

**VOLUNTEER BUS DRIVERS****Mr BROCK (Frome) (15:01):**

Thank you, Mr Speaker. My question is to the minister representing the Minister for Health. Can you advise the house why an existing volunteer bus driver has to sign an agreement with Health SA to be able to carry out their volunteering services at the Port Pirie Regional Health Service. With your leave, Mr Speaker, and that of the house—  
Leave granted.

**Mr BROCK:** I have been advised that volunteers need to sign an agreement that will allow for their engagement as a volunteer for a probationary period of three months and, if approved, they will be offered a 12-month agreement, to be reviewed during the annual performance and development review, and attend compulsory organisation orientation sessions and attend ongoing mandatory training sessions, workshops and meetings as directed. Country Health SA may also terminate their appointment as a volunteer and cancel their accreditation if they do not comply.

**The SPEAKER:** Member for Frome, whilst you do have leave, I would caution members against reading lengthy paragraphs of facts. Is that it?

**Mr BROCK:** It is my explanation.

**The SPEAKER:** Okay, thank you. Minister.

**The Hon. D.C. VAN HOLST PELLEKAAN (Stuart—Minister for Energy and Mining) (15:02):** I thank the member for Frome for this question. I know how genuine and sincere he is about volunteering and health in country regions. We are neighbouring MPs, Stuart and Frome, and we share a lot of these values together, so I know that he is very genuine and very sincere when he asks this question.

I guess the first thing I would do is to try to find out for him whether these requirements are requirements that, while they may have come in since the election, are policies that were put into place by the previous government or not, so is it something which the previous government decided to do which we have to consider whether we continue on with or whether we have to consider undoing, like so many other things we have come across since the election. We will find out for you, member for Frome, exactly what is going on there.

Let me just say that the volunteer drivers throughout regional and remote South Australia, who take people to and from doctors' appointments, take people to and from specialists in Adelaide and to and from hospitals for minor surgery where they don't have to be there overnight, are incredibly valuable people. They provide a very valuable service. I know a service that is shared between the electorate of Frome and the electorate of Stuart, the northern passenger service, is incredibly important and would be nothing without those volunteers.

While we would all agree that volunteers do need to be screened, and they do need to have some clear understandings with the organisation they serve, and while they should have to take on training it should of course be reasonable for those volunteers. It's a very hard thing to get exactly right, as we would all know, whether it's coaching, volunteer driving or whatever it might be. It's hard to get it exactly right so that you get the benefits of volunteering, and we ensure that the volunteers have the right skills, have the right intent and have the right capacity. You don't want to have something that's onerous for them. You don't want something that makes it hard for them or puts them or others off volunteering.

We know how badly the former government dealt with the screening of volunteers, particularly the screening of volunteers who work with children. It is a very important thing to do but, goodness gracious, how many volunteers did the previous government put off from putting their hands up to offer help because the screening process was so onerous? I take the question from the member for Frome very seriously. I will seek information on the topic for him.