulations. I understand why the definitions have been put in the bill, but we need to be careful about those definitions and how we use them, because they will be subject to cultural change over time and we should be flexible about that. Certainly, it is very important to define what a treasurer does and, in particular, the issues around liability. A lot of us would have been around when the insurance debacles went on in the community sector and everyone was panicking about having to shut down community groups so that they did not play ball or have a barbecue in the park. I suspect that a Labor government was in office at the time.

Mr C.J. Tallentire: Labor helped resolve the problems.

Ms L.L. BAKER: Yes. Who was the Premier? Was it Geoff? I think it was Geoff Gallop. I think the insurance package he sewed up for the community sector had a lot of government involvement. Again, that was a laudable initiative, but it simply had to happen. The sector could not have managed without the government stepping in and helping at a very trying time when people were panicking about insurance.

Some board members of larger agencies may know their liability as board members, but members of tiny organisations might be less likely to know what they are and are not liable for. I remember speaking to board members of quite large organisations who were blissfully ignorant of the liability they carried, particularly the financial risk involved. When we started to develop board training at WACOSS, it was done with a special emphasis on understanding things such as codes of conduct, insurance liability and declarations of conflicts of interest, because people were unaware of those matters. Seventeen years ago when this work was started, those kinds of concepts were on the horizon, but they certainly were not played out as we have seen them played out in many organisations.

We as a community have gotten a lot wiser, and I think the changes flagged in the Associations Incorporation Bill recognise the maturity in the community sector about these things. The changes also recognise that the relationship between the community sector and government has changed on a number of levels. Most specifically, as I referred to earlier, the contracting regimes have changed the nature of not-for-profits. I remember presenting a paper called "Cannibalise or Collaborate" to the Australian Council of Social Service conference when I headed WACOSS. It was at the start of the federal and state government changes to the contracting regime that introduced competitive tendering and a market model. That brought with it some huge challenges for the community sector. On the one hand, the government was demanding efficiencies.

[Member's time extended.]

Ms L.L. BAKER: I feel as though I have only just started.

The government demanded that the community sector become more businesslike in its contracting with government. The Western Australian Council of Social Service spent many years putting together a structure around contracting that delivered the government of the day and the community sector a win–win outcome. That had not been done by the end of my term as executive director. However, the former executive director of WACOSS, Shawn Boyle, had managed to get government to index government contracting. Most government departments legally require community funding to be indexed, but funnily enough that has never been actioned by the Department of Health. I think it manages to fly blissfully in complete negation of the government's legislation and, as it were, puts its middle finger up to government policy—if that is not an unparliamentary thing to say.

The government forcing the community sector to collaborate has resulted in amalgamations. It is not easy to amalgamate two not-for-profit organisations. Starting goal and mission alignments and those kinds of things are part of the journey. The process needs to be gone through and not enough is yet done to help not-for-profit organisations manage that collaboration. Probably more could be done, and funding organisations such as WACOSS to do more training on that would be a good thing. However, the sector has been rationalised, and, for me, that is a bad thing. I do not think that the community sector should be rationalised, and I hope that will start to turn around soon, because the community connection has been lost. When bigger agencies are funded and are asked to find subcontractors to do the work that the government was doing, the subcontractors end up with a very scaled-down version of the money, because it has had to go through the bigger agencies that take the

larger slice of the money. This leaves the little agencies left at the bottom, struggling to get enough money to operate effectively. We are left with the notion of either finding an agency and collaborating with it to work out how to bring the mission in line with another not-for-profit organisation, or cannibalising them. That has happened before. Governments have forced bigger agencies to consume smaller agencies in order to get contracts. That competitiveness has occurred and it is not good, in my view. I think the diversity of a sector is part of its richness and is a reward base for government.

There are a number of very good advances in this bill. I thank the minister for the briefing, and I thank Sarah and Melissa and those other people who briefed me. It seems like that happened a while ago and I am pleased that the bill has hit our desks and we are now able to discuss it.

Before I finish, I want to mention the Australian Institute of Company Directors' report "2014 NFP Governance and Performance Study: Examining governance practices and opportunities in Australia's NFP sector", which was mentioned by the member for Mirrabooka and which all members have received a copy of. The foreword of that report states that, according to the Australian Bureau of Statistics, in 2012–13, 57 000 economically significant not-for-profit organisations generated over $107 billion and employed more than one million people, or about eight per cent of the workforce. That is pretty impressive. The report that has come across our desks is AICD's regular look at not-for-profit governance and performance. It comments on some interesting things that are on the minds of not-for-profit organisations at the moment. The report refers to collaboration and mergers being on the agenda, and states that directors and not-for-profits have a very positive attitude toward that, but it also flags that there are problems with how that is being progressed and that mergers need to be supported. Some of the figures in the report show that 30 per cent of the boards that were surveyed—a couple of thousand agencies were surveyed—said that they had discussed or taken action to merge with another not-for-profit last year. More than 50 per cent of the 259 directors of not-for-profits in social services, particularly the large not-for-profits with incomes over $10 million or those operating in the social service, development or housing sectors, said that their boards had discussed mergers. Similarly, over half the 62 directors in development and housing had discussed a merger. The main reason for considering a merger was to improve existing services, which is a very interesting comment.

The community sector has sometimes been accused of being unprofessional or not effective at delivering its services. But the sector is prepared to look at its operations and constantly seek to align its strategic direction, mission and performance outcomes with what the clients of the services require. I have always believed that if an executive of an organisation is not fully reviewing its operations every two years, it is not leading an organisation effectively. It is interesting that that was acknowledged in the report. Twenty-seven per cent of the organisations surveyed said that they had considered a merger to be more attractive to funders. Who are the major funders of not-for-profits? It is the government. If about 30 per cent of funding on average comes from the government, they are doing that because we are forcing them to do so. I am not sure whether that is a good or a bad thing. I remain to be convinced that that is the best way forward.

I also want to mention the chapter of the Australian Institute of Company Directors' report titled "Certainty in government policy is needed", which states —

> Responding to change and uncertainty in government policy is a top priority.
>
> Maintaining or building income, diversifying income sources and clarifying strategy are still key priorities … but many boards now have to meet these challenges in an environment of widespread change in government policy.

Today there has been talk about the red flags that are going up around the federal government's withdrawal of effort in many communities. That is extremely troubling, because all the good work that has occurred in the community sector over the past 10 to 15 years has been to bed down an operating model that is effective for the community sector. Now the federal government is saying, "That's really nice, but bugger you! We are just not going to fund you anymore because we have changed our priorities." Every government has a right to change its priorities. That is what governments do: they get elected and they bring in their own priorities, but I do not think it is good to throw out the baby with the bathwater. We will rue the day if there is further fragmentation, marginalisation or narrowing of the community sector because of what is happening. The fragility of volunteerism is also concerning. We should be mindful that in such a busy world volunteers are sometimes hard to find. To keep them interested in what is being done and to keep them as part of an organisation, they need to be offered some structure and support. If funds are being withdrawn, that support is likely to dry up, and that would be very bad. It would put one hand, if not two hands, behind the back of not-for-profits.

In closing, I say to government that forcing change on the not-for-profit sector by forcing mission drift or realignment is not the best way ahead, and it would be a sad day to see the not-for-profit sector narrowed or weakened. We should be bolstering that work and making sure that the resources are there for the work to be

done effectively, through this kind of bill, which will hopefully be the last one for at least another 17 years. Let us see. The member for Wanneroo is probably ruing the day that he accepted this gig as parliamentary secretary. But a very worthwhile thing is being done, and it is the product of many governments and many people who are very passionate about the community sector. There are many people who are deeply committed to its advancement and want to see it with a clear work environment, with transparency for the public, and with a steady, strong hand at the helm. I think the Associations Incorporation Bill 2014 has a lot to offer on all those counts, and I look forward to listening to other second reading debate contributions and to consideration in detail.

MR R.H. COOK (Kwinana — Deputy Leader of the Opposition) [3.19 pm]: I can very faithfully, and I think confidently, assure the member for Maylands that it will not be another 17 years before we review this legislation, because the one thing we know is that there will continue to be change, particularly in the not-for-profit and volunteer sector, and we will continue to need to update the frameworks in which they operate. I begin by commending the member for Mirrabooka on her contribution to the debate. I think it was a very well considered and researched presentation to the chamber, and I am sure you agree with me, Acting Speaker (Ms J.M. Freeman), that it was a very good contribution to the debate!

I have been anticipating this legislation more than any other member in this chamber—more than the member for Wanneroo; the parliamentary secretary—and I will explain why. It goes back to 25 November 2010. I remember that date because it was the date I got my first piece of legislation through this place. I was approached at about mid to early 2010 by the Australian Medical Association, which, members may or may not be aware, runs an association called the Medical Defence Association of Western Australia. The Medical Defence Association provides insurance products to members of the AMA—doctors mostly, of course—in relation to malpractice suits and other such things. It was concerned that it was having to move quickly, because of commonwealth legislation, from the Associations Incorporation Act to the commonwealth regime. In every other state, there was a mechanism by which the minister could simply make that transfer. I think the way it went was that in Western Australia we had no such mechanism. In my naivety, I said, "That's all right; I can put up legislation that would do this. I'm sure the government won't mind. We can just put it up there, and if the government doesn't do it, we can just put this legislation forward." The AMA, being much more seasoned warriors I think, was somewhat chuffed and amused by my youthful enthusiasm at the time. It said, "Go for it, Roger! That's great; see what you can do!" I put this legislation up. It was a small change to the act. It simply allowed the minister to allow organisations to migrate to the federal regime. I put it up with great enthusiasm and fanfare in my second reading speech, and the government explained to me, "No, we will not entertain your legislation." I thought: But why ever not? This is commonsense.

There was a serious aspect in that at the time the medical insurance industry was undergoing great consolidation. Whereas small insurance companies were operating around the country in different states, one of the larger players was actually the Western Australian version of the Medical Defence Association. In positioning itself in the marketplace, it was actually consolidated with, I think, the South Australian body and one other association. It was saying to me that hundreds of jobs were on the line because, obviously, in consolidating it had to work out where it positioned its outfit. It was saying that unless it could migrate to the federal regime quickly, it would have to relocate its offices from Perth to, I think, Adelaide. Literally hundreds of jobs were on the line, so it was quite important legislation from that point of view—simple and technical as it was, and thoroughly boring to anyone who was not involved in the discussion. The government said, "No, we're not going to do it." I wondered why ever not, and the government said it was because it had major changes to the Associations Incorporation Act pending. "Any moment now we're about to bring forward major changes to the legislation—any day now. So, you, young Roger—young member for Kwinana—you can wait; there's no need to proceed." Here we are, almost exactly three years to the day.

Mr D.J. Kelly: You don't look any older!

Mr R.H. COOK: Thank you, member for Bassendean. That is why I continue to use my campaign posters from 2008! I think it is important to have that youthful exuberance in our campaign posters. For almost three years to the day we have been waiting for this legislation to come forward, so that we can say, "At last; here it is!"

But, of course, time was running out. It was 25 November and it was the last day of the parliamentary sitting. Most members at that stage assembled dutifully in the courtyard of Parliament House being entertained by members of the press gallery at the pre-Christmas media drinks. All was fine above the water, but underneath the water the ducks of parliamentary democracy, so to speak, were kicking like mad because the AMA was determined that this legislation would get through. "Give up all hope", I think was the advice we gave the AMA because we could not take legislation from go to whoa in the space of 24 hours. "Watch us", said the AMA. If any member ever doubts the power of the AMA in this state, mark my words carefully now: in the space of 24 hours it managed to propel a piece of legislation through not one but both houses of Parliament, and to have it

signed off by the end of the day. Even mighty, immovable forces such as Hon Norman Moore were unable to stop the momentum of the AMA when it decided it wanted to put changes to the Associations Incorporation Act through Parliament inside 24 hours. Apparently, the honourable member was heard grumbling under his breath—perhaps not so inaudibly—"Who the hell are these people to tell me what we're going to legislate just before Christmas?" Of course, as anyone in this place who aspires to be the Minister for Health will learn, the AMA has extraordinary influence when it comes to such things, and it got through my first piece of legislation ever to go through the houses of Parliament that was moved and sponsored by me. It was put through on that day, and it was all achieved within 24 hours. It was a great moment, but no more than maybe two or three people were in this place at the time. In the chamber at the time were, I think, the Acting Speaker at the time; the member for Nedlands, who was the responsible minister, and me, because everyone else was out there undertaking the solemn duties associated with pre-Christmas drinks! However, we passed this legislation on time, and, as I said, we managed to save lots of Western Australian jobs in the process.

I have been waiting for this day because the government assured me that this legislation was "coming in any day now" in November 2010. Here we are in November 2014, and I am very pleased to see that it has hit the decks at last. Although this stuff might seem a bit technical in nature—it may not be the stuff of great interest to members of the public—it is really important legislation. It will facilitate an untold amount of volunteer and professional activity in the form of P&Cs, sporting groups, large groups, small groups, volunteer organisations, service organisations, recreation organisations, craft groups, hobby groups and religious groups. A large amount of activities that go on in our community are usually driven or guided by the Associations Incorporation Act. I note the member for Mirrabooka's comment that this legislation began in 1895. This is a grand old activity of government in Western Australia. It ensures that we facilitate this incredibly important work that goes on in our communities.

There are three really crucial elements of a healthy society. One is that people have fair jobs in a fair workplace. The second is equality of opportunity so people can get those jobs and have opportunities in life based upon their hard work rather than race and position in society and so forth. The third element that underpins a healthy society is a strong, healthy, cohesive, nurturing, supportive and empowered community. One of the key vehicles of that are the associations that live and breathe in our communities for not only the services that they provide but also the strong positive community experiences they provide through the volunteers engaged in work in these associations. They help each other, help people in the communities, socialise in these organisations and consider themselves part of communities. A very important element of this is good governance. Good governance is one of those things that we often take for granted. Many people, particularly those of us in this place, are involved in many of these organisations. Before we came to this place, often our backgrounds included being involved in volunteer and not-for-profit organisations in our communities. A lot of the strengths around the governance of these organisations are taken for granted.

One of the very informative experiences of my life involved working in Aboriginal organisations, in which a lot of the experiences and socialisations around good governance have not been part of their lived experience. Many members will be aware of the Office of the Registrar of Indigenous Corporations, which is like another level of an incorporations act that helps Aboriginal organisations manage themselves in a way that is consistent with their cultures and values but maintains accountability. These Aboriginal organisations are incredibly important to the prosperity of the communities in which they serve.

A now famous study that came out of Harvard University called the Cornell Studies, essentially, looked at successful Indigenous or First Nation communities across North America to work out what were the successful ingredients of those communities and what were the characteristics of those communities that were prosperous, economically well off and progressive as opposed to those communities that were failing and not achieving their economic or community advancement or the progress they wanted. Many people would be forgiven for thinking it is because communities have lots of minerals on their reserves or in the areas in which they live. Many people would be forgiven for thinking it is because communities have casinos operating in their lands, or have seas in which they can fish, or other self-evident opportunities of economic advancement. The Cornell Studies discovered that the thing that was most important to whether a community was successful and had social and economic advancement was the good governance that was incorporated in the running of those communities. The issues around the economic opportunities were not self-evident; it was the way they managed those on an ongoing basis. Those communities that invested in good governance and incorporated that good governance in the way they managed their communities were the ones that were successful. Although we often take for granted the skills and culture that drive good governance in our community in these organisations, we should never underestimate the importance of this act in underpinning that good governance because good governance creates good and strong communities. I believe that the existence of strong communities is the other element that makes

a good society. Strong communities are about organisations that can come together when they have a need, service, want or recreation around which they want to organise.

I am struck by a recent experience I had. I was approached by a number of veterans in the community who wanted to preserve a piece of defence infrastructure in Kwinana—that is, a radar facility that was constructed on hills behind Medina and Calista. This radar station was part of a national network that existed during the Second World War. All that is left now are a few concrete bunkers and the stumps of some of the radar towers. This is a very important piece of our cultural heritage and our history. This group of people wanted to preserve it. I add as a footnote that Mrs Tonkin, the wife of a former Premier of Western Australia John Tonkin, was one of the radar operators at this facility. We came together and said that we needed to preserve this facility. The veterans said they needed to set up an organisation because they needed an incorporated body in order to receive support from Lotterywest to get the grants to undertake what was considered to be an important aspect of this work, and to do a business case around the elements needed to preserve the facility. We downloaded the model rules for the Associations Incorporation Act 1987 and the whole project came to a halt. Although these people were imbued with much enthusiasm and strong support for preserving the cultural heritage of the community in which we live, they were not so enamoured with the idea of wading through 20-odd pages of rather large and intimidating models of rules and regulations associated with the setting up of an incorporated association. We come to the nub of what the member for Mirrabooka was saying.

[Member's time extended.]

Mr R.H. COOK: If we say that 90 per cent of incorporated associations in Western Australia are tier 1s, it makes sense that we craft legislation that is more in keeping with the needs of the tier 1s. I think we run the risk, with the Associations Incorporation Act, of creating a framework in which we have large organisations—I think the parliamentary secretary mentioned the RAC in his second reading speech—on the one hand but very basic organisations on the other. I think that disparity or that vast scope of organisations will only increase. In an increasingly changing environment involving social media and different ways that people link up change, the infrastructure needs that these community groups have to operate will change very rapidly as well. We may envisage an association as a group of people may be sitting around a small table, usually inside a large, cold community centre hall, trying to confirm the minutes of the last meeting. They may be struggling to find two members who were at the last meeting and may not have a mover and a seconder to confirm the minutes and all the ongoing problems they face. To a lot of young people who are looking to organise in our community today, all this stuff is complete tosh. It is stuff about which they do not care. It is irrelevant. They think it is too difficult to deal with. They wonder why they cannot just get on and organise.

Ms J.M. Freeman interjected.

Mr R.H. COOK: That is right. Thank you, member for Mirrabooka—a voice off in the distance. They consider it irrelevant, and the difficulty associated with following all these procedures outweighs what they consider to be the benefits of the outcomes from undertaking these particular activities. We continue to drive this stuff underground. It strikes me that we need to find some way so that, in the words of the member for Mirrabooka, the commissioner of incorporated associations is not the regulator but rather the facilitator of these things. I continue to experience small organisations coming to me and saying that it is simply impossible to run.

I will give another example. Small organisations need a place to meet. It may not be appropriate for them to meet in someone's house, so they try to find a place where they can meet. They go to the local council and ask to meet in the local hall. The council says that, as an incorporated organisation, it will incur the usual fees associated with hiring the hall, which is perhaps $6 an hour for a certain time, plus $4 for every hour thereafter, but it will also need to have public liability insurance. People will ask, "Public liability—what the hell's that? Should we get that? I guess we need it. What's that?" The organisation needs public liability insurance to the tune of however many millions of dollars. We find these organisations running around chasing their tails with all these regulations and obligations, and we lose the essential element of what they represent, which is the great community resource of enthusiasm, community spirit and volunteerism. They get run over by the obligations associated with being an incorporated organisation.

Other organisations in the community are doing amazing work. I think of the Kwinana Early Learning Centre, the Kwinana Knights Football Club, ably led by its president, Bill Tregear, and other sporting organisations around the community. They do an amazing job on behalf of the community, but they have much more resources to draw upon because they have bigger incomes and club facilities. The Kwinana Knights have their own facilities, and heaven forbid the day that they relinquish those facilities to the City of Kwinana, because then the club will be crushed by the booking fees and other things that go with running an organisation that does not have control over its own infrastructure. These organisations tend to have more resources and can look after themselves. I am sure this legislation will go a long way towards facilitating their lives and making their job

simpler, but I worry about what might be called start-ups—that is, organisations and associations of the future, of which we will not be the beneficiaries, because they will be just run over by the modern obligations imposed by this legislation.

I know that in my speech there has tended to be a bit of a contradiction in terms. On one hand I am saying good governance is very important, and on the other I am saying let us not overburden these organisations with too much regulation. However, in that is the balance that we need to strike. I told the member for Maylands that we will be doing this again in 17 years, but I think we will be doing this again inside five years, because we will find that the disruption to our lives of the new digital age will so change the facilitation of collective community action that we will continually need to update the framework in which these organisations operate.

Mr P.T. Miles: The member also indicated that this incarnation has taken 17 years or so to come to this point, and some of its terminology is out of date.

Mr R.H. COOK: That is right, we are moving very quickly, and this is always the problem with legislation, is it not? By the time we get to encapsulate many of the modern-day principles in legislation, those modern-day principles become yesterday's practices. We will be at it again.

It is a matter of striking that balance, but I want to emphasise to the government that we should not overly burden these small organisations. Perhaps we need to be looking in the future at two acts of Parliament—one that facilitates those large organisations, which I think have been referred to in this legislation as tier 2 and tier 3 organisations, and one that might be called the "Associations Incorporation Act lite", for the small organisations, which may come and go, but that is the nature of the world in which they operate. As we know, things continue to speed up.

Judging from the second reading speech and the contribution of the member for Mirrabooka, the government has done a reasonable job in trying to craft new legislation around the modern reality for associations. However, I add my caution about the needs of modern organisations. I note, for example, that there is capacity for disputes to be resolved through the State Administrative Tribunal. My word of caution there is that, although SAT is striving towards a situation in which people are able to resolve issues that would otherwise be considered by action in the courts of petty sessions, in a non–court like environment, there is a danger that some associations may be caught up in that process as internal dispute resolution simply becomes an exercise in going to arbitration, rather than organisations having to strike these things. I note, from the contribution of the member for Maylands, that organisations often have very difficult times in resolving these disputes because of the way in which they conduct themselves. I remember a recent experience of one association that works in the mental health sector. A member of the organisation wanted to access the membership records of the organisation for what they considered to be perfectly legitimate and democratic reasons, but because of the difficult sector in which the organisation operated, it had to take a very careful approach to protecting the privacy of its membership. On one hand it had to respect the rights of the member to have the membership records, but on the other hand it had to respect the rights to privacy of the rest of the membership, and to make sure the situation was resolved amicably and did not escalate. We need to make sure that the incorporation legislation works in a flexible way to accommodate these organisations. As I said, maybe one day we will be contemplating splitting this legislation into a couple of pieces of legislation or providing for regulations for tier 1 organisations so that the framework in which they operate can change more flexibly.

I will make the point in my final couple of minutes that these organisations almost always rely on the hard work of volunteers. Kwinana is very blessed with an extraordinary core of volunteers from the community who run these organisations, providing good services, important facilities and great outlets for community members. However, that culture of volunteerism is under threat because people are increasingly caught up in their working life, particularly fly in, fly out workers. Whereas, before, mum or dad might have been able to dedicate a lot of time to the local sports association, increasingly that is becoming more and more difficult. Dad or mum might be working up in the mines, which means that the other parent is busy taking care of the kids and other things; and when mum or dad comes back from the mines, they are too tired to consider carrying out work in the community beyond their immediate family. We are therefore losing a massive component of that volunteer base in our community. Sporting groups for young children in particular are the ones missing out. This is important legislation but it is stuff that we must view very carefully.

MS S.F. McGURK (Fremantle) [3.50 pm]: I too rise to make a contribution on the Associations Incorporation Bill 2014. Like other speakers before me, I have marvelled at the member for Mirrabooka's command of the minutiae contained in this bill and I thank her for her work and her contribution so far. I imagine that she will give the parliamentary secretary a run for his money at the consideration in detail stage and I hope he is prepared.

Mr P.T. Miles: I was on the committee with the member for four years!

Ms S.F. McGURK: So, the parliamentary secretary will know what he might be up for!

I want to make a number of points about this bill. The first is about an issue that has been raised by other people. However, what struck me when I was reading the parliamentary secretary's second reading speech was the length of time it has taken for this bill to come before the house. I understand that some work for the green paper was done under the previous Labor administration and that the green paper was released in 2006–07, but only now, in late 2014, do we have the bill before the house. I note from the Department of Commerce website that it was not until November this year that consultation concluded on the model rules for associations. It does, therefore, seem to have taken a long time to get to this point. I do not know why that is the case. In the second reading speech, the parliamentary secretary talked about the number of organisations covered by this bill, the importance of those organisations and the importance of modernising the legislation for the governance of those organisations, yet it has taken this administration a long time to bring the bill before the house.

Notwithstanding that, I welcome any change to associations operating in my electorate that makes their work easier and that facilitates and assists the work of volunteers in often not-for-profit organisations. I refer to parents and citizens associations and parents and friends associations at schools, and the many sporting and community organisations. I am reminded that volunteer work may involve P&Cs and P&Fs and may also involve school councils and not-for-profit boards in the aged care and community sectors. A raft of organisations operate throughout our community to which we are all indebted and whose absence we would feel very keenly if they were not with us. The government therefore has a responsibility to assist those organisations and to make sure that the framework of rules that apply to them assists them, and at the same time give protection to the people covered by the organisations and the people working with them.

Those sorts of initiatives that have been already identified seem to me to be commonsense. They include a reduction in the number of financial reporting requirements for organisations that operate with funds of less than $250 000 a year, the encouragement of self-reporting for organisations with a lower turnover, the protection of personal privacy to give comfort to people who become involved in those organisations, and the removal of restrictions on trading associations whose profits go back into the association. All those initiatives seem to make a lot of sense. Also, writing the legislation in plain English and gearing it towards the organisation it is regulating and seeking to serve can only be a good thing. I note that the government believes that about 90 per cent of organisations operate with less than $250 000 a year and they will therefore not be required to get an independent audit but to keep basic financial statements. That seems to make a lot of sense.

As I said, although the work of these organisations in our communities is widespread and much relied upon, the reality is that a number of those organisations in our modern society are struggling for a range of reasons. Before I stood to speak, the member for Kwinana began to list the challenges of the reduction in volunteerism and I wondered whether it is because of a culture of reduced volunteerism that might feed on itself. However, it is more likely to be because the life of working people is changing. One partner in a family might work away in a fly in, fly out arrangement, as the member for Kwinana said, but there might also be an issue of housing affordability with couples feeling that they both need to work, and so on. There is a range of reasons for why fewer people are participating in those organisations and, again, that is all the more reason why the governance and legislation that relates to those organisations should be responsive to their needs, and should assist and not hamper their work.

The modern-day struggle for clubs in society is no more apparent than it is in some sporting clubs in my electorate. Leaving the Fremantle Dockers aside, sporting clubs from Western Australian Football League clubs down the line have had varying levels of community participation compared with past years. Some sporting clubs seem to be doing well. The statistics show, for instance, that soccer continues to have a very high rate of participation. The Australian Sports Commission report on the trends in participation in sport, titled "The future of Australian sport: Megatrends shaping the sports sector over coming decades", identified soccer as one form of organised sport that is not declining in membership. I was surprised that it did not refer to netball—but it did not refer to netball. Apart from that, the report identified that there is a clear trend towards declining levels of participation in organised sport. As I said, that has become very obvious in the clubs that I have a lot to do with in my electorate. Many of those sporting clubs either own or control bars or clubrooms, and some of those facilities over which the clubs have control are quite substantial holdings. They either own those holdings or have leased them over time, and that creates an extra burden for their organisation. Owning or leasing them has been very profitable for them, both in organising their members and in ensuring that there is a place for their members to meet and socialise, but it can also create an organisational burden for them in modern times. The two WAFL clubs in my electorate, South Fremantle and East Fremantle Football Clubs, have been forced to consider co-locating because of ageing infrastructure. In the face of popularity, glamour and the hundreds of thousands, if not millions, of dollars held by the AFL, those WAFL teams have struggled to attract the number of

attendees at games, let alone club members, that they have had in years past. Having said that, anyone looking for a great, relaxed family atmosphere to watch a quality football game could do a lot worse than going along to a local WAFL match, whether it be the Bulldogs or the Sharks. I would not bother with any of the other WAFL teams, of course!

Mr R.H. Cook: What a shameless promotion of local teams!

Ms S.F. McGURK: I would not bother with any of the others, but people could do a lot worse than go along to one of those games because they really have a great atmosphere. I think that those clubs recognise that and are trying to look at strategies to attract more families, because it really is a great afternoon, particularly at quarter time and half-time, when the kids can get out on the oval and have a kick and run around.

The East Fremantle and South Fremantle Football Clubs, because of their ageing facilities, have taken the initiative, which they announced during the winter season just gone, to have discussions about co-locating, hopefully at the South Fremantle Football Club. It was a very difficult task to notify their members, particularly for the East Fremantle Football Club.

Mr D.J. Kelly: Have they actually made that decision?

Ms S.F. McGURK: They have made a decision to enter into discussions, and are currently looking at the feasibility and possible alternatives of moving to South Fremantle. East Fremantle Football Club reminded its members that it actually won more premierships while it was at the South Fremantle Football Club—that is where it originated—than it has at Shark Park, so it might actually be better for the club to relocate and it is trying to talk it up as much as it can. It really is a great idea. East Fremantle Football Club was struggling with its infrastructure and the Town of East Fremantle does not have the resources to put money into that facility or the park around it. I congratulate both clubs on taking a leadership role in their organisations and saying that if they want to be vibrant for the next few decades, they will to have to look at making a significant change. They know that other WAFL clubs have done that and that it has been very successful.

Another club is in the mix at South Fremantle Football Club—the Dockers. The Dockers club has a lease over the clubrooms and use of the oval. I think it is important for the state government to play a role in those negotiations. Of course, the state government has committed money to the new Cockburn sports facility, to where the Dockers hope to relocate. It seems to me that if the Dockers club is to relocate to that facility, it needs to release some of its grip on the South Fremantle Football Club and ensure that that facility is available to not only WAFL clubs, but also the Fremantle community. Those discussions have commenced and, as I said, they sound very positive to me, but there is definitely a leadership role for the government to play in those negotiations.

While I am speaking about WAFL clubs, it is worth commenting on the funding uncertainty that currently surrounds those clubs due to not knowing about the management of the new Perth Stadium and what that might mean to the funding of WAFL clubs and the effect that will have on the important development programs that those clubs are doing in their own catchment and regional areas. All that has created a lot of uncertainty for WAFL clubs and I think that the onus is on the state government to ensure that those clubs are assisted and that there is as much certainty as possible, whether it be with the facilities—I have spoken about those issues at Fremantle—or the funding for those organisations, which will be crucial.

In relation to the viability of clubs in my electorate, another issue worth commenting on—I spoke about WAFL clubs being proactive—is the initiative of two sporting clubs and a community club in Fremantle that have recently announced their desire to co-locate. The Fremantle Lawn Tennis Club, Fremantle Bowling Club and Fremantle Workers Social and Leisure Club have agreed to enter into an arrangement to relocate to Fremantle Park, which is where the bowling and tennis clubs are now. The issue is securing government funding. The Fremantle workers and tennis clubs celebrate their centenaries this year, so it is quite fitting that the leadership of those clubs—I note also the leadership of the bowls club—have taken a very forward-thinking approach and have said, "Look, we have three separate club facilities and we are all struggling. If we look at co-locating and building some new clubrooms, we can have a much bigger and better facility and perhaps attract more people to use our clubrooms and sporting facilities." I really commend the leadership of those clubs for taking that initiative, and I wish them all the best. I understand that the City of Fremantle has made an application to the Department of Sport and Recreation to secure some funding. The city and the three clubs would also contribute some funding. For instance, the workers club has put on the market its building on Henry Street, in the west end of Fremantle. I am not sure whether the sale has been secured yet, but the building is on the market. The proceeds of the sale will be the capital that the club will use to put into the new project. One would not have thought it a natural fit for a west-end workers club, with a very rich history over decades and a strong association with trade unions and a connection with Labor, to work with a sporting club, but the club realised that unless it took the initiative, it would not be viable in the future.

[Member's time extended.]

Ms S.F. McGURK: I will quickly mention the history of the workers club. A couple of weeks ago the club had its centenary and I was there for the launch of a booklet to mark the occasion. In 2011, a general meeting of the club was convened and told that it was likely that receivers would need to be called in, that the club would need to lose its liquor licence, and that perhaps thought needed to be given about what to do about the ownership of the premises. However, over the past two years, under the leadership of Don Whittington and Ruth Belben, and some very hardworking people, the west-end club now boasts 800 members and a vibrant activity scene, certainly every weekend and on a couple of weeknights. It has been a fantastic turnaround. Again, the leadership of the club realised that although they could increase their membership and secure a better financial footing, it could not really sustain that into the future unless it was in partnership with other groups. That is why they have entered into this hopeful arrangement of a shared facility with the tennis and the bowling clubs, and all strength to them.

There clearly is an issue of viability—I am sure other members of this house experience it—in some of the community clubs, particularly the sporting clubs, within their electorates. Just last week I visited the East Fremantle Bowling Club, which is one of three bowling clubs within my electorate. The membership of that bowling club is declining and the leadership there is looking at what the alternatives are for their organisation. I hope I can provide some assistance to them. Clearly, the membership is ageing and some of the traditional attractions of organisations such as bowls clubs might not be what they once were. Having said that, I was interested to see a report that was done in June this year for a member of the Legislative Assembly in Victoria, Jane Garrett, the member for Brunswick, called, "Keeping the ball rolling: Helping community sports clubs stay viable in today's world". This report looked at some of the issues that some small sporting clubs and organisations might be dealing with. I found it to be a useful read. It basically centres on one particular bowling club, but it draws out a number of themes in, for instance, the trends of sport that I referred to earlier.

In the 2013 Australian Sports Commission report that I referred to earlier, "The future of Australian Sport: Megatrends shaping the sports sector over coming decades", one of the megatrends is fewer people going into organised forms of sport and a trend towards individualised forms of sport. We need to recognise that trend. For instance, the Australian Sports Commission report states that 60 per cent of the population do not participate in any organised physical activity, while running, cycling and walking have seen large increases in participation. Although we need to recognise that trend, it is worth noting the social capital that comes along with organised forms of sport. If we let go of some of our sporting clubs or any club in our communities, we let go of them easily at our peril. The report initiated by Jane Garrett states —

> Increased membership of sporting clubs leads to additional societal benefits that independent physical activity does not achieve. Sporting clubs facilitate the development of social capital. The central premise of social capital theory is that social networks have value.

The idea is that it is worth investing in the future of Australia's grassroots sporting organisations because they bring a range of benefits to local communities and society as a whole. Although people may not see bowling as especially sexy, bowling clubs are a great example of that; they attract older people to a social environment, people who otherwise might be disconnected from our community, and it is a form of sport that is very accessible. If we simply let those organisations go and say that that is just the way of the future, we do so at our peril. I certainly hope that I can work with those organisations that are struggling to see what the future will be for them, and find ways to assist them to either work in cooperation with other clubs—to relocate or co-locate might be one model—or look at other alternatives. The report initiated by the Victorian member for Brunswick outlined some of the experiences of a bowling club within her electorate that undertook many initiatives and perhaps loosened up some of the arrangements around that club to attract a younger and more vibrant membership.

There is one other issue that I want to briefly raise and to which other people have referred. I do not know whether the Australian Institute of Company Directors knew that we were debating this bill, but it was certainly fortuitous to have its study on not-for-profit organisations,"2014 NFP Governance and Performance Study", arrive on my desk this week. Perhaps like many members, I have been a beneficiary of the Australian Institute of Company Directors training. I did its company directors course a number of years ago and the number of issues that it raises in this national report on not-for-profits is pertinent. I think other members have already referred to this report in this debate. This AICD report makes the point that there are 57 000 economically significant not-for-profits in Australia generating over $107 billion per annum and employing more than one million people. This particular questionnaire that looked at the governance issues facing those not-for-profits was answered by 2 700 directors. It is a sizeable study into a significant sector and it is very pertinent when we look at this bill before us, which is about trying to assist those sorts of organisations, while operating under the protections of the law and making sure that they are separate legal entities with those protections.

Three issues struck me from the AICD report. I have already mentioned one of those examples within my electorate about the Western Australian Football League clubs and the co-location of a couple of smaller sporting clubs with the Fremantle Workers Social and Leisure Club. One of the issues that this AICD report refers to is that collaboration and mergers are on the agenda for not-for-profits. The trend that this report has identified is that not-for-profits show a high degree of collaboration. The results of this survey reveal that not-for-profits are actively collaborating and partnering with other not-for-profits to deliver services across the sector, and it notes the trend that slightly higher proportions of not-for-profits are collaborating with organisations with a turnover of less than $250 000 a year. It is good to see that there is a trend towards doing that. Those organisations can only benefit from discussing and sharing either physical resources or intellectual or strategic resources amongst themselves. Mergers are being considered by 30 per cent of the boards being considered in the AICD report.

Another point worth noting from the national AICD survey is that education services are the largest single sector of not-for-profits in terms of income and employment reach. When this survey looked at the priorities of school boards, for instance, it identified not only managing the school's reputation but also funding uncertainty as a key issue facing those schools. I know that this includes not only government schools but also Catholic and other independent schools. It is important to consider the school councils and the parents and citizens associations and the sorts of issues that come before them. I note in particular that funding uncertainty is a key issue for those organisations, which is an issue that has been much debated in this house.

Finally, another point highlighted in this survey that I thought was quite pertinent to the bill is that certainty in government policy is needed. Responding to change and uncertainty in government policy is a top priority for those organisations surveyed. It is relevant to this bill because we need to make sure that the change in the law and the regulations that apply to associations is clear to those organisations. This national survey also refers to the broader policy changes that are occurring, particularly at a federal level, in a range of reforms in education, aged care, disability services, health care and social services. Certainty in government policy is needed. The survey refers to those trends, but it is on trend to some of those issues closer to home in my electorate around support for organisations such as Western Australian Football League clubs and whether the state government can play a role in assisting those organisations with funding certainty in their location, just as it can in assisting school communities with education funding certainty.

MR C.J. TALLENTIRE (Gosnells) [4.20 pm]: I rise to speak to the Associations Incorporation Bill 2014. It gives me a chance to reflect on the importance of the not-for-profit, non-government organisation sector in the Western Australian community. Other members have given some indication of just how diverse this sector is. I draw a general distinction between those organisations of a not-for-profit nature that are focused on service delivery and those that are involved in advocacy. My experience has been very much in the advocacy sphere. It was a wonderful career opportunity for me to work in that sector. It amazes me that young people who are going through the school system and are entering university sometimes overlook the opportunities that are afforded in the not-for-profit, non-government sector. I think that is a shame. It is a sector in which people are not particularly well paid, but I do not think people go into the not-for-profit sector for payment; indeed, I will come to the issue of how this sector thrives on and derives its energy from the passion of its volunteers. The sector is built on volunteerism. Those people who are lucky enough to gain a position of paid employment in that sector have the opportunity to work with people who are their mentors and guides, but they are there because they are passionate about a particular issue or subject.

There is a distinction to be made with those organisations that are service focused rather than advocacy focused. When I think of the social services sector, I think of the career of my colleague the member for Maylands and her leadership of the Western Australian Council of Social Service and the programs delivered by that organisation and the many affiliated groups of WACOSS that provide services such as emergency relief. Indeed, in my electorate, there are some excellent organisations that provide food hampers to families that may be in such financial difficulty that they cannot even afford to go to the local supermarket and buy essential foods, so they turn to a little organisation that can provide them with support. Even a little group such as an emergency relief organisation can benefit from this structure as an incorporated body. There is no obligation on an organisation to become an incorporated body. Sometimes when a group is that small, it may not need the formality that comes with incorporation. That formality involves issues such as calling an annual general meeting, holding meetings and forming a committee. Those sorts of administrative tasks can be somewhat onerous and burdensome, but they become essential when an organisation wants to display good governance and openness and accountability. When it wants to put forward a grant application to government, Lotterywest or another funding body, it needs to demonstrate that it has a constitution, which I see is described in the bill as a set of rules. The idea of a model set of rules is very sensible. Indeed, that is the current situation. A body that is considering incorporation can download the model constitution from the website and, when necessary, adapt it to its needs.

These governance arrangements are important for a sector that is growing and becoming increasingly important in our society. I have often asked myself what has led to the rise of the non-government sector, especially on the advocacy side. That is the experience I had when I worked at the Conservation Council of Western Australia and I was lucky enough to be the director. It strikes me that 30 or 40 years ago, there was not the same opportunity for a non-government organisation. One of the reasons we have seen the rise of the non-government sector, especially in the advocacy sphere, is that universities no longer play that role. When there was an issue of some environmental concern with a proposal by government to develop a region in a certain way, to install a particular industry in an area or to develop some piece of infrastructure, the media in particular would ask an academic for an independent comment. I do not see the academic sector fulfilling that role of independent commentator as readily as it perhaps once did, and that is one reason we have seen the rise of the non-government sector. The non-government sector does step into that role and is prepared to enrich public discourse, research topics when necessary and provide forthright, uncompromised, independent commentary. The importance of that is great. We know that many people have vested and pecuniary interests in seeing a particular project go forward and we need something to balance that. Of course, employees of public relations companies can speak on behalf of the well-heeled and the well-funded and put forward the case for their particular project, and that will always happen. The media run their line fairly faithfully. When a resources company wants to present its arguments for a particular project to go ahead, the public relations people within or contracted by that company will present the case for the project in a very clear, smooth and professional manner. But we need something to balance it, and that is where the not-for-profit advocacy groups are so important. They do not have anywhere near the resources of the resources sector or, indeed, an infrastructure partnership group or a property developer. Nevertheless, the public discourse is enriched by ensuring that those advocacy groups are in a position to make their comments known.

I heard the member for Maylands make the comment that it is unfortunate that the NGO sector derives its name from a negative. If we were to look for another name for the sector in general, it could be around the volunteerism that is at the heart of the sector and that drives so many organisations. I think of the environmental organisations that I have been closely involved with such as the Wildflower Society of Western Australia and the knowledge in that group and its understanding of and research into the flora of Western Australia. All of us now know that Western Australia is endowed with something like 14 000 plant species and has one of the richest floristic diversity suites in the world. It is exceptional. That knowledge may have come partly through the academic sector, but it has been driven in no small measure by the competency, enthusiasm and passion of groups such as the Wildflower Society of Western Australia. It continues that work. It continues to do such things as flora surveys when plants are in flower. It then links up with and provides information for the public and submissions for environmental assessments run by the Environmental Protection Authority. It is very important work.

There are other groups such as the Urban Bushland Council WA, which is dedicated to the protection of bushland in the urban setting. Bushland in the urban setting is constantly under threat from urban development—the desperate need that we have to find more land for urban development, for housing—and from mismanagement, neglect, the dumping of rubbish and the sometimes unwitting and sometimes intentional lighting of fires in urban bushland. Then there is the downward spiral, the general degradation and flammability from greater weed incursion, which then locks the land into a cycle of a fire every single year, and a piece of bushland is lost before we know it. The Urban Bushland Council advocates for those areas and has been instrumental in the development of the Bush Forever sites as part of government policy, and it is constantly advocating for Bush Forever sites around the Perth metropolitan area to be protected. It is a tough campaign and it would not have got as far as it has had it not been for volunteerism and the passion that people in the Urban Bushland Council have brought to the public discussion. I note that the Liberal Party developed the Bush Forever concept through Perth's Bush Plan and the former planning minister Graham Kierath who first introduced it into this place in 2000. But it has gone on thanks to people in a group such as the Urban Bushland Council. Those people have also conducted incredible research into the importance of fungi. I mentioned fungi in another debate on a taxation bill today. They have established the vital need for micro-organisms, especially fungi, in the reproduction and the propagation of many plant species that occur throughout the Perth metropolitan area. That is off the back of a volunteer group pushing for research. People had a bit of a hunch; they had been involved in some academic work and they realised that a whole lot of work could be done. They pushed for funding, got the funding and then got the necessary experts in to further that study. That is the kind of passion we get when working with the NGO sector. It results in a very broad vision. I contrast that with relying on the academic sector to provide commentary on matters and ideas for further research. There is a tendency in the academic world to focus on and specialise for doctoral theses, to narrow down into one very detailed, specific area of research. The NGO sector balances that out beautifully when it pushes for things to be seen in a broader context. We have great examples of that in Western Australia.

I note, however, that the NGO sector is under threat in Western Australia and right across the country. There are those who do not like the enrichment of public discourse that comes with the NGO sector. I have seen the reports of the federal counterparts of our Liberal Party colleagues opposite pushing for groups such as the Wilderness Society, the Australian Conservation Foundation and the Australian Network of Environmental Defender's Offices to lose their charity status. Currently, if people want to make a financial contribution to those groups through a system known as "deductible gift recipient", they can claim a tax deduction. That is, of course, a great advantage to those groups. It means that if a person makes a $50 donation to the Wilderness Society, it can be claimed as a tax deduction. Indeed, anything more than a $2 donation can be claimed as a tax deduction. But there are those on the right of Australian politics who do not like that and who feel that it is unreasonable that those groups get a tax break and are able to receive money via deductible gift recipient status. If those people were to have their way, they would deny Australia the wisdom that comes forward and the quality of debate that is enriched. It would skew the debate to one side so that only the well-resourced and those with pecuniary interests are able to control the debate. We are ensuring that we enrich the debate and balance it in some way by enabling groups such as the Wilderness Society and the Australian Conservation Foundation to be involved in our public discourse by having the benefit of tax advantages, a very important thing. When one bears in mind that most of the effort of those groups comes from volunteers, it does not seem like much to allow them that break.

As members can tell, I am passionate about this sector. I have great faith in it. The legislation is important and I do not want the sector compromised by poor governance. That is why I am keen to get into the detail of this legislation and to look at how it will ensure that we maintain or improve the quality of governance, because I know there can be problems when an incorporated association has run its course, its job is done and a particular campaign has been run, and the membership has more or less evaporated.

[Member's time extended.]

Mr C.J. TALLENTIRE: I am concerned that sometimes an organisation will have run its course, but a couple of people will keep the name of the association and use it almost as a megaphone to project their combined voices beyond their own voices as individuals, and that somehow is distorting. There need to be checks in the system to ensure that associations that are not active, not holding annual general meetings and not meeting are not being somehow hijacked and that their name is not being used in vain, so to speak. I am not sure that this legislation will provide for that. I note, however, that the legislation does a good job of checking the credentials of an organisation when it is about to be set up and that there is opportunity for people to comment on and to express concerns about an organisation, although it is not entirely clear to me how people will hear about an organisation when it is being set up. I note that clause 9 is titled "Request for refusal of incorporation". If somebody saw a group and they suspected that it was not genuine in its intent, they would have the opportunity to voice some concern or criticism of it. There are other measures that enable the Commissioner for Consumer Protection to rule a particular group ineligible. If the commissioner had some doubts about the nature of the group's activities, he or she would be able to refuse it incorporation; indeed, clause 11 is titled "Refusal of incorporation".

We have these measures in at the front end, but I am not sure that the Associations Incorporation Bill 2014—I stand to be corrected on this—deals with the problem of a group that has had a very successful existence and made a sterling contribution to our society, but is perhaps comings towards its natural end. We could even envisage a situation of it perhaps being hijacked in some way. What happens then? How easy is it? I know there are provisions for people to appeal to the State Administrative Tribunal, which strikes me as a complex process and maybe one that will not quickly react to a difficult situation. I hope other provisions allow people to flag that an organisation—an incorporated body—is no longer genuine and is perhaps being used in a way that is not quite correct, without having to go to that extra extent of going to the SAT. Maybe it is the case that the SAT is a straightforward, simple process for concerns that people might have about incorporated bodies, but I am not clear on that either. Again, I look forward to hearing some more information presented.

Another issue—I heard the member for Armadale make the point, too—is that we are in a very political environment here and we have our passionate debates. But when people are involved in community organisations to which they have volunteered enormous amounts of time, when there is a falling-out, it can be really rough. It can be, I think, probably more feisty and there can be more upset than we would ever see in this place because it is dealing with people's passions. It is dealing with their real beliefs in such a close and personal way. We are lucky in that here we are passionate in our work and beliefs, but somehow the process almost depersonalises things; whereas with a volunteer organisation or incorporated body, the personal nature of it is very, very intense. I am not sure whether the legislation tackles that. Members could well ask: how could legislation ever be developed to deal with people's passions when they can be so intense? I recall a situation—this is a matter of public record—back in about 2005 when we had volunteer enthusiasm for keeping cane toads

out of Western Australia. We had two groups: the Kimberley Toad Busters, based up in Kununurra, and the Stop the Toad Foundation, based down here in Perth. In theory, they were doing the same work, and raising money and awareness, with the same objective of keeping cane toads out of Western Australia. Unfortunately, a conflict arose between the two groups. They were passionate and really had a shared goal, but it did lead to a high degree of upset and meant a distraction from their main task. It meant that people—in this case it was corporations—who were prepared to throw in rather large amounts of money to support this cause said, "Oh, we're not sure about this. Why would we put money into this campaign when there is tension between two groups? It could look bad for us." It just spoilt things. I think we had problems because the governance arrangements were not solid enough. I understand there will always be situations that arise, but I think there were cases there —

The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr I.M. Britza): Excuse me, member; there is a little bit too much noise in the chamber. This is too important an issue, and I am listening.

Mr C.J. TALLENTIRE: When passions are high, that needs to be respected and supported with the best possible governance arrangements. That is what I am hoping to see in this legislation, because it is a way of preserving the integrity of the whole sector. If we have the governance arrangements and structures right, we can make sure that the integrity of our non-government sector remains strong.

I want to acknowledge some of the community groups–incorporated bodies in my area. I heard the member for Fremantle talking about the sporting organisations in her electorate and how they all work under this incorporation arrangement, and how important they are. That made me think of the great undertakings of organisations such as Thornlie Bowling Club, Gosnells Bowling Club, Gosnells football club and Gosnells Croquet Club; they undertake tremendous work. Increasingly, they are taking on development projects that are of quite a significant scale in financial terms. I know Thornlie Bowling Club has some serious plans for the development of some new clubrooms that will be a real boost to the area and provide a function facility. We are talking about a project that could be in the $2.5 million to $3 million range, and that is a big undertaking for a community organisation. Again, we need the right structures in place to ensure that everything is properly organised and there is a real legitimacy about the way the organisation runs.

That leads me to another thing that I have seen creep into some organisations—that is, the crossover. There is the starting point of an organisation being solely a volunteer group, but then somebody who is on the committee—possibly even the president—says that the organisation needs a paid person. I think that can often be a good formula that can work really well if a committee oversees an executive officer or a chief executive officer and the committee does the hiring and firing. But I can see problems when there is a crossover—when the CEO is also on the committee or a person who is the paid staff of the organisation is also a member of the committee. That kind of conflict of interest is very dangerous, and I think it is a risk. I am not sure the bill before us really attempts to deal with that, but, again, I stand to be corrected and I look forward to going into the detail of it.

Mr W.J. Johnston: Did you know that up until 10 years ago, the RAC used to elect its people at its AGM? It does it now by postal vote. One year they had to get the staff out of the office to come to the AGM because they did not have a quorum, and that is a multimillion-dollar organisation.

Mr C.J. TALLENTIRE: Yes. Problems can arise and it is incumbent on us in this place to make sure that those sorts of conflicts of interest that the member for Cannington raised do not compromise the integrity of incorporated bodies. It is very important that there is clarity and integrity.

In the remaining time I want to acknowledge an organisation that was, I think, the very first community organisation–incorporated body that I joined when I was living in York in the wheatbelt in 1995—the River Conservation Society. That group continues to this day. It is a tremendous organisation that started with a focus on landcare-type work—tree planting, river restoration work and monitoring of the pools along the Avon River such as the Gwambygine Pool and other pools. There have been some really great initiatives, and some great projects and research have come out of the work of the River Conservation Society. I wanted to acknowledge the passing of the organisation's founder. I was at the funeral this week of Dr Cicely Howell, who did a tremendous job in creating the River Conservation Society. She and her husband, Tony, who passed away two years ago, were the real backbone of the organisation. It is a real challenge for an organisation such as the River Conservation Society to ensure that it continues. It is reforming, reshaping and refocusing on being a body that commissions research and works with academics to get them to come out and do more research on different natural attributes of the Avon River. That is great work. When I was on that committee—that was my very first experience of being on a committee—Cicely was the chair of the organisation. Other members of the committee included Sir William Heseltine, who was the secretary to the Queen, and Judge Chris Pullin, who has since served on the Supreme Court bench. Cicely was able to assemble an amazing array of people. I remember feeling quite daunted being on the committee with these very experienced people who knew everything about

how a committee should be run. It was a great training ground for me and certainly an insight into how a community organisation should be run at its most effective. It was a great honour. It was with sadness but a privilege to be at Dr Cicely Howell's funeral on Monday this week.

I look forward to going into this legislation in greater detail and seeing it help further enhance the integrity of a really great and very important sector in our community.

MR P. ABETZ (Southern River) [4.51 pm]: I would like to make a contribution to the second reading debate of the Associations Incorporation Bill 2014. This bill has had an incredibly long gestation period. I remember the review of the Associations Incorporation Act 1987 beginning in the 1990s. That was in the days of the Richard Court government. I was involved in that review through my involvement with the Association of Heads of Churches of Western Australia. A very significant consultation process was undertaken. I want to commend the staff of what is now called the Department of Commerce. I am not sure what it was called in those days; I think it might have been the Department for Consumer Protection. They certainly took a lot of time to consult different groups—getting different sporting groups together and consulting with them on what they needed. Then they spoke to church groups and various other groups. They were very much aware that a bill that deals with incorporated associations needed to deal with a range of different scenarios. I want to commend them for the good work they did. Recommendations were made following the consultations.

I understand that a further desktop review of the act was undertaken in 1997. When the Gallop government came to power in 2001, the review was not progressed for some time. If I remember correctly, a green bill was released for further public consultation in 2006. Again, I was involved in the consultations around that. We drew attention to a number of things, such as the different tiers for the different associations. The green bill referred to the capital assets of the associations. We argued, successfully, that it should be on the turnover rather than on the capital. For example, an inner-city church with a very small congregation may well have a couple of million dollars' worth of assets but its turnover may just be $100 000 a year. I am glad to see that that is incorporated in the bill before us today.

Upon my arrival in this place, through the trust placed in me by the voters of Southern River in 2008, I made repeated inquiries—I think I may have even done a grievance at one stage—about what was happening with the Associations Incorporation Bill that was supposed to be coming. I kept being told that it was coming and finally it has come. That is good news.

One of the things that I was well aware of before coming into this place was that many incorporated associations run into difficulties because often a group is started by a group of people who are passionate about their area of interest and they run the show the way they want to run it. Then, after a while, a group of people within that organisation who are not so happy with the direction of things decide to nominate for president, secretary or what have you and all of a sudden we get a takeover. The old guard is most upset and they refuse to hand over any of the records—bank accounts and that sort of thing. As a result, what does the new committee do? In times past, all the Commissioner for Consumer Protection could say was, "Well, they are breaking the rules; that is true. Go to a lawyer. Go to the Supreme Court." Most lawyers would require at least $10 000 or $15 000 to even start looking at it. It was often easier just to walk away and start all over again with a new association. I believe that the bill before us today will alleviate a lot of that kind of behaviour because rogue office-bearers will no longer be able to be rogues with impunity. I have seen and been told of situations in various incorporated associations. If committee members were part of a corporate body involved in those situations, they would end up in jail for fraud but because no-one in the association had the resources to challenge them; it went unpunished and unresolved.

I have been involved in incorporated associations. The earliest one that I can remember being part of was the Organic Gardening and Farming Society of Tasmania back in 1972. I was one of the founding members while I was still at university doing my agricultural science degree. I have also been a long-term member of the Volkswagen Club of Western Australia. Each of our local churches is an incorporated body. As a pastor of churches, I have served as chairman of the governing committee under the Associations Incorporation Act in both Victoria and Western Australia. I fully appreciate the issues of compliance.

The reality is that the 1987 act virtually had no compliance requirements. I do not believe that that was a satisfactory situation. Victoria in the 1980s already had much higher compliance requirements than Western Australia. Over time I have been called upon to try to assist people in various situations who felt very aggrieved because the committee was not following the constitution of their organisation. I tried to resolve those kinds of issues. I certainly have some firsthand experience of the issues that face incorporated associations.

I have recently taken on the chairmanship of Jade Lewis and Friends Inc, a not-for-profit group that does excellent work with prisoners, particularly in Bandyup Women's Prison. Jade Lewis and her team are doing

a fantastic job helping women in prison and also once they get out by supporting them with mentors and so on and helping them to stay on the right path.

Mr M.P. Murray: I agree very strongly.

Mr P. ABETZ: I thank the member. I will pass that on to Jade.

I want to mention some of the positives in this bill and then also some little concerns that I believe perhaps need to be addressed. I believe that incorporation provides an association with very significant benefits. Earlier someone mentioned a court case in 1994 with some pony club in the Gosnells area involving someone being sued. The court case would have left those people and that association very exposed in terms of liability. Being an incorporated body certainly gives members of that association very significant protections. Although that gives that protection—if you like, a right to those people—I believe that in society, rights always come with responsibilities. Part of that responsibility is complying with what is expected of an incorporated association. For example, I dealt recently with a situation in a fairly large incorporated body. Some of the members came to see me because they felt that they had been very unfairly dealt with because the committee had made decisions pertaining to them. I asked them what the minutes said, and they replied that the committee had said that it does not keep minutes, so there is no record. I went to the association president and said, "Surely what these people are telling me cannot be true; surely you must keep minutes." The reply was that the committee had not kept minutes for over 10 years; it was considered a waste of paper. Good grief, does that work? That is a pretty significant organisation. The bill now before the house requires minutes to be kept and provides penalties for not doing so. Financial records have to be kept for seven years. That type of thing is very positive.

There are now also clear penalties. For example, failure by a management committee member to declare a material personal interest can result in a fine of up to $10 000. Obviously, if it is a tiny group, I cannot imagine a magistrate imposing the maximum fine, if such a matter ever went to court, but just having those significant fines in the legislation acts as a very strong incentive for office-bearers to do the right thing. For example, in the scenario I mentioned before, in which an association old guard is thrown out at an annual general meeting and then refuses to hand over the records, in the past the new committee was powerless to do anything about that, unless it was willing to go to court. Now, under the new bill, all that will be necessary is a phone call to the old guard committee members to convey the fact that they cannot hold on to the records. If they do, the commissioner can take action and initiate proceedings. I am sure that long before the matter gets to court, the old guard committee would be handing over the papers. Clause 44, dealing with the duty of care and diligence, and clause 45, dealing with the requirement to act in good faith and so on, are very positive aspects of this legislation.

Clause 54 deals with failure to make the register of members available to other members. Some clubs have been renowned for doing that because they did not want members writing to all the membership to complain about something, so they refuse to let those members access the membership register. Now, the committee will no longer be able to withhold that information, and there will be pecuniary penalties if it does so. I think that is great.

I will just pick up on the comments made by the member for Gosnells about groups that have had their day and can be hijacked for the name or title. My understanding of this legislation is that once a group no longer holds annual general meetings, it must be wound up, which would bring it to its conclusion. I understand that at one stage the Department of Commerce did a check on associations and discovered literally thousands of defunct incorporated bodies that were still on the books but had not operated for years.

Ms J.M. Freeman interjected.

Mr P. ABETZ: Yes; in fact, the Department of Commerce has the constitution of every incorporated body on file for public access.

The other very positive provision that I see in this bill is clause 60, which will allow the commissioner to call for a general meeting if there is a dispute in an association about whether things have been done properly. He can order a meeting to be held to let the membership decide what the outcome should be. That is very positive.

The structure of tier 1, 2 and 3 organisations in the bill is very commendable, and should serve us well.

I am conscious of the time, and that people want to get home, so I will try to keep it a little shorter than what I had intended. I refer now to a few concerns that have been raised with me, including by Noel Harding, whom the member for Maylands mentioned. He is a man with whom I have worked quite closely. Back in the days when the goods and services tax was introduced, he was the chief author of the manual for not-for-profit groups and churches on how the GST would work for them. He has been very generous in the time that he has given to the not-for-profit sector, and he has contributed very freely. One issue that needs to be addressed is in clause 24, which deals with the restrictions on the distribution of surplus property. The issue with that is that, for example,

if a local church were to be no longer viable, due to demographics or whatever, it would sell its property and shut down, and may decide that, rather than giving that money to another church, it would set up a trust to fund youth work, for example, in other churches. Is that permissible under these rules? It is something that needs a little clarification. It would seem that the commissioner may approve variations under clause 25 of the provisions implied by clause 24, so I think it does allow for that, but it would be good to have some clarity on that. When an organisation is wound up, its assets have to go to another charity or whatever. For example, in the Anglican Church, I understand that the property is actually held in the name of the archbishop, which could create some technical issues.

Ms M.M. Quirk: Which archbishop?

Mr P. ABETZ: If it is the Anglican Church, it would have to be the archbishop of the Anglican Church.

The other point that I want to draw to the attention of members is clause 64(4), which mentions accounting standards but does not state exactly which accounting standards. Noel Harding, as an accountant, believes that it is imperative that the word "applicable" be inserted in relation to the accounting standards, and that the regulations then need to specify what the applicable standards are. Under the Australian accounting standards, even the smallest groups would have onerous reporting requirements, and I do not think that was the intent of the legislation.

There is also an issue in clause 89 that perhaps needs a little comment. The clause is headed "Removal of reviewer or auditor by resolution", and the words "As soon as possible" in subclause (4) need clarification, but we can deal with that in consideration in detail.

One of the other very significant issues I want to raise is that of dispute resolution. It is great that every constitution will have to contain a dispute resolution process and that the State Administrative Tribunal will be a backstop as the place for people to go if they cannot resolve a dispute. However, one concern posed to Noel Harding by the Baptist Union of WA and the Australian Association of Christian Schools was that if a dispute of a theological nature is raised, the proper procedure is followed and a decision is made, the member can go to SAT if they are unsatisfied with the decision.

[Member's time extended.]

Mr P. ABETZ: The State Administrative Tribunal would then be in the position of having to decide a theological issue that relates to that particular organisation. I do not think that is a satisfactory situation. Perhaps the parliamentary secretary, when he replies to the comments made in the second reading debate, will be able to address that question and how it might be dealt with.

Several members interjected.

Mr P. ABETZ: Another issue has emerged from one of the organisations in my electorate about the dispute resolution process. The organisation has a dispute resolution process in its constitution and a person decided to initiate that process, but the committee proceeded to expel him from the association. It therefore said, "You are no longer a member. You have no right to use the dispute resolution process." I hope that there will be some provision in this bill to prevent that kind of misuse of the powers of a committee. I hope that a person will still be able to go to SAT and have the dispute resolved there; otherwise, I believe that will be an abuse of process.

Given the time, perhaps I should conclude my remarks, it being Thursday afternoon and everybody rather itching to get home. I will conclude my comments there and leave the rest of the debate for the consideration in detail stage.

Debate adjourned, on motion by **Mr J.H.D. Day (Leader of the House)**.

House adjourned at 5.12 pm