

## HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

THURSDAY 02<sup>ND</sup> JUNE 2015

### APPROPRIATION BILL 2015

**Mr PEDERICK:** Come on, Bronwyn! Anyway, I think it is disgraceful when we have these black spots for phone towers on our regional highways. I know some of it is not in my electorate now but, when you go out through to Karoonda and Mindarie, where the Mindarie mine was operating, there were certainly very good spots for two towers: one at Wynarka and one at Mindarie.

It is not just for the people and the farmers working in those areas but for people travelling those roads. I know people talk about whether it is viable for the amount of transmission and that sort of thing, but I am talking about equity for country people. Why can't country people have this equity? It is just so wrong.

I know Telstra runs these things, as well as Optus and other companies, and it comes at a great cost. I know they spend millions and millions of dollars putting these mobile towers in for phone networks, but these base stations are coming out of the federal government's \$100 million Mobile Black Spot program. South Australia is getting 11 of these phone base stations.

This compares to 144 in New South Wales, 130 in Western Australia, 110 in Victoria, 68 in Queensland, 31 in Tasmania and five in the Northern Territory. The Northern Territory is getting nearly half of what we are getting but, when you look at the gross misrepresentation across the rest of the country, we are just so underdone. Quite frankly, I think it is just because the Labor government has no reflection to do with anything in regional areas. I wonder what would happen if they were in a broken down car one day at Wynarka—and it would be good for the transport minister to go out and assess the roads out there because they are going to need a lot of work with the closing down of the rail service for the Viterra grain

operations—or if someone were to break down at Mindarie in that region. It is about equity and it is about safety.

You look at the commitments that other state governments put in alongside this federal funding—\$32 million from Western Australia, \$24 million from New South Wales, \$21 million from Victoria, \$10 million from Queensland and \$350,000 from Tasmania, along with \$1.7 million from local government, businesses and community groups. As I said, minister Close said the prime responsibility for the telecommunications sat with the federal government and with commercial operators in the sector. I guess there are plenty of phone towers in Port Adelaide, but that is the way it is.

I want to speak about the screening check inquiries in the final few minutes of this grievance debate. These are five longstanding ones, and my office has dealt with a lot more than these in the Hammond electorate. As I have often said to the minister when we have had a quiet meeting face-to-face or when interjecting across the chamber, screening checks are self-funding. You could employ 1,000 extra staff and it would not matter because it is not a cost to the government. The charge that is made for the screening check all comes back and more. It is just holding back so much business in this state. I know we have to get it right but it has just got so out of control.

People are losing their jobs, people are not able to do their job and feed their family. I look at this one, for instance, which is someone trying to be a taxi driver and his has been outstanding since December 2014. We have others, including a lady who is a Families SA carer whose check has been outstanding since December 2014; a family day care provider, outstanding since February 2015; a bus driver, outstanding since February 2015; child related employment, outstanding since September 2014.

So, what do these people do in the meantime? I will tell you what happens, Madam Deputy Speaker, when these people cannot get their preferred choice of work, whether it is in child related operations or with being a taxi driver where obviously they need a high rate of clearance, they go and get another

job. It impacts directly on all of society because if you cannot get drivers and you cannot get people to look after our children when we need them in child care—and we used to use child care a lot—it impacts all the way down the line. Late last year I had discussions with the minister and one of her senior staff who was supposed to tidy this up, but why are we having so many problems with these checks? It is just crazy stuff, especially when it is self-funding and there is probably a bit of profit involved in it as well.

Sadly, I am running out of time at this late part of the day. I would like to say there are no major infrastructure projects in this budget for Hammond, and what really annoyed me with the budget was that the government turned their back on \$25 million for our river communities right the way through the state in the diversification fund. For a government that is receiving close to \$1 billion of unbudgeted GST, I think that is absolutely disgraceful, and it would not have happened if it was \$25 million being funded into a city seat. That is politics played at its worst, but if the Treasurer and Premier want to play that way, then good luck. Let's see when we are on the other side.