

12 DECEMBER 2016

From **STEVEN GRIFFITHS MP JP:**

It is hard to believe 2016 is nearing an end; the year has certainly flown by. In extending season's greetings, it is timely to reflect on highlights and challenges.

Concerns about rising costs of living, in particular issues around power supply and pricing, have escalated in 2016 and are impacting on every household and business.

Mobile phone and internet coverage also continues to be an issue, as does the new Royal Adelaide Hospital which remains empty without an opening date in sight, and Labor's Transforming Health plans and rollout.



Complaints about health services remains the number one topic I am contacted about, followed closely by the state of our roads.

Rises in the Emergency Services Levy and the Natural Resources Levy have also, justifiably, caused stress, as have difficulties with claiming the Cost of Living Concession and PATS (Patient Assist Transport Scheme).

The State Liberal Party has released, and throughout 2017 will continue to announce, significant initiatives to reduce cost of living pressures for South Australians, and policy to stimulate the economy and jobs growth.

Key announcements made in 2016 include:

- A Marshall Liberal Government will remove Labor's massive increases to the Emergency Services Levy to return \$90 million per year to property owners
- Introduce a Local Government rate capping scheme
- Conduct an independent inquiry to uncover the issues with water pricing to deliver fair and efficient water prices for South Australians families and businesses
- Establish four Entrepreneurial Schools (two in Adelaide and two in regional South Australia) encouraging entrepreneurial skills in the next generation of young people
- Deliver an independent inquiry to address crippling energy prices and continue to investigate a solution through demand management strategies and accelerating the development of large-scale battery storage technology
- Implement a 10- year moratorium on exploration of unconventional gas (fracking) in the Limestone Coast area
- Make foster care and kinship care payments available for young people up to 21 years of age, and
- Enhance public sector efficiency and cut Labor's wasteful mismanagement

Discussion about time zone changes, nuclear storage, and voluntary euthanasia have featured in Parliamentary debate for all elected Members. As Shadow Minister for Planning, the debate on the 240+ pages of legislation for the Planning Development and Infrastructure Bill, with its near 400 amendments and now its intricate staged roll out of new systems, has demanded a lot of time this year (and last).

Weather events have also been a feature this year, with rain, hail, wind and floods impacting many. Let us hope 2017 presents less of these challenges.



### **Pinery Anniversary**

The 12-month anniversary of the devastating Pinery fire was marked on 25 November, and I was honoured to speak at the community commemorative event (at Pinery) on that day. I was in Adelaide on fire day, and travelled through the fire ground the next day, and every day since it has been clear to me that as a regional community the Adelaide Plains has dealt with the tragedy and devastation in such a magnificent way.

From the efforts made to save and protect lives and property; the immediate support and recovery efforts; the caring shoulder for those who lost loved ones and property; and the ongoing support in rebuilding – it all has been nothing short of inspiring and gives me, and the rest of Australia, the knowledge that as a community we can deal with and overcome all.

I also commend all responsible for the firefighter “suit pack” initiative which has ensured farmers are better protected when fighting fires in the future. Thanks to local farmers and businesses (Gilmac, Balco, IT Johnsons & Sons, Casella Family Brands), the kits containing personal protective equipment are now available, with more than 200 handed out to Pinery farmers at the commemorative event on 25 November.

Harvest was late starting this year but it appears we are on track for record yields. Fingers crossed volumes will offset any losses from storms and hail, or falling prices which can result in seasons of abundant supply.

I also sincerely hope Treasurer Koutsantonis does not continue to increase the Emergency Services Levy on the back of every state emergency faced, as this is unsustainable for households and businesses. Indeed, when so many farmers are also volunteer CFS members, it is wrong that the very people who risk their lives for us to fight fires (and clean up after them) are penalized in the back pocket with increases to the ESL.

### **Fire Danger Season dates**

The Fire Danger Season dates as determined by the SA Country Fire Service (CFS) for the Mid North and Yorke Peninsula are: **15 November 2016 – 30 April 2017**

### **Great Appeals**

Well done to SA Produce Market and AusVeg which started an appeal soon after the flooding event on 6 October which inundated 1500 hectares across the Gawler River floodplain, affecting an estimated 300 growers.

This appeal has raised more than \$80,000 to help affected producers buy seed and get back on their feet, and then more recently, IGA Supermarkets joined in with a pledge to raise an additional \$100,000 to assist growers to get planting again.

Well done to IGA, and to all who have donated via these community-led appeals.

The PIRSA recovery programs opened in response to the flooding event continue to operate from the Virginia Horticulture Centre on old Port Wakefield Road, and I am advised will do so until at least next April (phone 0484 327 667).

## Jetties Update

The news on 9 December that the October storm-damaged Port Rickaby and Port Victoria jetties are to be partially re-opened in time for the Christmas holiday period was received with tremendous relief.

Our local jetties are vital to our tourism industry, and small businesses in the jetty townships feared extended closures awaiting repairs could force them to close their doors, such has been the impact on trade.

The announcement by the State Government on 7 October that it is to provide funding of \$3.5 million to repair jetties damaged by the storms was very welcome. In the Goyder electorate, \$900,000 was allocated to the task, with \$300,000 for Port Rickaby Jetty; \$500,000 for Port Victoria jetty (which lost at least seven bays, four piles and 50 metres of deck); and \$100,000 for Wallaroo spur jetty (for new fenders and deck).

It was feared the major repairs would not be able to be completed until next year. I commend the efforts of Yorke Peninsula Council to fast track the works, including advocating with the Department of Transport & Infrastructure (as owner of the jetties) to at least get portions of the jetties reopened in time for the busy Christmas/New Year tourist season.

## Unused boat levy

The State Opposition remains frustrated that money collected under the boating facilities levy from recreational boat uses and intended to be used for upgrades to boating facilities continues to sit unspent in government coffers.

In the vicinity of \$8.6 million of the levy sits unspent, up from \$6.4 million in the 2014-15 year.

This is money every boat owner in the state pays as part of their vessel registration, and which is earmarked for projects such as improvements and maintenance to boat ramps.

Councils and community organisations can apply for the funding for projects but are required to match any money allocated from the fund. The SA Liberals believe applicants should only have to pay up to 20% of the cost for a project and that this reduction in the co-contribution will ensure more of the money collected will get used for its intended purpose.

## New fishing rules

The State Government's new size, bag and boat limits for King George whiting (and 25 other species) came into effect on December 1.

The impacts the changes will have on our local small businesses and tourism industry are yet to be seen.



PIRSA, the lead agency responsible for implementing the changes, released a Regional Impact Assessment Statement – Management of the King George Whiting Fishery on November 29. This coincided with the same day a notice of motion in Parliament from member for Chaffey Tim Whetstone condemning the State Government for not undertaking such an assessment before announcing the new limits (which I formally requested of Minister Bignell back in April before any decisions being made).

The seven-page document is big on noting the consultation undertaken in the lead-up to announcements but light on evidence of actual impact studies undertaken.

With 277,000 recreational fishers in SA and significant economic benefits, particularly in coastal towns, the industry is indeed an important one.

I believe any perception that you cannot fish for whiting on YP, even for a month (from 1 May), can lead people to decide not to visit us. I hope this doesn't happen.

The SA Liberals recognize the need to have sustainable fishing stocks for future generations to catch but believe any decisions about new regulations and restrictions can only be made based on reliable evidence and after thorough assessment of all consequences of their introduction.

I also agree with Shadow Minister for Recreation and Sport Tim Whetstone's call for a grace period so people can learn the extensive new rules. Plenty of recreational fishers are going to have no idea about the changes, so it's important there is an extensive public education program before people are prosecuted for breaching new restrictions.

For the full list of reduce size, bag and boat limits which came into effect on 1 December 2016, visit [www.stevengriffiths.com.au](http://www.stevengriffiths.com.au)

## **Mining Review dates extended**

I was pleased with the announcement on 29 November that the closing date for the current review of our state's mining laws had been extended to 24 February 2017.

I wrote to Minister for Mineral Resources the Hon. Tom Koutsantonis MP on 19 October after the review was announced, requesting he consider the submission timelines so they did not coincide with this year's busy harvest period. Farmers are major stakeholders in the review as owners of land sought for mining exploration, and I was very concerned proposed consultation timeframes would impact on their ability to fully participate in the review.

For details on how to make a submission, visit:

[http://minerals.statedevelopment.sa.gov.au/exploration/leading\\_practice\\_mining\\_acts\\_review](http://minerals.statedevelopment.sa.gov.au/exploration/leading_practice_mining_acts_review)

Submissions can be emailed to [DSD.miningactreview@sa.gov.au](mailto:DSD.miningactreview@sa.gov.au) or posted to Department of State Development, Mineral Resources, GPO Box 320, Adelaide SA 5001.

## **New Inquiry into Retail Supply issues**

On 16 November 2016 the Parliament of South Australia's Economic and Finance committee resolved to inquire into issues faced by primary producers relating to competitively supplying their products to retailers, in the horticultural, viticultural and agricultural sectors.

The committee seeks submissions from interested parties by Friday, 3 February 2017. To access the Inquiry's Terms of Reference and for information on how to lodge a submission, visit <http://www.parliament.sa.gov.au/efc>

## Changes to working with children

The State Government recently passed legislation that will simplify the processes required for people wanting to work or volunteer with children.

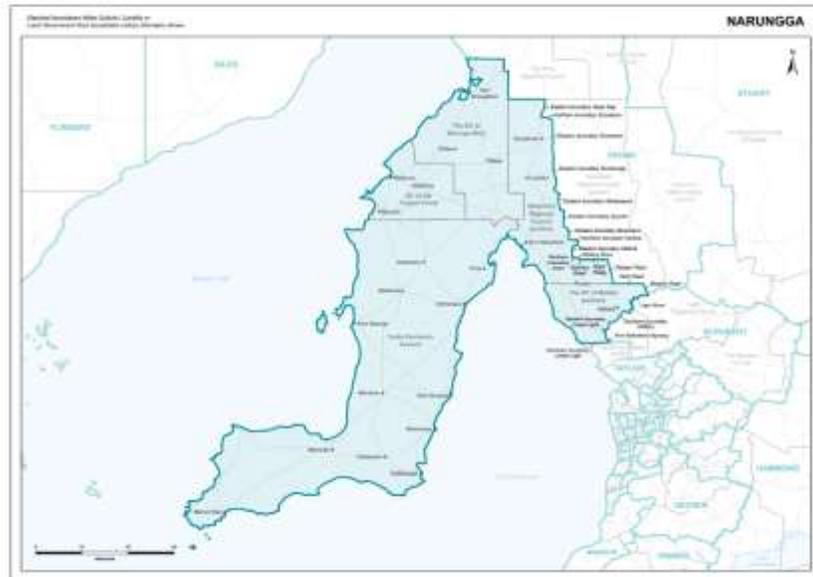
This means soon there will be a one all-purpose background check available, which will also be valid for longer and transferrable between jobs and/or volunteer positions.

Details are still being finalized; I will keep you updated as more information becomes available.

## Electoral Boundaries changes

The Electoral Districts Boundaries Commission report was released on 8 December 2016, and I advise the Goyder electorate is to be renamed Narungga electorate.

Boundary adjustments (shown at right) also mean that as at the March 2018 election, the townships of Port Broughton, Bute, Snowtown and Lochiel move into Goyder (Narungga), and the townships of Two Wells, Owen and Hamley Bridge move out (Two Wells into Taylor; Hamley Bridge and Owen into Frome).



Whilst I very much welcome the inclusions, I am saddened to lose Two Wells, Owen and Hamley Bridge as in recent years I have developed friendships with many individuals and groups in these districts.

## Parliamentary activity

I regularly contribute to legislative debate, Question Time and Grievances sessions in the House of Assembly.

Hansard excerpts are available from [www.stevengriffiths.com.au](http://www.stevengriffiths.com.au)

Topics are very diverse, and examples this year have included agricultural land use conflicts, council informal gatherings, mobile food vans, petition presentations, health services, police resources, community accolades, budget examination and the need for road upgrades (including the long standing concerns at the intersections north of Port Wakefield during peak holiday periods).

Of note is the lengthy debate on two bills in particular - the Dying with Dignity Bill 2016, and, as Shadow Minister for Planning, the Planning, Development and Infrastructure Bill (one of the largest pieces of legislation introduced in the last 20 years, with its 400 amendments considered).

Of the latter, I was pleased my determination to fight against Minister Rau's push to have local councillors removed from Development Assessment Panels won the day and the option of one has been retained.

Whilst this important local input in planning decisions that affect local communities is to remain, the new laws do include an urban growth boundary (which impacts the Adelaide Plains Council), a new Planning Commission, changes to planning rules, and a new infrastructure levy.

The staged roll out of these reforms will continue in 2017.

## Voluntary Euthanasia

As most people would be now aware, the Private Members Bill (the *Death with Dignity Bill*) was debated to its lost conclusion in Parliament on 15-17 November after some six hours of clause by clause examination.

Please find the link (on my website) to the Second Reading speech I made in the evening of Tuesday 15 November which provides the reasons why I voted against the Bill:

[http://www.stevengriffiths.com.au/voluntary\\_euthanasia\\_debate\\_15\\_nov\\_2016](http://www.stevengriffiths.com.au/voluntary_euthanasia_debate_15_nov_2016)

You will note that I said in my speech that I would support a Second Reading vote to ensure the legislation was discussed in the Committee stage (it is a debate that I fully supported occurring), but that I would not support it at the Third Reading which is required for legislation to be passed by the House of Assembly.

On Wednesday night (16 November) I was in the House of Assembly chamber from about 8.45pm, in the expectation of the Second Reading vote happening. All who wanted to speak for the up to 10 minutes allowed had done so by 10.00pm and this vote passed 27 to 19 - and then from 10.00pm until 4.00 am we were in Committee. I was in the Chamber, and involved in the debate and asking questions on specific clauses of the Bill.

For me, the principle AND the detail is equally important - and this is for all matters. I considered the feedback from the Goyder community via letter / email / telephone calls and discussions with me, and noted this in my speech. Since the vote, I have received many messages, the majority supporting my decision to vote against the Bill.

I spent a significant amount of time reading the legislation of Duncan McFetridge MP word by word, plus the amendments from Chris Picton MP and more amendments from Duncan presented on the day. I decided to vote no and to involve myself in the debate as the detail of how VE was to be managed in the legislation was critical to me. I supported the questions of many, asked others that had not been considered by others, accepted some responses and disagreed with others.

Some have said that sitting until 4.00 am is crazy and distorts the voting. While it was a long day (I was in the building for 21 hours), I was not impacted by the long sitting as my mind was focussed on what I was saying and what was being said by others. This Bill is more important than 90% of what we discuss in Parliament, yet attempts were made to rush it through in record time. We spend months discussing less important issues. Many questions could not be answered and the answers changed over the course of the night/morning. I was not prepared to support something that was being handled this way. Near enough is not good enough on such an important piece of legislation as there were so many unanswered questions.

I know that Voluntary Euthanasia will be considered by the Parliament again, and I understand that this latest legislative consideration is the 15th time it has been before the Parliament. I will give any new Bill/legislation the thought and consideration it deserves - and I say this on the basis that I respect that it is one of the most socially challenging issues any community and Parliament can consider.

## Our new national park



In 2016 much progress has been made in the development of the Adelaide International Bird Sanctuary (AIBS) which is pleasing.

This Sanctuary comprises nearly 60 kilometres of coastal land along the Gulf St Vincent coastline and, as recently announced, is now a national park – the first new national park for SA in over a decade.

Formally named the Adelaide International Bird Sanctuary National Park – Winaityinaityi Pangkara, it covers 2,457 hectares of shorebird habitat in what is being called the Northern gateway of the AIBS, and it is where, at the peak of the summer migration season, more than 27,000 birds reportedly gather, with many species arriving from as far away as northern Asia and Alaska.

It is being created in stages, with the first stage now proclaimed. Future stages will follow during the next 18 months, including the addition of The Port Gawler Conservation Park.

## Food branding project

Another success story in 2016 was the ongoing development of specific branding for our region's products, resulting in the release of a food, wine and produce directory by Yorke & Mid North Regional Development Australia, supported by PIRSA, YP Tourism and local councils.

This is a great resource for locals and visitors seeking information about local produce and how to access it: <http://yorkepeninsula.com.au/-/yorke/lib/uploaded/YP%20Food%20Directory.pdf>

## Resources to fight Ice

Throughout 2016, I have been advocating for more resources in regional South Australia in response to rising concern about drug and alcohol use in our communities, particularly by our young people.

I was astonished to hear in community forums, of the rising incidence of problems associated with the drug Ice.

I was pleased with the recent announcement that the Country SA Primary Health Network is rolling out new regional drug and alcohol services, with eight organizations chosen to deliver services to an extra 1,000 patients.

This new program is scheduled to commence from January next year.

Further, in response to recommendations in the 2015 National Ice Taskforce Final Report, a new national online counselling service has commenced to help people affected by substance misuse. This service includes ice-specific counselling and self-help options, and is free and available 24/7 at [www.counsellingonline.org.au](http://www.counsellingonline.org.au)

## Grants Update

Many grant programs are closed now until about February next year. However, the following funding programs are open (or will soon), and some are open all year round so I encourage community groups to apply where criteria suits. All details are at [www.stevengriffiths.com.au](http://www.stevengriffiths.com.au) or phone the Goyder office for help.

**Building Better Regions Fund (Federal Government):** Grants are available through two streams, Infrastructure Projects and Community Investments. The Infrastructure Projects Stream supports projects which involve the construction of new infrastructure, or the upgrade or extension of existing infrastructure that provides economic and social benefits to regional and remote areas. The Community Investments Stream will fund community building activities including, but not limited to, new or expanded local events, strategic regional plans, and leadership and capability building activities. Projects must deliver economic and social benefits to regional and remote communities. First round opens 18 January 2017. More info: [www.business.gov.au/bbrf](http://www.business.gov.au/bbrf).

**Veterans Community Grants Program (Federal Government):** open all year round to ex-service organisations, veteran representative groups, community-based organisations or private organisations for projects which can demonstrate ability to contribute to the well-being of members of the veteran community. More info: <http://www.dva.gov.au/consultation-and-grants/grants/grant-and-bursary-programs/veteran-and-community-grants>

**Strengthening Communities Volunteer Grants (Federal Government):** Closes 20 December 2016. Grants between \$1,000 and \$5,000 are available for organisations and community groups to purchase equipment or help offset costs associated with training volunteers, or with things such as fuel/transport, and security checks for volunteers. More info: <https://www.dss.gov.au/grants/grants/funding-open-for-application/volunteer-grants-2016>

**Fishing Grants (State):** Up to \$100,000 available per grant, suitable for community groups and councils with projects aimed at boosting recreational fishing opportunities. Applications will open 14 January 2017 and close 20 March 2017. More info: [www.recfishsa.org.au](http://www.recfishsa.org.au) or phone 8340 0777.

**Natural Disaster Resilience Program (State):** Open to community organisations, not-for-profits, Local Government and State Government. Up to \$250,000 per annum can be sought as a contribution toward total cost of projects which aim to improve the ability of organisations and individuals to prepare for, respond to, and recover from natural disasters and emergency events. Projects must commence on or before July 2017 and be completed within 2 years. Applications close 13 January 2017. More info: [www.safecom.sa.gov.au](http://www.safecom.sa.gov.au)

**Job Accelerator Grants:** offers businesses up to \$10,000 (\$5,000 each year for two years) per new full-time equivalent job created between 1 July 2016 and 30 June 2018. More info: [revenuesa.sa.gov.au](http://revenuesa.sa.gov.au)

**Four one-off programs:** a single application process for community groups seeking consideration under four different one-off grant programs: Charitable and Social Welfare Fund (formerly Community Benefit SA), Multicultural SA Grants, Volunteer Training Grants and the Volunteer Support Fund).

Major grant rounds of \$20,001 - \$50,000 open twice a year; medium grants of \$5,001 - \$20,000 open four times a year; and minor grants of up to \$5,000 open all year round (assessed monthly).

More info: Phone 1300 650 985 or visit [dcsi.sa.gov.au](http://dcsi.sa.gov.au)

**Regional Arts Fund – Country Arts SA:** three categories: Step Out, Step Up, and the Country Arts SA's Skills Development Program, all designed to inspire arts and cultural activity in rural, regional and remote areas of South Australia. To apply go to [countryarts.org.au](http://countryarts.org.au)



## Busy diary

A most enjoyable aspect of my role is getting out and about in the community, speaking with people and sharing information which can assist them in their daily lives. I attend many community events, meetings and presentations, host listening posts, and regularly visit organisations, businesses and schools, particularly in December when I present my annual award to meritorious students.



Above, left: 1 December, in my role as Shadow Minister for Planning addressing a public meeting of Campbelltown residents concerned about a residential development proposed for their area. Above, right: 30 November, talking regional matters on Radio Italiana 531 on 30 November.

At left: 20 November, at the Yorketown Historical Society's Christmas lunch with Pat and Jane Butler.

### EXCERPTS FROM STEVEN'S DIARY for DECEMBER 2016

1 Dec	Campbelltown residents meeting
2 Dec	UDIA luncheon, Convention Centre, Adel
7 Dec	Hamley Bridge Primary School, presentations
9 Dec	SA Property Council Christmas luncheon, Adel oval
11 Dec	Mallala Men's Shed opening
11 Dec	Pt Vincent Primary School, celebrating 120 yrs. of education
12 Dec	Wallaroo Primary School, presentations
13 Dec	Wallaroo Mines Primary School, presentations
13 Dec	Point Pearce Primary School, presentations
13 Dec	Maitland Area School, presentations
14 Dec	Moonta Area School, presentations.
14 Dec	Meeting Local Government Association
15 Dec	St Mary MacKillop School, presentations
19 Dec	Briefing, Mining Act Review
19 Dec	Briefing, Local Government Act amendment

## Our new website

Staff at the Goyder office were pleased to develop a new website this year, at the new address of [www.stevengriffiths.com.au](http://www.stevengriffiths.com.au).

With its fresh look and easy navigation features, the site offers:

- updates on all State issues affecting Goyder constituents
- important grants information for community, business and sporting groups
- news of activities around the district and in Parliament House
- media statements; and
- links to



*Merry Christmas and a Happy 2017 from Steven and Donna, and the Goyder office crew. Pictured at our end of year lunch this week (l-r): Rachel Francis, Holly Simmons, Steven, Kim Meier and Rosemary Cock.*

*Please be advised the office will be closed from 5 pm Friday 23 December 2016, to 9 am Tuesday, 3 January 2017.*

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