

Remarks at the Invictus Games Sydney 2018 Media Launch

PRIME MINISTER:

Your Excellencies , Your Royal Highness, Premier of New South Wales, Defence Minister Marise Payne, Minister for Veterans' Affairs Dan Tehan, distinguished guests one and all, but above all, the Australian Squad Members for the Invictus Games.

Thank you for your service, for your leadership, for your courage. We thank all of our servicemen and women and veterans here today.

We are reminded now and forever how our freedoms depend, today, as they did a century ago, in your putting your lives on the line to keep us free.

The games are called Invictus – unconquered, you are unconquered, you are unconquerable, just as are the values for which you fought, for which you fight, for which our nations stand.

And I thank you, Your Royal Highness, for the sympathy, for the condolences, for the solidarity you show us, as we show the people of Britain, as your High Commissioner Menna Rawlings understands very well.

When we saw the people of Britain attacked, Manchester Arena, London Bridge, it was an attack on Australia and our values as well.

And tragically, as we know, two young Australians lost their lives in that shocking terrorist attack on London Bridge.

And we have had another terrorist attack this week in Melbourne, another innocent civilian has been killed.

This battle against terrorism is fought at home and around the world.

And everywhere it depends on brave men and women – unconquered, unconquerable, committed to the values of freedom for which we stand and which our fathers and mothers and grandfathers and grandmothers have stood for generations – standing up, unconquered, unconquerable, always invictus.

These games remind us of that commitment, that enduring commitment to the wounded, injured, ill servicemen and women, both on active duties and veterans.

It is as Prince Harry said it is an opportunity to use that healing power of sport to help them rebuild their lives.

And in the lead-up to the 2018 Invictus Games here in Sydney, we are entranced, inspired, by the tales of triumph over adversity, of which you spoke, Your Royal Highness.

Like Curtis McGrath, an Ambassador for the Invictus Games and a recent gold medallist from the 2016 Rio Paralympic Games. As an Australian Army Engineer Curtis lost both legs in an improvised explosive device blast while serving in Afghanistan in 2013. Since then Curtis has overcome his severe injuries through rehabilitation and intense training to represent Australia at the highest level.

Curtis, along with each of the members of the Invictus Squad is an inspiration to our ADF and to all Australians. That's the power of sport.

As you said, Your Royal Highness, it is not just Sydney that is sports mad, Australia is sports mad. It unites us all, it inspires us, it brings out the best.

Now the Sydney Invictus Games will be on the year 2018, which marks the centenary of the end of World War I.

We know how important it is to honour the sacrifice of our servicemen and women over the ages and our veterans.

In Canberra, the Australian Parliament stands opposite, across the lake, the Australian War Memorial, whose Director, Brendan Nelson, an Ambassador for the Invictus Games, is here today.

That monument is a powerful, quiet reminder to those of us who lead our nation to always seek to resolve conflict by peaceful means. But, if we cannot, and we send our troops into harm's way, to ensure that they are always well led and well resourced. So that they can return home safely, duty done, mission completed, to their families.

And it also is a reminder, as are these Invictus Games, that the best way to honour the diggers of 1914 and 1918 is to support the servicemen and women, the veterans and their families, of today and that is our commitment.

Our servicemen and women defend our freedoms and our values so we may live in peace. Many have paid with their lives. Many more have returned wounded, physically, mentally, emotionally.

And that is why the Australian government is providing comprehensive support to help our veterans return to civilian life. With better services so they can get on with their lives, more funding across a wide range of areas, including mental health and suicide prevention strategies.

We have also personally committed – the Minister and myself and my whole Government – to an employment initiative that will enable veterans to forge new careers.

And the inspiration for that came, Your Royal Highness, from a meeting with my son-in-law and veterans of his era, your era, young veterans in their 30s who said: "We need some help; more help to get business to give us the employment opportunities we need to return to civilian life".

It's a good example of the way we engage with the veterans community to

ensure that we are providing each and every one of them the support they need in every way.

Rebuild their lives, return to civilian life, to continue to serve the nation, they have through their service, kept free.

So the Invictus Games is another way we can honour our veterans. It is a great opportunity to show them and the serving men and women of the ADF, that the whole nation, the whole community, is right behind them.

So I want to thank General Leahy for his leadership. I want to thank the sponsors for their support. And this is a good opportunity, in addition to the support that comes from government for businesses, for individuals, to provide their support in every way to the Invictus Games. We can all show our support for these great Games.

So, it is time to get ready to embrace the 2018 Games, embrace the Invictus spirit.

These veterans are unconquered; the values for which they fought are unconquered and unconquerable.

We salute you, we thank you and we will be cheering you on at the Invictus Games here in Sydney in 2018.

Thank you very much.

[ENDS]

[Press Conference with Mr Michael Phelan APM, Acting Commissioner, Australian Federal Police](#)

PRIME MINISTER:

Good morning. I'm joined this morning by the Acting Federal Police Commissioner Mike Phelan.

The events in Brighton in Melbourne last night, coming so soon after the attack in London, have shocked all Australians.

This terrorist attack by a known criminal, a man who was only recently released on parole, is a shocking, cowardly crime. It is a terrorist attack and it underlines the need for us to be constantly vigilant, never to be deterred, always defiant, in the face of Islamist terrorism.

Now, I want to say how much all Australians admire and thank the Victoria Police for their decisive and courageous intervention. They responded swiftly and they, as they always do, as our police and security services and the ADF do, they put their lives on the line to keep us safe.

Three police officers were injured and we wish them a speedy recovery, as the Victorian Police Commissioner has confirmed the injuries are not life threatening.

They killed the offender swiftly and therefore brought the incident to an end.

He killed a receptionist in the block of serviced apartments and we offer our condolences to the victim's family in the wake of that shocking murder.

Now, there is a major investigation going on at the moment. There is a lot about this incident that is not known. But we do know it was a terrorist attack and he has claimed, the offender claimed that quite specifically.

Now, I have had briefings from my security chiefs – Counter Terrorism Coordinator, from Acting Police Commissioner Phelan, the director-general of ASIO, and with senior colleagues.

What is clear here is that we face a growing threat from Islamist terrorism in Australia in our region and around the world. We will continue to defy it and we will continue to defeat it. We have the best law-enforcement agencies in the world, the best security services in the world and our ADF, the best in the world, all of them working together to keep us safe.

But there are some very, very grave questions.

And I have raised these today with the Victorian Premier, whom I called last night and I called again this morning.

How was this man on parole?

He had a long record of violence. A very long record of violence. He had been charged with a terrorist offence some years ago and had been acquitted. He was known to have connections, at least in the past, with violent extremism. But he was a known violent offender. How was he on parole?

Now at the COAG meeting with Premiers and Chief Ministers later this week, we will be, as I have arranged, we will be getting a report from my Counter Terrorism Coordinator and we will be discussing a number of issues relating to our response to terrorism including the protection of places of mass gathering, which has been a key priority work that is going on at the moment.

But this issue of parole has to be addressed.

There have been too many cases of people on parole committing violent offences of this kind.

Now, I have raised these important issues, counter terrorism issues with

premiers before.

My government has taken the lead in keeping Australians safe.

Shortly after I became Prime Minister, I went to COAG and I asked Premiers to provide support, which they did, to put in place a post-sentence detention regime so that people who have been convicted of serious terrorist offences, or terrorism offences and are found not to be, not to have rehabilitated and are found to be a continuing threat can be detained in prison after the expiry of their sentence. That is a very important measure.

We now need to address this issue of parole. That will be a high priority at the COAG meeting.

We have also, as you know, given the ADF the ability to kill terrorists in the field in the Middle East, whether they are in a combatant role or not. Prior to that legislation being passed they were limited in the circumstances they could target terrorists in the field.

And of course, in addition to other legal changes we have provided record funding to the Australian Federal Police so that it has the means, the resources, to investigate and deal with the new threats, criminal threats, that we face, right across the board.

So, I will ask the Acting Commissioner to speak about, to say a few words about the operational matters and then take your questions.

I would say, also, in respect of the London attack, there are two Australians – one of whom's names has been in the press today, about whom we have real concerns. We are working diligently in London with the police and other authorities there and of course, staying in very close contact with their families as we seek to confirm the circumstances relating to those two Australians.

MICHAEL PHELAN APM – ACTING-COMMISSIONER, AUSTRALIAN FEDERAL POLICE:

Thank you Prime Minister.

As most of you will have heard this morning, Chief Commissioner of Victoria Police Graham Ashton outlined details of the operation so I won't go into a lot of that detail but I am happy to answer any questions you may have.

But the first thing I'd like to say is the thoughts of the Australian Federal Police, and indeed, all police around the country, go out to the families and the family of the innocent person that was killed in this very tragic event.

And also from the whole policing family across this country, our thoughts go out to the families as well as the three individual officers who were shot during yesterday's incident.

It just goes to show how dangerous law enforcement activities are in this day and age, in this country.

I'd also like to reiterate that the events that happened yesterday do demonstrate that the threat from terrorism is real in this country.

We have seen a number of attacks now since the threat level was raised to high and now changed to probable in September 2014. 12 successful disruptions and now five CT incidents. So the threat is real.

And it is important for all of us in the community and as part of law enforcement that we have as much information as we can to be able to disrupt activities.

The national security hot line plays a very important role in that. So anybody out there in the community that has any information, no matter how minuscule you think it is, or unimportant, let us join the dots and let us put things together. That number of course is 1800 123 400.

And I'm happy to answer any operational questions.

JOURNALIST:

Mr Turnbull, the Victorian parole system, so to speak, failed Jill Meagher – the young lady who was murdered by a parolee. Are your concerns with the Victorian parole system just confined to terrorism or more broadly?

PRIME MINISTER:

You mentioned Jill Meagher's case, but there have been other cases as well.

It is clear that this is a real issue where people with known records of violence and, including people with known terrorist connections or at least connections with extremists have been released on parole.

So, yes, this is an issue that I will be raising and discussing with the Premiers on Friday.

JOURNALIST:

Prime Minister, a number of the – obviously in the case of Monis and this case and the case of the London terrorist attack, people were known to police, those perpetrators were known to police beforehand. It is a point you have just been making. Are police now going back and reviewing the list of those people who have been determined by previous assessment to represent a known threat?

PRIME MINISTER:

Well, from our point, I will ask the Acting Commissioner to add to this, but from the point of view of the federal government, and our agencies, we are constantly reviewing the threat environment and working very closely, naturally, with state police in all of those matters.

As you saw, with Commissioner Ashton, the Federal Police is represented there. It is a dual powered operation – a joint counter-terrorism operation,

but perhaps, Commissioner, you can add to that?

ACTING-COMMISSIONER, AUSTRALIAN FEDERAL POLICE:

Thank you Prime Minister.

In our country, there is a threat, okay. It is a – all of the targets, or those that are under consideration is done on a priority basis. The JCTTs around the country, so the front line in terms of criminal investigation and plot disruption, currently has in excess of 70 ongoing operations throughout the country.

In addition to that, there are – and the Director General of Security has put on public record the 200 people that they are looking at. In addition to that, on another outer ring so to speak, are those that have come to attention for one part or other, either association and so on, in each of the state jurisdictions that is monitored by their equivalent of their intelligence units and in the case of Victoria, that is in the hundreds.

So this is where people fit on that list. We are constantly putting people under review, depending on the amount intelligence that comes through, the actual investigations that are ongoing, so if someone comes up as part of that, a peripheral target, phone numbers come up, those sort of things, then people get reassessed. This is how the process works. It is not a stagnant process that does not move. People move in and out of the outer rings based upon the threat at any given time.

JOURNALIST:

PM are you saying the only way you'd get certainty with these people with known terrorist links is to either detain them indefinitely or maybe deport them? Because once they are on parole, there is just unknown unknowns.

PRIME MINISTER:

The critical thing with this case, and recognising this is early days and the investigation is going on, what we do know about the offender in this particular case is that he had a long record of violence – violent offending. He had been an accused in a terrorism prosecution, although he had been acquitted. He was in prison for offences of violence and was released on parole and he had, we understand, offended while in prison.

The question to be asked is this, following on a number of other cases, is why was he on parole?

The same question was asked about Man Monis, you will recall.

So these are important issues and Australians need to be assured that people who are a threat to their safety are not being released on parole when clearly, this person – it is – well, we will – more investigations and explanations will be given, but it is plainly – it is very hard, I think, to understand why he was released on parole given the nature of his record and the nature of his offence.

JOURNALIST:

Prime Minister was this man an Australian citizen?

PRIME MINISTER:

Yes.

JOURNALIST:

How concerned are you about copycat incidents and is any consideration being given to raising the alert level?

PRIME MINISTER:

Two points. Are we concerned about copycats? Yes, absolutely.

That is one of the reasons why, as soon as after the Nice truck attack, I asked our counter-terrorism coordinator to swiftly work with premiers, and I spoke to a number of the premiers at the time to review all of our arrangements for protecting places of mass gathering.

I mean, the terrorists and other criminals use different attack vectors.

Now, we have been successful in keeping terrorists out of aeroplanes, but since – you know, the cockpit of aeroplanes – since 9/11, but anyone can get access to a motor vehicle or a truck.

So we have seen that, as a very common attack, frequent attack vector. We have seen it in London just recently. And of course, in Melbourne, while it was not a – in the Bourke Street attack – while that was not a terrorist related incident, again, you saw the damage that a vehicle can do.

So protecting places of mass gathering is obviously vitally important. That is the work that has been going on at the moment and actions and initiatives have already been taken.

But all of these attacks, particularly given the way they are reported, you know, across the world, all run the risk of promoting other copycat incidents.

And that is why with every development in the sick pathology of terrorism, wherever it occurs we have to learn from it. We must be always more agile than those who seek to do us harm. We have outstanding police, outstanding intelligence and security services and, of course, in the field the Australian Defence Force is taking the fight up to and destroying ISIL with our allies and partners in the field.

I might ask the Commissioner – do you want to add to that point?

ACTING-COMMISSIONER, AUSTRALIAN FEDERAL POLICE:

We are always concerned about copycats and to that end, even during the evening I was in constant contact with the Chief Commissioner of the

Victorian Police but also in contact with police commissioner colleagues around the country and making sure that all the intelligence that was coming and information coming from this investigation is being passed around to all the state jurisdictions so everybody is on the same page, there are no knowledge gaps between any of the state police force, federal police, ASIO, and indeed the operational agency where it is happening on the ground at the moment.

JOURNALIST:

Are there lessons to be learnt from the way in which police in London responded so swiftly to that attack? They responded within eight minutes. Is there any confidence in Australia that our forces can respond so quickly? Are there things that they are doing in London that we should be considering doing in Australia?

ACTING-COMMISSIONER, AUSTRALIAN FEDERAL POLICE:

The first thing, the difference of course between the London police and ourselves, the law enforcement agencies throughout this country is that we are all armed.

So in an event similar to London where people are armed with edged weapons, then the first responders are most likely uniformed patrols from the state police and they are equipped to be able to deal with situations like that.

There is active armed offender training going on throughout the whole country for all law enforcement agencies where the aim is to contain and neutralise the threat. If that means using deadly force, then deadly force is utilised in particular occasions.

So that's where it makes it different.

In terms of our specialist response, that high-end tactical response, the Victoria Police were there very swiftly last night, as indeed they are in most jurisdictions. It is normally cordoned and contained first if they need to, if it's not an active shooter. If there is an active shooter, the protocols are that they go in and try and neutralise the threat. If it is cordoned by uniformed patrols, then the special operations groups or their equivalents come in and deal with the situation accordingly.

But each situation must be dealt with on its own merits. There is not one particular situation that fits every case.

JOURNALIST:

Prime Minister, how concerning were the revelations on Four Corners last night? Does Sam Dastyari have questions to answer? And should foreign political donations be banned?

PRIME MINISTER:

The answer is yes he does and clearly he should. I committed earlier in the

year at the Press Club in fact, to ban foreign political donations. That work is ongoing and legislation will be prepared to do that.

JOURNALIST:

Just very briefly, was there any consideration this morning in briefings to lift the terror threat?

PRIME MINISTER:

The threat level is under constant review and it has not been changed. The advice we have from the Victoria Police – and that's confirmed by the Acting Commissioner, he can add to this – is that this act, this terrorist attack, the understanding is at this time that it's not part of a coordinated attack. There were not others involved. I think that is the advice we have.

ACTING AUSTRALIAN FEDERAL POLICE COMMISSIONER:

That's right. At the moment the threat level is at probable, which is exactly that – an event is probable, that it will occur.

To raise it to the next level means that we have very specific intelligence that a specific event will occur. We do not have that intelligence. At the moment there is no suggestion that this matter will expand further.

Having said that, we want to be careful. There are still search warrants going on at the person's residence. The crime scene is still being secured. We have all the electronic data in the possession of the person of interest. At the moment we've got to go through all that.

So a lot of the questions you have been asking around the actual investigation – what was the motivation, all those things et cetera – will hopefully come out once we examine all of that material.

PRIME MINISTER:

Can I just reinforce what the Acting Commissioner has said – this is always a very dynamic environment. So our agencies, our intelligence agencies, security agencies, our police are working in real time. And so when we, as the Commissioner just said, when we present an assessment, that is as it is known at the moment. And facts, circumstances, as new facts emerge then the assessment may change.

JOURNALIST:

Prime Minister could you give us your assessment of how big a threat do you believe espionage and foreign interference is in Australia and what does your government intend to do about it?

PRIME MINISTER:

Yes, the answer is any threats to our sovereignty are very serious.

Early last month, in early May, I asked the Attorney-General to review our espionage laws, to review our laws relating to the activities of foreign governments in Australia and he is going to present a report on that as to what changes we may need to make.

But we take it very, very seriously.

The sovereignty of Australia, the sovereignty of our democratic processes, free from foreign interference is a matter of the highest concern.

It goes across a whole range of areas including, of course, the cyber domain. You would have seen last week, I had gathered together, with Dan Tehan the Minister assisting me on cyber security, the heads of the major telcos and a number of the big social media platforms, including Facebook, to discuss how we ensure that we are proofed from cyber threats, including from cyber interference of the kind that was seen in the US election and indeed, as newly-elected French President Macron said occurred during the French election.

These are matters – again, we are not reacting. This is part of my very proactive approach to these matters of security. We set out a cybersecurity strategy over a year ago. Again, it is a very high priority of my government.

We do not wait for threats to emerge, we anticipate them and make sure that we are putting in place the measures to keep Australians safe and also to keep our democracy secure and to maintain its integrity.

JOURNALIST:

Prime Minister, on direct threats to Australian citizens from a foreign government – the takeover of Chinese language media, the activity of student groups – did you raise this with the Chinese?

PRIME MINISTER:

We've certainly, I've always stated, and I said it in my speech in Singapore in fact, that just as modern China was based on an assertion of national sovereignty, so China should always respect the sovereignty of other nations including, of course, our own.

JOURNALIST:

Prime Minister you've declared this an act of terrorism even though there doesn't appear to have a coordinated or group aspect to it. Can we just get a concise, clear definition of what exactly constitutes an act of terrorism and how it differs from an individual act of violence?

PRIME MINISTER:

Well, an act of terrorism, in a nutshell, is politically motivated violence. But in this case the offender stated that he was doing this on behalf of ISIL and Al-Qaeda.

ACTING AUSTRALIAN FEDERAL POLICE COMMISSIONER:

Yes that's right – he made those clear in a phone call to Channel Seven.

JOURNALIST:

It's been a long time since you've had anything approaching bipartisanship on climate change. Are you enthused by Bill Shorten's comments that he may be prepared to look at whatever you cough up on the back of Finkel?

PRIME MINISTER:

Well let's wait and see. I'm glad you are ending the press conference on an optimistic note but I won't speculate about that.

But you know, in terms of bipartisanship, there are a number of other measures where I know Mr Shorten's shadow cabinet would like him to be more bipartisan.

He should be supporting our schools policy, which is genuine needs-based school funding as designed by and endorsed by David Gonski.

And he should be supporting our commitment to fully fund the National Disability Insurance Scheme by increasing the Medicare levy by 0.5 per cent – precisely the measure, precisely the approach of course he urged on the Coalition a few years ago.

So if Mr Shorten wishes to engage in some bipartisanship, he could do so in those areas and he would, so we believe, do so with the support of three quarters of his shadow cabinet.

Thank you very much.

[ENDS]

[Doorstop with the Treasurer, the Hon. Scott Morrison MP and the Minister for Urban Infrastructure, the Hon. Paul Fletcher MP and the NSW Member for Mulgoa, the Hon. Tanya Davies MP](#)

PRIME MINISTER:

Before we talk about this important step in the construction of vital

infrastructure in Western Sydney, I want to say some more about the events in London, the implications for security in Australia and the circumstances of Australians affected.

The attack in London reminds us yet again, that we face a determined enemy in Islamist terrorism. It is a global threat. We fight it the Middle East in the field, in Syria and Iraq. And we fight it at home in Sydney and Melbourne, around the nation and around the world.

We've seen these terrorist attacks in one city after another in very recent weeks – in London, in Manchester, in Kabul, in Jakarta and Baghdad.

These criminals, these terrorists, are cowards. There is nothing heroic in what they do. Driving a car and running down pedestrians, taking out knives and slashing at people who are out having dinner. This is the work of cowardly, crazed criminals.

Now this is a corruption, a disease, within Islam.

It is a global phenomenon and it has to be dealt with globally. So when I was in Singapore, at the Shangri-La Security Conference, much of the focus of discussions was enhancing cooperation between the nations there represented, in the battle against this global threat.

Intelligence sharing is absolutely critical. Sharing intelligence about returning foreign fighters, sharing intelligence about how they spread their evil message and seek to corrupt our young.

We also share intelligence about how we respond – upgrading our response to these events, ensuring that places of mass-gathering are more and better protected. Australians have seen the result of that at public events and sporting events and concerts where there are more physical barriers to prevent vehicle access, more checking of bags and of course, a higher presence and a more visible presence of police.

We send our heartfelt sympathy to the people of the United Kingdom. We send our love and our condolences to the victims and their families. But above all, we are in resolute solidarity with the people of the United Kingdom and our friends and allies around the world.

We will never give in to terrorism. We will never change the way we live. We defy these cowardly criminals. We defy them and we reject the poisonous ideology they peddle – this corruption of Islam, this blasphemous corruption and defamation of millions of Muslims around the world, trying to poison that religion from the inside and threaten all of our ways of life.

Now let me speak about the Australians affected by these events in London.

As you know, there are around 130,000 Australians living in the UK at any given time and many Australian visitors, and there were many Australians in the vicinity of the attack.

At this stage we know of, we can report, that two Australians were injured,

physically injured in the attack. One, a woman, is recovering in hospital. Another, a man, is returning to Australia.

There are two other Australians, so that brings it to a total of four, about whom we have very real concerns but at this stage we're not able to say anything more. We have been in touch with their families, in close touch with their families, as we seek to find greater confirmation of the circumstances of the two other Australians.

JOURNALIST:

So are they unaccounted for?

PRIME MINISTER:

There are concerns about their circumstances and we are not able to confirm, we're not able to provide any further information.

I understand your interest naturally, but we are in close touch with their families and it is not appropriate to say any more at this stage.

In terms of our response here, we are working very closely with all of our security agencies night and day to keep Australians safe.

Since I have been Prime Minister, we have upgraded our security laws so that our forces in the Middle East are able to target and kill terrorists, whatever they're doing. So they don't have to be in a combatant role. Our objective is to destroy the terrorists in the field in Syria and Iraq.

We've also changed our domestic laws, the laws as they apply domestically, so that persons who have been imprisoned for terrorist offences, can be kept in prison after the conclusion of their sentence if they are found to remain a threat to society.

Since September 2014, when the threat level was increased to 'probable', there have been 63 arrests on terrorism charges and 12 terrorist plots that have been frustrated. The most important tool that we have in this battle within Australia, is intelligence. That is why it is very important for our intelligence services, ASIO – working with the Federal Police and of course the state and territory polices – to be able to be alerted to these plots, as they develop, so that they can be uncovered, such as the major plot in Melbourne just before Christmas that would have seen an explosive device ignited around Federation Square. It is important that we get that intelligence early so that we can intercept these plots, disrupt them, arrest the perpetrators and bring them to justice, and the lengthy terms of imprisonment they deserve.

So it is vitally important for all Australians if they have concerns or are aware of information that might suggest that somebody is radicalised or radicalising or could be contemplating violent or extremist acts of this kind, to let our police and security services know. They are working night and day to keep us safe and they are absolutely the best in the world.

But it is a dangerous environment. We will see more of this terrorism before we see less, so, we have to be vigilant and determined and defiant.

We lead our Australian way of life on our terms. We will not buckle or bend or be cowed or intimidated by terrorism.

Let me now turn to this very important announcement here. What we've seen is – Ken Kanofski has just taken us through it – and I'm here with my colleagues, the Treasurer, the Minister for Urban Infrastructure Paul Fletcher, the Assistant Minister for Cities Angus Taylor and of course, representing the Premier, the Member for Mulgoa, Tanya Davies.

These projects here, collectively are part of a \$3.6 billion Western Sydney infrastructure program.

We're starting work now and I've turned the first sod on work on two sections on The Northern Road and on the Bringelly Road, totalling around \$1 billion.

This is vitally important. It is a commitment to jobs in Western Sydney. This infrastructure development, together with the Western Sydney Airport, which we are going to build, is going to add tens of thousands of jobs to Western Sydney.

For too long, as people in Western Sydney know, as Tanya would know very well having lived here all her life, Australians living in Western Sydney have had to commute to jobs in Parramatta or further afield in the CBD itself. It is vitally important that sources of economic growth and activity are developed here.

But governments have to make decisions. They've got to invest. As Tanya was saying earlier, for many years governments- Labor governments federally and at the state level – had talked about Western Sydney, and they'd drawn lines on maps, no doubt, and there had been plans, but they had not made the tough decisions to raise the money, to find the money, to invest it and build the infrastructure.

Now, we're doing that. These are massive investments, multibillion-dollar investments over a long period of time. We are funding them. We are paying for them. We have the vision and we have the commitment.

We're not just talking about the Western Sydney Airport. We're building it.

We're not just talking about these roads, we're building them.

That is what Liberal-National governments can do.

Because we are committed to ensuring that the sinews of a strong 21st century economy – a great future for this part of Sydney where there will be more than a million additional residents over the next 20 years. A new city, in effect, the size of Adelaide, coming to Western Sydney. Great opportunities in every field – in industry, in education, in science, in innovation. All of that needs the sinews, the transport sinews of road, rail, the airport – all of that is what we're putting our money and our commitment towards.

So, I'm delighted to be here with my colleagues. It's a very important day. This is getting on with the job of delivering those 21st century jobs and 21st century growth here in Western Sydney.

So I'll ask Paul Fletcher to say some more about the projects that are getting under way today.

THE HON. PAUL FLETCHER MP – MINISTER FOR URBAN INFRASTRUCTURE:

Thank you, Prime Minister.

The Turnbull Government is delivering the infrastructure around Australia that Australians need.

Here in Western Sydney, working with the Berejiklian Government, we're delivering the infrastructure that the people of Western Sydney need.

We're building an airport and in the budget just gone, we committed \$5.3 billion of equity into WSA Co which will build Western Sydney Airport.

And we are working with the Berejiklian Government to deliver the vital ground transport infrastructure so that the airport will have excellent connectivity to the rest of Sydney and the Sydney motorway network.

Now, the Prime Minister has just turned the sod on three very important projects, which form part of the \$3.6 billion Western Sydney infrastructure plan.

We're at Glenmore Park just near the Glenmore Parkway and there will be over 4km extending to Jamison Road in South Penrith. Then there's a 11km section further south along The Northern Road starting at Peter Brock Drive and about a 4km section on Bringelly Road.

This is a very important dividend of Western Sydney Airport that the road upgrades are happening now and the upgrades on The Northern Road that the Prime Minister has just turned the sod on, will be open by 2020. In some sections here near Penrith, they'll be as wide as four lanes in each direction.

So this is about providing the growth capacity that the people of Western Sydney need to move around efficiently and to make sure that the ground transport connectivity is there and in place before Western Sydney Airport becomes operational in 2026.

So we're delivering an airport. We're delivering the infrastructure that's required. And, of course, working to make sure that those works are as coordinated as possible, disrupt to the least extent possible people living along these roads but of course delivering the benefits of better connectivity.

And we're also working, again, the Turnbull Government and the Berejiklian Government working closely together to make sure that we maximise the economic and the jobs benefits of Western Sydney Airport. For example, just

tomorrow, I'll be joining Stuart Ayres, the New South Wales Minister for Western Sydney, in a forum with local tourism operators where we'll be talking about how best to capture the benefits of Western Sydney Airport to stimulate tourism to Western Sydney and surrounding areas.

So the Turnbull Government working with the Berejiklian Government, delivering infrastructure in Western Sydney – Western Sydney Airport and the surrounding road transport infrastructure – and the Prime Minister has just turned the sod on \$1 billion worth of investment.

I now ask Tanya Davies to make some comments on behalf of the Premier.

THE HON. TANYA DAVIES MP – MEMBER FOR MULGOA:

Thank you, Paul.

Well this morning's sod-turning event is further evidence that it is in fact only a Liberal-National Government at the state and federal level that have the capability and have the desire to invest in Western Sydney.

I've lived here for many, many years and my community has said over and over again that they have been longing for governments to actually notice Western Sydney, to pay attention to Western Sydney. And in fact, it has only been the Liberal and National state and federal governments working together that are investing and building the infrastructure and the framework to support our families and our small businesses here across Western Sydney.

So today, I congratulate the Turnbull Government and the Berejiklian Government on their commitment to actually investing in the region that I love which is Western Sydney, to support families and to support businesses and the future that Western Sydney has.

Western Sydney is the nation's third biggest economy. And it is wonderful. It's a glorious day that is, in fact, Western Sydney's prime day to shine. That we are the region's blossoming, we are the region's economic powerhouse and this investment today just goes to prove that the Turnbull Government and the Berejiklian Government are supporting Western Sydney all the way.

PRIME MINISTER:

Great, thank you. Thank you. So some questions?

JOURNALIST:

I'll start off. What do you make of John Wagner's claims that he could build the airport for cheaper and faster than the government?

PRIME MINISTER:

Well Paul may like to add to this but as far as the Wagners are concerned, who built the new airport at Toowoomba, Wellcamp Airport, we'll be looking for, as we build this airport, as the federal government builds this airport, we'll be looking for people to tender and offer to construct it.

So I can assure you that it will be a very competitive environment and I look forward to the Wagners with their track record at Toowoomba putting their hand up.

JOURNALIST:

Can we just circle back to London for a second? Your predecessor is calling for military to be at front of terrorist operations if they happen in Australia. Is that something you'll consider? Do you have faith in the police?

PRIME MINISTER:

Well we have great faith in the Australian police forces and it is very important that the public has confidence in our police and our security services. We have to remember that they do a phenomenal job keeping us safe. 12 terrorist plots uncovered in the period since September 2014 – 63 arrests. They are constantly, 24-7, keeping us secure.

Now, in terms of the role of the defence force in terrorist incidents and terrorist attacks, that is a matter that is being reviewed.

There are procedures, of course, that would enable the SAS, for example, to be brought in to a siege situation. That is perfectly legal and capable. It has to be done at the request of the state government. That's a constitutional matter.

But we're looking at the procedures and protocols at the moment. It is a matter under very active consideration and in fact, I initiated it last year.

I want to say, however, that there is a view being put around that police do not have an ability to shoot-to-kill. That is quite untrue. The practice of cordon and contain, which had been used for many years, is not applied by police in situations where there is an active armed offender, an active shooter or someone with a knife, such as you saw in London. And the Australian police, presented with a situation as you saw in London, would respond quickly to disable, to shoot in other words, the assailants, just as the police officers in London did.

I'd also make another observation that I think is important to bear in mind. In the United Kingdom, most police officers, the vast majority are not armed. So the Bobby on the beat does not have a firearm. That is not the case in Australia.

So there was a heroic British police officer who was unarmed, who confronted those assailants on London Bridge and was wounded by them. Seriously wounded by them. In Australia, his equivalent would have had a firearm and would have been able to deal with them, to shoot them.

So we have a lot in common with the UK in policing and we share intelligence and practice intimately but we do have that big difference that our front, all of our front line police officers are armed.

JOURNALIST:

The British Prime Minister has come out saying that they're too tolerant of extremism and they need to change how they deal with radicalised youths. Do you think the same could be said in Australia?

PRIME MINISTER:

Well we have the most successful multicultural society in the world and it is based on mutual respect.

I have to say I think we have done a better job than most countries in integrating a very diverse number of immigrants from all very different backgrounds.

The Treasurer Scott Morrison, who is here, of course, was Immigration Minister and understands this area very well and may want to add to it.

But I would say that I think that the British Prime Minister has put her finger on a very important point, that there is too much tolerance of extremist material on social media and that, ultimately, requires cooperation from the big social media platforms, in particular, Facebook and Twitter. They, of course, are American businesses, headquartered in the United States, and it is one of the priorities that we have and our friends in the UK have as we work as part of the Five Eyes intelligence community, which, of course, includes the United States, Canada and New Zealand as well, to get a more responsible approach taken to this type of material.

The other thing, the other area where we need these global social media and messaging companies to assist is in providing access to encrypted communications which are used by billions of people, of course, and applications like WhatsApp and so forth and Apple iMessenger, but our security services need to be able to get access to them.

You may recall the difficulty the FBI had getting access to the iPhone of one of the terrorists involved in the San Bernardino attack.

So we need to have a full court press against extremism, against violent extremism. But we must recognise – and I made this point in Singapore and I'll make it again – there are no borders. Nowhere is far away from anywhere else in the age of the internet.

So you might think that Syria and Raqqa are a long way away from Western Sydney. Well, in miles, maybe. But electronically, in terms of communications, everywhere is close and that is why we need much greater cooperation.

We must be as smart, smarter – agile, more agile – connected, more connected – collaborative, more collaborative, than the people who are seeking to do us harm.

They use social media and the internet very skilfully.

Nations, police forces, security agencies, need to work very closely together.

Now, within Australia, we have the great advantage, that for example, the Europeans do not have, and we're a big country, but we have a national federal police. We have a national security intelligence organisation in ASIO. We have very strong cooperation and coordination.

My Counter Terrorism Coordinator Tony Sheehan will be holding another meeting today with his counterparts and the federal police in state and territory police forces.

You know we are constantly working together as a coordinated response to terrorism but we need to do more and we will do more. We're committed to it and we need to do more internationally as well.

JOURNALIST:

Prime Minister – do you think that you could convince your party room to support a low emissions target?

PRIME MINISTER:

Do you want to hold that – let's just exhaust security and then we'll come to that.

JOURNALIST:

PM, just to clarify, is the government concerned about the two additional Australians that you mentioned – is the government concerned that that they may have died?

PRIME MINISTER:

I won't go any further. I'll just say that we are concerned about their circumstances. I'm sure that everyone, you and everyone watching this understands, that out of respect for families and the individuals involved, we will be discreet and circumspect about what we say until we have confirmation of the circumstances of the two other Australians.

But, you know, this is the global environment in which we operate. We have seen Australians killed and injured in terrorist events around the world. The Bali bombing, of course, is a very, very bitter memory. The 9/11 attack. The young girl who was killed in Baghdad just the other day. Australians are all over the world at any given time. There's over a million Australians living outside Australia in addition to those of course that travel. So that's all I'll say on that at the moment if that's alright.

You had a question about –

JOURNALIST:

Do you think you could convince your party room to support a low emissions

target?

PRIME MINISTER:

We are looking forward to the report from the Finkel Review.

Our commitment is to ensure that our energy policy is driven by economics and engineering. Not ideology, which is Labor's mistake.

You know, Labor has created a shocking state of affairs and most notably in South Australia, where, as you know, they have this huge renewable energy resource – wind – they did no planning. They didn't think about storage or back-up. So they have got a situation in South Australia where the wind farms can generate 100 per cent of the state's electricity one minute, or zero per cent the next. That's just dumb, that is just reckless, putting ideology and politics ahead of hard-headed planning.

So engineering and economics is what drives us and our commitment is to ensure working with the states that we have an energy plan that will deliver affordable, reliable and secure energy – electricity and gas – and in addition to that, will meet our emissions reduction targets in accordance with the Paris treaty. And we're on track to do that, I should add.

We've had to take some tough decisions already. I had to make some tough decisions about limiting the exports of gas from the east coast to ensure the domestic market was fully supplied.

Australians understand we're committed to that, we'll meet those three objectives – affordability, reliability, and meeting our global commitments to reduce our emissions as we agreed in Paris.

Thank you all very much for being here.

[ENDS]

Major Works on The Northern Road and Bringelly Road Upgrades

The Turnbull Government is continuing to deliver vital infrastructure that is improving transport in Western Sydney, creating local jobs and growing the regional economy.

Work today began on the next two sections of The Northern Road upgrade as well as the second stage of the Bringelly Road upgrade.

The projects form a major part of the \$3.6 billion Western Sydney Infrastructure Plan. The Commonwealth has funded 80 per cent (\$2.9 billion)

of the Plan that will create new and upgraded transport connections for the Western Sydney Airport ahead of it is opening in 2026.

Nationally, the Turnbull Government will deliver a \$75 billion infrastructure package to deliver unprecedented investment in infrastructure for all Australians.

Works began today on:

- The Northern Road between Peter Brock Drive, Oran Park and Mersey Road, Bringelly (11.3 kilometres);
- The Northern Road between Glenmore Parkway, Glenmore Park and Jamison Road, South Penrith (four kilometres); and
- The second stage of the Bringelly Road upgrade, between King Street, Rossmore and The Northern Road, Bringelly (4.3 kilometres).

Western Sydney will grow by more than one million people over the next 20 years. We are planning ahead and providing essential infrastructure to support this growth and make life better for more people in Western Sydney.

Our investments are already transforming the economy of Western Sydney, giving businesses the confidence to invest, expand and create new jobs. This means more people can access employment opportunities close to home, giving them more time to spend with their families and in their communities.

The Coalition will build the Western Sydney Airport, providing a new international gateway and securing Sydney's aviation capacity. It will create 20,000 new jobs by the early 2030s, and deliver more than 60,000 direct airport jobs in the long-term.

The Commonwealth and State Governments are working together to improve access to Western Sydney and tackle congestion, improving major transport corridors such as the M4 Motorway and the future M12 Motorway.

The Coalition's leadership has brought all three levels of government to the table for a City Deal for Western Sydney. The City Deal is on track for signing by the end of 2017, providing a blueprint for the region's growth. This means better transport, more local jobs and more affordable housing.

The Turnbull Government thanks the Berejiklian Government for their investment and close coordination in building a better Western Sydney.

Today's milestones expand on work that is continuing on the Western Sydney Infrastructure Plan, including Stage 1 of the \$509 million Bringelly Road Upgrade.

For more information visit www.rms.nsw.gov.au

Statement on London Terror Attacks

PRIME MINISTER: Australians woke this morning to the grim news that London was again in the grip of a terrorist attack.

And again we send our heartfelt sympathy and love to the victims and their families and to the people of Britain.

And to the people of Britain our resolute solidarity, as always, allies in the values we defend for freedom, to find the terrorists, defeating them in the field in the Middle East and at home.

Now we admire and thank the swift and courageous reaction of the first responders in London, the police who swiftly moved to kill the terrorists within eight minutes of the first attack being reported.

We have spoken with our Counter Terrorism Coordinator and to our High Commissioner in London Alexander Downer, who is liaising closely with the British authorities. We have also spoken to the Director General of Security, the Acting Commissioner of the Australian Federal Police, who's assured me the AFP is liaising closely with its state counterparts who are stepping up security arrangements for public events in the light of this attack and those that have preceded it, including the shocking attack in Manchester.

Now there are many Australians in London, 130,000 Australians live in the UK, and we are aware of many Australians who were in the vicinity of the attack.

At this time we aware of reports of two Australians who have been directly affected by this attack. This afternoon, the Foreign Minister has spoken to the parents of both Australians.

One case has been confirmed and the Australian concerned is in hospital, in the other case we are continuing to making inquiries.

Our officials will continue to provide every assistance they can to Australians affected by this shocking attack and to their families.

Now Australian and British agencies work closely together in the fight against terrorism- none closer in fact- and its right across the full spectrum of our work. These partnerships are enduring and vital to keep our nations safe.

We are working intensively with other countries as well to further develop our national strategy, a global strategy for protecting places of mass gathering.

This attack is yet another cruel example of the new reality with which we live – the ever present threat of murderous Islamist terrorists intent to harm our communities, our way of life and the freedoms we hold dear.

We have to be clear eyed about the risk – it is real, and that is why the

terror threat level in Australia is set at probable.

Our security agencies, our police services, our defence forces work night and day to keep us safe. And indeed since September '14, 2014 when the threat level was raised to probable we had here in Australia arrested 63 people on terrorism charges and frustrated 12 terrorist plots.

But the work is relentless, our agencies are working 24 hours a day, seven days a week and we continue to provide them with a legislative force they need, the laws they need to keep us safe and the resources they need that have the capabilities to do so.

We will never, ever bow to terrorism.

We will continue, as will the people of Britain to lead our lives the way we always have.

We defy the terrorists, in the field we find them, we destroy them we kill them.

At home our agencies disrupt their plots, uncover their networks, bring them to meet their just deserts in the courts and lock them up where they can no longer do us harm.

FOREIGN MINISTER: The Australian Government has updated our travel advice and Australians are asked to continue to avoid the London Bridge area and to follow the directions and advice of local authorities.

I urge any Australians in London or those who are thinking of traveling to London to continue to monitor our smartraveller website, which will be updated as information comes to hand.

If you have loved ones or family and friends in London and you've not been able to contact them, please call our consular hotline on 1300 555 135. And if you are calling from overseas, it's +61 262 613 305 and our consular officials will do their best to provide whatever assistance we can.