

LETTER FROM MELBOURNE

Saving you time. A monthly newsletter distilling public policy and government decisions which affect business opportunities in Australia and beyond.



ISSUE 163 PRE-BUDGET EDITION

24 MARCH TO 18 APRIL 2011

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Letter From Melbourne is a monthly public affairs bulletin, a simple précis, distilling and interpreting public policy and government decisions, which affect business opportunities in Victoria and Australia.

Written for the regular traveller, or people with meeting-filled days, you only have to miss reading The Age or The Herald Sun twice a week to need Letter from Melbourne. It's more about business opportunities (or lack of them) than politics. It's not Crikey.com. We keep words to a minimum.

Letter from Melbourne is independent. It's not party political or any other political. It does not have the imprimatur of government at any level.

For context. It includes events and people and society, and the weather if that is important.

Increasingly, Letter from Melbourne is developing a federal and national coverage and also an increasing synopsis of national business issues.

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EDITORIAL

Movement at the station.

How exciting. A 12 month inquiry into taxis by Professor Allan Fels, a former Australian Competition and Consumer Commission chairman who has enquired into just about everything else, should cheer up many Melburnians and cause them to put pen to paper.

Minister for crime prevention and minister responsible for the establishment of an anti-corruption commission Andrew McIntosh is starting to release the details of the election-promised anti-corruption commission. Challenging. Bring Victoria into a similar product line with New South Wales and Queensland.

In the meantime, Ombudsman George Brower and Auditor-General Des Pearson have used their current powers, and as signaled on the latter's website, to launch their inquiry into several 'failed' state information technology projects, including myki and the police crime database. Since 2005, evidently these two busy people and their teams have investigated more than ten IT systems or projects, including myki, HealthSmart and the police data base LEAP.

The May 3 Budget is being slowly structured

before our eyes. One big item is the coming tiff with the federal government over its cuts to GST payments to Victoria. The big 'IT' and other projects such as water and hospitals continue to get a working over. The premier has released a pre budget document detailing various cost blowouts.

In the past year or two, Letter from Melbourne's editorial team, after canvassing the four* daily papers, and increasingly reading The Weekly Times and after reflecting upon Monday night's Q&A and Sunday's The Insiders, usually produced 20,000 words or more, which required some trimming. More recently, we find several thousand fewer words after completed the above tasks. Hence, more Viewpoints and advertorials are coming your way. (*AgeSunFinAus)

Our Victorian Government Chart is off to the printers this week as the remaining senior ministerial staff appointments have, almost, been completed.

Thought for the day. We did read that Melbourne will be a bigger city than our northern cousin in a few years time on current figures, but watch the Sydney-Melbourne rivalry in the next few years for events, tourism and other things, as we have two state governments with similar robustness which will be clearly defining some identical or similar targets.

Happy Reading.



ABOUT THE EDITOR ALISTAIR URQUHART

Alistair Urquhart graduated from the Australian National University in Canberra, in Law, History and Politics, was admitted as a barrister and solicitor of the Supreme Court of Victoria, and remains a (non-practicing) member of the Law Institute of Victoria. Before that, he graduated from high school in Bethesda, Maryland, and had many opportunities to become aware of the workings of Washington DC.

For 30 years, he listened every Sunday evening to the late Alistair Cooke and his Letter From America. His early career was mostly in the coal industry, where he became involved with energy, environmental and water issues, and later in the SME finance sector.

His public affairs firm works with many engineering and information technology firms, other professional association and industry groups, on a wide range of issues, in Victoria, Canberra and overseas. Urquhart visits Canberra regularly. He may hold the record for miles rowed on Canberra's Lake Burley Griffin.

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STATE GOVERNMENT & POLITICS

Federal tax grab

The Commonwealth Grants Commission plans to strip Victoria of \$2.5 billion in GST revenue. According to *The Age*, state Treasurer **Kim Wells** said the decision was 'completely removed from economic reality'. He said the commission's decision penalised Victoria for economic reforms, and did not take population growth into account.

Information isn't free

The Age reported that a senior adviser in Premier **Ted Baillieu's** private office has been given the power to decide whether sensitive government documents should be released. The paper claims that this undermines the Coalition's pledge for openness and transparency. The senior adviser, **Don Coulson**, was the Coalition's Freedom Of Information expert when the Brumby government was in power, and has 20 years of experience in the area.

Finessing Question Time

The *Herald Sun* claimed that Premier **Ted Baillieu's** pledge to lead a spin-free Victorian government has been undermined by the release of a secret briefing note, instructing ministers what to say and how to behave in State Parliament. A document obtained by the *Herald Sun* showed that Cabinet ministers were ordered to follow a formula to avoid embarrassment in Question Time. The internal document apparently revealed how ministers are prepared for Parliament to avoid tripping up. The strict rules were sent to at least five ministers as a blueprint for possible Parliamentary questions, and they dictate how such questions should be answered.

Coalition's \$5b surprise

The Age reported that, three weeks before the state budget, Premier **Ted Baillieu** took the unusual step of releasing a 12-page document detailing an array of cost blowouts totalling \$5 billion inherited from the Labor government.

Governor's last word

Victoria's outgoing governor **David de Kretser** had, according to *The Age*, expressed dismay at the state of the climate change debate. He said he supports efforts to provide people with clear and factual information on its impact and ways of addressing it. De Kretser was reported to be planning a return to medical research after leaving his post. An interesting note, de Kretser was born in Sri Lanka, and left as a nine-year old in 1949.

Pregnant pause

An interesting turn occurred in the maternity leave case of former Hulls ministerial adviser **Jaclyn Symes**. *The Age* reported that Premier **Ted Baillieu** intervened, ordering a review of the employment arrangements that led to a

decision to deny Symes paid maternity leave because she had left one payroll which pays ministerial staff for another payroll where she now works.

After hours

The president of the Legislative Council, **Bruce Atkinson** came under fire when the *Herald Sun* reported that Atkinson, who was criticised in 2005 for working as a planning consultant and writing poems while holding his position as an MP, has now written several articles for a trade magazine, of which he is a director.

ARTS

Art house

Works by some of the nation's greatest painters adorn the private office and walls of the Victorian Premier and senior ministers. The works are on loan from the National Gallery of Victoria. The *Herald Sun* said **Ted Baillieu**, who is both Premier and Art Minister, revealed that options are being considered to make it easier for the public to view the \$15 million of art works. However, portraits of former premiers may have to be removed from Queens Hall to provide exhibition space.

Astor's birthday

The Astor theatre on Chapel Street celebrated its 75th birthday. *The Age* said that it was the sole remaining single screen 'picture palace' operating in Melbourne.



Agent Provocateur Charles Kovess (pictured third from left, above) attends the launch of the Mobile Business Centre on the corner of Collins and Swanston Streets, Melbourne.

**Baillieu's waltzing book launch**

Victorian Premier **Ted Baillieu** launched a children's book titled *Christina's Matilda*, detailing his great-aunt **Christina Macpherson's** creation of the famous tune *Waltzing Matilda* with lyrics by **Banjo Paterson**. P dedicated the book to his mother, **Diana Baillieu**, who died in 2008 and provided photographs and documents for the project. Baillieu said his mother had a close relationship with Ms MacPherson her great aunt, and would have been happy to see the story published. MacPherson wrote the tune for *Waltzing Matilda* at Dagworth Station, near Winton in Central Queensland, in 1895.

Wild boy goes on exhibit

The first exhibition of colonial landscape artist **Eugene von Guerard's** art in over 30 years was opened at the National Gallery of Victoria, *The Age* reported. The show, which will run until August 7, includes two sketches that have never before been exhibited to the public.

Blockbuster exhibitions

An *Age* report by **Gabriella Coslovich** posed the question, are blockbuster shows about great art or making money? It was a timely question, with the proclaimed 'greatest exhibition of all time' *Tutankhamun and the Golden Age of the Pharaohs* showing in Melbourne. Museum Victoria chief executive **Patrick Greene** was interviewed on the subject and claimed that it was not about the money. He told *The Age* 'we will make some money out of it, but it won't be vast amounts. We are here to serve the people of Victoria and therefore we want to bring things here that people will get enormous enjoyment from'. Also, the most popular recent exhibition attendances were detailed, with *Titanic: The Artefact Exhibition* drawing a crowd of 480,879 to the Melbourne Museum in 2010. *A day in Pompeii* saw 332,679 visitors to the same museum in 2009. At the National gallery of Victoria, 333,000 viewed the *Salvador Dali Liquid Desire* exhibition in 2009 and 371,000 appreciated *The Impressionists: Masterpieces from the Musee D'Orsay* in 2004.

Good job

Melbourne Recital Centre, Australia's newest producer and cultural centre, is committed to creating, exploring and presenting great music. Based in the heart of Melbourne's Southbank arts precinct, it is fast becoming internationally acclaimed as the nation's landmark centre for music. The MRC is looking for two driven professionals to fill the roles of Director of Marketing and Customer Relations and Director of Development. As per *The Age*.

EDUCATION

School scores manipulation

The Age reported that Victorian Education Minister **Mark Dixon** vowed to crack down on schools that discourage struggling students from sitting National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy tests in order to improve scores on the My School website.

Statistics obtained by *The Age* revealed participation rates in national literacy and numeracy tests have slumped in every year level in Victoria since their inception in 2008.

School of scientology

A Melbourne school linked to the Church of Scientology has had a spotlight thrown on it by the MySchool website. An *Age* investigation revealed that Yarralinda School in Mooroolbark spent just \$3,727, despite receiving combined government and tuition money of \$6,171. According to *The Age*, Yarralinda has also been criticised for obscuring its affiliation with Scioentology in a flyer that spruiks the school as a 'no homework school'.

Safer school bus

The Age reported that The Australian College of Road Safety wrote to Premier **Ted Baillieu** to demand that more be done to ensure that occupants of busses in regional Victoria wear seatbelts. Currently, on school buses and regional buses, seatbelts are not required to be fitted or worn. In 2009 a V/Line coach crashed near Portland, killing three passengers.

Foreign students fall

The Age asked Melbourne University's vice-chancellor **Professor Glyn Davis** whether he expected to see further falls in foreign student enrolments in 2012.

He said 'All of our modelling has told us that 2012 is likely to be worse than 2011 and there's a good reason for that – there's a long lag time between making the decision to study abroad and enrolling. There has been a massive shift of the Americans and British into the market and the strength of the Australian dollar [is a continuing issue]. If you're a betting person you'd be pretty nervous about 2012'.

ENVIRONMENT

CONSERVATION

Here today

Leadbeater's possum, which was once thought extinct, may soon be lost for good. The warning came from Eric Wilkinson, who rediscovered the animal in 1961 after it had not been seen for decades. Wilkinson was acknowledged in a ceremony on April 3 by the Museum of Victoria. He told *The Age* that it was a 'critical time for the species' with its population down to about 1,000. A Leadbeater expert, Australian National University ecologist **David Lindenmayer**, claimed that 80 per cent of the possums' habitat in the Yarra Ranges is loggable forest, and called for an end to clear felling. A spokesman for VicForests said to *The Age* that no harvesting is permitted 'in areas which meet the criteria for habitat to protect the possum's population'.



Eric Wilkinson is interviewed on Museum Victoria's website in the mini-documentary 'Lost and Found: The Rediscovery of Leadbeater's Possum.' Source: Museum Victoria, 2011.

Zoo board

The Minister for Environment and Climate Change is seeking expressions of interest for five positions, including the deputy chairperson, on the Zoological Parks and Gardens Board from July 30, 2011. The Board oversees Zoos Victoria, responsible for the management for the zoos at Melbourne, Healesville and Werribee. As per *The Age*.

ENERGY

Stay on target

Premier **Ted Baillieu** will stay on target to cut Victoria's greenhouse gas emissions

by a fifth over the next decade. Both Labor and the Coalition last year agreed to a 20 per cent reduction in emissions by 2020. Liberal insiders told *The Age* that the target is ambitious. The paper also reported that as the government prepares for its first budget in May, business and industry would increase pressure for a change of strategy.

Meters aren't so smart

Customers gave a scathing response to claims from the Department of Primary Industries that smart meter charges would be 'modest,' the *Herald Sun* reported. **Janine Reyner**, a spokesperson from the Consumer Action Law Centre, said that 'charges aren't being kept down because the current law is just too easy on the electricity companies.' The Baillieu government will review the former Labor government's plan to install the meters in all Victorian homes, but probably won't scrap the technology involved.

WATER

Melbourne's dams

The daily water catchment updates on the cover of *The Age* were notable at the end of this summer. A year ago the dams were only one-third of capacity, but now they are more than half-full, heading into what is expected to be a wet winter season. However, state Water Minister **Peter Walsh** said that Melbourne would remain on Stage 2 water restrictions, which would stay in place to ensure dams recovered throughout winter and spring.

Profits watered down

The builder of Victoria's desalination plant cited the project as a major factor in a massive \$900 million down-grade in its profit forecast. *The Age* said construction giant Leighton had acknowledged that the project had 'become a physical and financial quagmire'. The company is now expected to make just \$6 million profit from the embattled project, as a result of bad weather, poor productivity and underestimation of construction and materials costs. 'Well placed industry figures' told *The Age* that in a bid to minimise financial damage, Leighton has fallen six months to a year behind schedule. As *Letter from Melbourne* has said previously, we do our best to report the facts as they appear in the media, but we do not check the details of balance sheets, etc.

Breakwater breakdown

The Baillieu government came under increased pressure to dump plans for a 130-metre breakwater in East Gippsland, after it was revealed that the Brumby government had funded the project against the advice of its own safety experts. *The Age* reported that documents it had obtained showed former major projects minister **Tim Pallas** had been advised to scrap the plan by an expert panel established by Marine Safety Victoria, but

Labor proceeded with funding for the Bastion Point facility anyway.

Wet work

The Board of the Wimmera Catchment Management Authority is seeking a dynamic leader to continue to nurture a highly responsive performance based culture focused on natural resource management outcomes. As per *The Age*.

HEALTH

Yes at last

Construction for the Oliver Newton-John Cancer and Wellness Centre at the Austin Hospital is well under way, but without the final \$45 million the facility would have been without in-patient beds and a cancer research centre. The State Government has now agreed to fund the final stage, despite initially refusing to commit to it, citing black holes in Labor's budget for the project. Ms Newton-John is a breast cancer survivor. 'It's going to be completed late 2012 or 2013 I think, and it's something wonderful to look forward to'. The Premier said the Government was unable to commit to the project sooner because Labor had not accounted for the final stage in its costings.

Donation evaporates

The state government confirmed to *The Age* that a \$35 million donation pledged to help build the new Royal Children's Hospital would not be delivered. Victorian Health Minister **David Davis** said the hospital had not received the money which had been promised to its foundation under the original public-private partnership. The arrangement included a pledge from the winning consortium to secure donations of \$35 million to the RCH Foundation from project investors. However, *The Age* revealed that the donation was underwritten by a member of the Babcock and Brown group, which collapsed in 2009.

Hospital safety

Several senior doctors at the Royal Children's Hospital told *The Age* that the design of the new intensive care unit would put children's safety at risk. They argued that the use of single rooms instead of open-plan cubicles make it harder for staff to communicate with each other, observe multiple patients at the same time and reach patients quickly. The issue had been the subject of disputes between staff and those responsible for the new hospital's design, with *The Age* reporting rumours that the new building was being called the 'Royal Children's Hotel' in private.

Health costs smart

The Age reported that Victoria's Health Department will have to spend \$200 million more to rescue the \$360 million already spent on its troubled health technology program,



big thinkers (think tanks, knowledge brokers, networks & opinion shapers)

The 2009 edition of Affairs of State's latest publication *Big Thinkers (thing tanks, knowledge brokers, networks & opinion shapers)* has just been launched by historian Geoffrey Blainey.

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including HealthSMART. Departmental advice to the Baillieu government said that as much as \$95 million will be needed to complete HealthSMART's original plan for a computer system linking 10 big hospitals and giving medical staff immediate access to patient records. The department has signalled that \$100 million more will be needed to replace software, computers and electronic equipment, all of which were outside the scope of the original HealthSMART proposal.

Australian Medical Association state president **Dr Harry Hemley** told *The Age* he was confident that, as with the troubled myki public transport project, the government would keep the HealthSMART system and spend more on it. HealthSMART was supposed to introduce clinical applications, such as access to test results and medication details, in all big Victorian hospitals. Those features have so far been introduced at just two hospitals – Box Hill and the Royal Victorian eye and ear – and are due to be introduced at two others – the Austin and Frankston. Six other hospitals are preparing for the new system.

Purchasing board

The State Minister for Health, the Honourable **David Davis** MP, is seeking applications for part-time board member positions to Health Purchasing Victoria, with terms of office commencing July 1, 2011. As per *The Age*.

INVESTMENT

BUSINESS

Businesses want a break

The *Australian Financial Review* said that Victorian businesses have demanded a sweeping overhaul of the state tax regime to lift competitiveness. They argued such action would be needed to fend off a New South Wales government push to poach business, investment and major events. However, *The Age* reports that Premier **Ted Baillieu** delivered his strongest hint that there is little room left in the budget for spending or tax cuts beyond election commitments. The Victorian Employers' Chamber of Commerce and Industry's submission to the May 3 budget urged the government to cut payroll and land taxes, lower WorkCover premiums, and freeze increases to fees, fines and charges for two years.

Gift cards expire

The Age alerted Borders and Angus & Robertson gift cardholders that their vouchers would not be honoured after an April 3 deadline. The embattled bookstore chain administrators set the date, after already implementing a policy whereby a customer would have to match one dollar spent for every dollar redeemed. In a



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related development, administrators for Angus & Robertson announced that more than 100 staff at the troubled bookstore chain would lose their jobs. Another 12 stores were closed, including five in Victoria, as the business struggled to survive.

Supermarket price wars

The *Herald Sun* reported that Fosters was temporarily withholding supplies from Coles and Woolworths to prevent its beers being sold below cost. **Bart Becht**, global CEO of Reckitt Benckiser which owns brands that include Vanish, Harpic, Mortein and Dettol, told *The Australian Financial Review* that the price war was undermining brand image, and was forcing companies to reduce marketing investment if the battle were to continue.

Fashion CEO

According to the *Herald Sun*, Melbourne businessman **Solomon Lew** has appointed former David Jones CEO **Mark McInnes** to run his Premier-Just Jeans retail chain.

ICT

Brouwer launches massive IT probe

A series of botched IT projects, including myki and the police crime database, came under intense scrutiny as ombudsman **George Brouwer** used his powers to launch an inquiry into the multi-billion dollar failures. *The Age* reported that both Brouwer and the Auditor-General, **Des Pearson**, who will also be involved in the investigation, were frustrated by a lack of accountability for project failures and cost over-runs. The announcement came on the back of a Victorian Treasury report which labelled myki, the HealthSmart system and the new police crime database as key factors in the predicted \$2 billion blow to the state budget. Premier **Ted Baillieu** welcomed the inquiry, saying that it 'will be an important investigation which will assist the government in identifying how these massive losses and mismanagement occurred, and how we can ensure they are not repeated.' The ombudsman and Auditor-General have investigated more than 10 IT systems or projects since 2005.

Out of Order

An independent review of the Department of Human Services' computer program found that when court reports were printed, highly

sensitive information was produced and could not be removed. The report, published in *The Age*, said information could threaten the safety of caseworkers and vulnerable Victorian children. Caseworkers have reportedly taken to using liquid paper and photocopying documents as an ad hoc solution.

AGRICULTURE

Foreign investment scrutiny

The Weekly Times revealed that no one knew how much of Australia's farmland was owned by foreigners. The Australian Foreign Investment Review Board and the federal government admitted that they did not track the amount of land purchased by foreign investors. South Australian Independent **Nick Xenophon** said that not doing so was 'ridiculous'. Later it was reported in *The Australian* that Nationals agriculture spokesman **John Cobb** succeeded in establishing a register of foreign purchases. Cobb's motion means that the Australian Bureau of Statistics and the Australian Bureau of Agricultural and Resource Economics and Sciences would collect information on foreign ownership, and the Productivity Commission would recommend safeguards to protect food security.

On track to deliver

Australian Railway Association CEO **Bryan Nye** reportedly told a Lloyd's List DNC grain logistics forum that farmers had to be more innovative in trying to get their product to port. *The Weekly Times* said Nye suggested that growers band together to lease individual rail lines to move their grain.

Fruit fly outbreak

The Department of Primary Industries ran advertisements advising that outbreaks of Queensland Fruit Fly had been detected in several locations in regional Victoria.

Food basin threat


The entire food-growing area of the lower Murray-Darling Basin could be converted to trees under a \$36 carbon price, research from the CSIRO has found. *The Age* obtained a snapshot of a CSIRO report weeks before its publication. It reportedly showed a dramatic change in land use from agriculture to 'carbon sinks' of trees in the Murray-Darling, starting at just an \$11 carbon price.

The Murray-Darling Basin produces 39 per cent of Australia's agricultural production. It also contains 65 per cent of the irrigated land and 40 per cent of farms. Researchers told *The Age* that the findings are only one set of results among many in the full report, and assume very large incentives for farmers to switch from food production to growing trees to store carbon.

If the incentives are reduced or barriers are put in place, significantly smaller amounts of agricultural land would be converted to forest. However, the CSIRO's chief executive, **Megan Clark**, publicly presented a graphic from the study showing fertile agricultural land in the lower-NSW, Victorian and South Australian parts of the basin entirely converted to carbon forest projects under a \$36 carbon price. Clark showed the graphic during her speech at a climate change conference in Cairns, and briefed federal politicians in March.

The high country

As interpreted by *The Age*, the Baillieu government has received a 'humiliating rebuff' to its alpine cattle grazing trial. The scientist handpicked to investigate its effect on bushfires refused to take part. In the latest criticism of the trial, University of Sydney forest ecologist Professor **Mark Adams** told the state government he would not become involved while there were flaws in its experimental design and management. Adams, dean of agriculture University of Sydney, was named in January as the leader of the government's grazing research program and had not visited



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the grazing areas or signed a contract to run the research.

The Department of Sustainability and Environment website had claimed Adams would start work on the trial later this year. Professor Adams told *The Age* that he was disappointed about how his involvement in the trial had been portrayed. He said it would have been 'very helpful' if the government had spent more time designing the research before releasing cattle in the park, including how to measure the animals' impact.

Victorian National Parks Association spokesman **Phil Ingamells** told *The Age* that the rejection of the first three months of the trial by the scientist named to lead it was further evidence it had been politically motivated. 'It is just another indication that the government got this very wrong,' he said. He called for creation of an independent scientific body to look at how to reduce bushfire risk, based on the recommendations of the Black Saturday Bushfires Royal Commission.

The cattle have now been moved out of the High Country for winter, as one does, which does coincide with the federal government's ultimatum. Await the next season to see which government wins!

Won't cop out on promise

The Age said **Ted Baillieu's** government would spend \$6 million in police recruitment advertising, to keep its election promise of 1,700 more officers.

Sad story

At the end of March, both *The Age* and the *Herald Sun* ran the result of the West Gate Bridge murder trial as their cover. **Arthur Phillip Freeman**, who threw his four-year-old daughter to her death from the West Gate Bridge, was convicted of her murder. A jury of five men and seven women deliberated for five days before reaching the verdict, after struggling to determine whether or not Freeman was clinically insane at the time.

JUSTICE

Rapke on rape

Jeremy Rapke QC asked the Court of Appeal to introduce five categories of rape and a sliding scale of penalties to properly reflect the crimes' seriousness. The *Herald Sun* reported that the Director of Public Prosecutions' submission to a full Bench of five judges said 13 of the 56 rape sentences imposed in Victoria in 2009 were inadequate. The average sentence for rape between 1999 and 2008 was just over five years.

Workplace bullying ruling

The conviction of co-workers found guilty of driving a teenage waitress to suicide was covered by *The Age*. Following the ruling, the state government introduced tougher laws against workplace bullying.

That's the ticket, Ted!

A third page article in the *Herald Sun* broke the shocking news that Premier **Ted Baillieu** had been nabbed with a parking ticket in Brighton. An embarrassed Baillieu admitted to forgetting to feed the meter, when swimming on a Sunday morning!

It's on the way

Victoria's first corruption-busting agency will be a new commission with sweeping powers to investigate alleged corruption and misconduct by cabinet ministers and their staff, police, councilors, the judiciary and others in public service. *The Age* reports that an international firm has begun searching for a suitable commissioner, who will have the powers to tap phones and conduct covert surveillance. Asked by *The Sunday Age* how soon the commission would be fully operational, Crime Prevention Minister **Andrew McIntosh** said 'Work on the bill for the establishment of the Independent Broad-based Anti-corruption Commission is well advanced. The legislation will be introduced into Parliament this year. The Baillieu government is determined to ensure that Victoria's integrity bodies operate in line with world's best practice. The government has repeatedly made clear that IBAC will be established in 2011.'

Liberal insiders reportedly told *The Age* that the delay in the agency's creation is in part due to the time it has taken to obtain Commonwealth approval for telephone intercept powers, a matter which the government says is still being 'co-operatively' worked through between the Department of Justice and the federal government. The *Herald Sun* reported that Victoria's first independent anti-corruption commission, comprising of 300 investigators, has a start date still undecided.

Crime Prevention Minister **Andrew McIntosh** said the commission would be given unprecedented manpower, funding and the right to spy on public servants. The commission was also expected to work with an esteemed legal team consisting of four former judges and legal experts designed to develop groundbreaking anti-corruption legislation. In response to the news, **Peter Faris QC** wrote an opinion article in the *Herald Sun* contending that the commission is a great idea, but must have sweeping powers to be effective.

Camp X-ray

A full-body scanner will reportedly be installed in Victoria's largest women's jail within months. *The Age* said prison authorities decided on the move as they grappled with the problem of drug smuggling. The new X-ray machine will be shipped from the Netherlands and tested at the Dame Phyllis Frost Centre, amid ongoing concern that illicit drugs are entering the prison in high volumes, despite repeated attempts to tighten security.

Bad cop, bad cop

A front-page article in the *Herald Sun* reported that police officers in Victoria are breaking the law at a rate of more than one a week for a range of serious crimes, including assaults, sex attacks, thefts, threats to kill, burglary, child pornography and drug offences. The exclusive story also showed that an average of four officers each week fail to do their duty, with over 2,000 public complaints being proven over an eight-year period, and \$15 million being paid to suspended officers in that time.

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ALP won't hack that

The *Herald Sun* reported, seemingly with some satisfaction, that rival paper *The Age* was likely to face legal action from the ALP after it was accused of hacking into the political party's IT systems during last year's federal election. A database containing the names, addresses, phone numbers and marital status of every Victorian was accessed.

A-Hoy there conman

On the front page of the March 23 issue of *The Age* it was announced that flamboyant Geelong entrepreneur, 58-year-old Graeme Hoy, would spend at least the next nine years in jail. Hoy conned 'scores' of people out of tens of millions of dollars on the bogus promise of sky-high returns. The sentence is reported by *The Age* to be one of the heaviest ever handed down for fraud in Victoria – 13 years and nine months.



Anton Mayer of LeadWest. Source: ABC.

trying to get a say on behalf of a booming urban sprawl. Its members include Victoria University, the Western Bulldogs and five local councils. Among those councils is Wyndham, which new figures show added 12,600 new residents last year. Mayer told *The Age* that the biggest pressure on the suburbs was transport, with roads bursting with cars, and trains overflowing with passengers.

Melbourne cleaning up

Melbourne City Council is reaping more than \$10 million a year from Sydney's Council in fees for municipal cleaning services. The *Herald Sun* revealed that the City of Sydney has paid \$33 million, over the past three years, to a company owned by its Melbourne counterpart. The company, Citywide Service Solutions Pty Ltd, has three lucrative outdoor magnets contracts with the Sydney Council, including one worth \$16.2 million to maintain the city's 250 parks, gardens, sports fields and open spaces. Other contracts include graffiti removal and tree-logging.

Our Heritage

The *Melbourne Times* announced new additions to the Victorian Heritage Register. Melbourne's

Comedy Theatre in Exhibition Street, the Black Eagle Hotel in Lonsdale Street, the former Commonwealth Bank in Bourke Street, and the former Oddfellows Hotel in Little Lonsdale Street were all added to the register.

Cart before the horse

Horse-drawn carriage operators expressed fears in the *Melbourne Leader* that they were being shunted out of the CBD by increasing Melbourne Council red tape and the redevelopment of Swanston Street. *The Age* said that the council reviewed a draft Street Activity Policy at its meeting in April. The draft reportedly proposes new restrictions on buskers, fundraisers, spruikers and horse drawn carriages. Carriage operators said the proposed guidelines for their line of business - including introducing a tender process, a cap of three carriages per operator and a compulsory fee - would hurt the industry. Council chief executive **Kathy Alexander** said the tender process was to ensure operators met standards for safety, animal welfare, city amenity, presentation and customer service. A council survey of 246 respondents found 80 per cent thought horse-drawn carriages added to a vibrant atmosphere in the city, but only 25 per cent thought they should be allowed in Swanston Street. Under the council's \$25.6 million plan to reshape Swanston Street and banish most traffic except trams and bikes by the end of 2012, the number of carriages based in the street would be cut to six.

EVENTS

Grand Prix

Australian **Mark Webber** came fifth at the Australian Grand Prix, with Red Bull team mate **Sebastian Vettel** winning comfortably. Melbourne's Grand Prix contract expires in 2015. Australian Grand Prix chairman **Ron Walker** told *Autosport* magazine that the corporation could look to an Avalon track to secure the event for Melbourne in the future. Formula One boss **Bernie Ecclestone** hinted that a permanent track could help Melbourne keep the Grand Prix, rather than have to drag it off to New York or somewhere. **David Fox**, son of trucking magnate **Lindsay Fox**, supported the proposal to build a track on his family's huge property holdings in Avalon.

Queen's day at the races

The Queen may visit Victoria as part of her Australian tour in October this year. This prompted the *Herald Sun* to speculate that Elizabeth II may attend the 151st Melbourne Cup. The Queen will travel to Australia for the 16th time, in order to attend the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting in Perth from October 28 to 30.

MELBOURNE

A throne fit for a king

The *Herald Sun* says a new loo in Melbourne may be the most expensive in Australia. The single public toilet is a high-tech, self-cleaning cubicle on Flinders Street, costing \$173,400 to buy and \$280,000 to install and connect to the public sewerage system. Lord Mayor **Robert Doyle** said he was 'angry and embarrassed' by the cost.

Population explosion

New figures from the Bureau of Statistics showed that Melbourne's outer suburbs are growing faster than any other area in Australia. Melbourne is set to surpass Sydney as Australia's most populous city by 2028.

West faces test

LeadWest is a lobby group for the western suburbs headed by **Anton Mayer** and

Myer reopening

The *Herald Sun* covered the official opening of Myer's Bourke Street store after four years and \$300 million of renovations. The guest-list was a 550-strong showing of who's who in Melbourne.

Busy weekend

The Melbourne International Comedy Festival and the Melbourne International Flower & Garden Show both opened on the first weekend of April.

Earth Hour

Earth Hour was held on Saturday, March 26 at 8.30 pm. The event, begun in Sydney, has become an international phenomenon, with people all over the world turning off their lights for an hour in support of climate change awareness. However, the Melbourne Arts Centre spire experienced technical difficulties and stayed lit until 9.08 pm.

Anzac Day notice

The Victorian Government ran an advertising campaign reminding all citizens that Anzac Day celebrations will take place on Monday April 25 as per usual, despite the fact that the Anzac Day public holiday is officially on April 26 because of a clash with the Easter holidays. The traditional shop trading restrictions will apply on the 25th until 1:00pm. So Friday is off, and also Monday and Tuesday.

It's Waltzing Mathilda with a Danish twist

The *Herald Sun* reported that **Princess Mary** of Denmark's Australian heritage was honoured with the naming of one of her newborn twins. The child's fourth name is Mathilda, the Danish version of the Australian name made famous in **Banjo Paterson's** *Waltzing Matilda*.

Tutankhamun's revival

The University of Melbourne advertised a series of public lectures covering Ancient Egypt that corresponded with the Tutankhamun exhibition at the Melbourne Museum. Details can be found on the Museum Victoria website. www.museumvictoria.com.au

PLANNING & BUILDING

VicUrban speed bump

The *Herald Sun* reported that business and residents in Dandenong and Shepparton had joined a chorus of Victorians angry with state urban developer VicUrban. The organisation, which is responsible for urban renewal, subdivision and rejuvenation projects throughout Victoria, faced claims that its slow progress is leaving thousands of Victorians in limbo. The *Sunday Herald Sun* revealed the heads of some of Melbourne's most powerful companies – including the National Australia Bank, ANZ and Etihad Stadium – were fed up with the congested and messy state of Docklands under VicUrban's control.

A design gunn

Docklands' principal design advisor, architect Graeme Gunn, was awarded the Australian Institute of Architects' highest accolade, the Gold Medal. *The Age* covered the event, held in Perth, where the jury described Gunn's work as principal architect at VicUrban as having a 'transformative impact'. Gunn responded to criticism of the Docklands on the night, and was quoted by *The Age*. He said 'to get the interest into the street means you've got to break up those larger sites to the point where they do have a separate identity. That's when you get to the interaction and the vitality and a lot of fun. That's going to take another 10 years... In hindsight, Docklands would not have released such big blocks'.

ANZ Docklands

ANZ Centre was named the Victorian Development of the Year at the Property Council's 2011 Innovation and Excellence Awards. The Collins Street building was designed by Hassell and Lend Lease Design, and built by Bovis Lend Lease. It is the largest single-tenanted commercial building in Australia with about 86,000 square metres of net lettable area, accommodating 6500 staff. An accredited six-star Green Star building, the ANZ headquarters includes environmental

features such as solar power, wind turbines, tri-generation, blackwater recycling, a green roof, river cooling and under floor air-conditioning. Property Council of Australia Victorian executive director **Jennifer Cunich** told *The Age Business Day* that the ANZ Centre represented 'a new generation of high quality building and development'. 'ANZ Centre demonstrates the marriage of innovative design and truly sustainable features which have set a global environmental and social sustainability benchmark,' she said.

Demolition approved

The Age reported that the Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal approved the demolition of the heritage-protected 1975 Elizabeth Towers Hotel in Parkville. Melbourne University will replace the building with a \$210 million medical research centre, specialising in influenza pandemics. The decision was criticised by Melbourne City Council's planning committee chairman, **Peter Clarke**. He was quoted in *The Age* as saying the decision showed that 'VCAT is now seen to be barracking for development at all cost, that heritage has diminished value and that it calls into question the role of VCAT going forward for looking at heritage buildings and having the appropriate expertise available on their panels'.

Project ahoj

According to *The Age*, more than three months after taking office, the Coalition still had not decided the fate of the \$300 million Epping wholesale fruit and vegetable market, which is already under construction. Premier **Ted Baillieu** also had not guaranteed the future of the \$5 billion regional rail project. In Caroline Springs, a road had reportedly been planned as a link to where a new \$55 million railway station was intended to go, but would no longer be built. Also shelved is a \$4 million plan to deal with Hoddle Street congestion.

Jolimont off the rails

A plan to develop the Jolimont rail yards into a raised deck-like area, joining Melbourne's art and sporting precincts, has stalled. Senior




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government sources told *The Age* that Major Projects Victoria had been instructed to revise the plan. Premier **Baillieu** had ridiculed the proposed project while opposition leader last year.

Zip

The Baillieu government has fast-tracked a \$1 billion development of the old Bradmill factory site in Yarraville. The *Herald Sun* reported that about 1,000 homes, a supermarket, a library and a medical centre will be built on the 26-hectare Yarraville Gardens Estate, eight kilometres from the CBD. The development is bounded by Francis Street, Mclvor Reserve, the West Gate Freeway and the Newport goods rail line. Planning Minister **Matthew Guy** told the *Herald Sun* that he had rezoned the project after delays under the Brumby government.

Fisherman's Bend

The Age was the first paper to report a Baillieu government plan for a new suburb around Fisherman's Bend near the Westgate Bridge. Planning Minister **Matthew Guy** exclusively told *The Age* that he would establish an Urban Renewal Authority in the next four months to oversee a 20-to-30-year plan for the 200 hectare light industrial area. He said it would be 'a suburb of high-density accommodation that is unlike anywhere we've seen in Australia,' also claiming it would be the countries 'first inner-city growth corridor'. The project fits in with the government's stated policy of refocusing some urban growth from Melbourne's fringes to its heart. State-owned developer VicUrban is to be heavily involved in implementing the government's plans.

E-Gate plan swings open

According to *The Age*, the Baillieu government is considering plans for a carbon-neutral, high-density suburb of 12,000 on Footscray Road, in West Melbourne. It would become Victoria's largest urban development since Docklands. Reportedly, work to turn old rail yards into a \$6 billion-plus residential area known as E-Gate could begin as early as 2014. Major Projects Minister **Denis Naphine** said work would begin on the 20-hectare E-Gate site before a bigger project on land, zoned as light industrial, at Fisherman's Bend near the West Gate Bridge.

Richmond renovation

The *Herald Sun* announced that a multi-million-dollar revamp of Richmond station would be one of the first projects for the new Urban Renewal Authority. Preliminary plans for a 20-storey residential and office tower above the station have been drawn up. Planning Minister **Matthew Guy** said the station was 'run down' and ripe for regeneration. He said the project would be a godsend for both football fans and locals fed up with the difficulty of crossing Punt Road and Brunton Avenue.

Suburban high-rise

The Age revealed a plan to build more than 2000 apartments and townhouses at the

Moonee Valley racecourse including for high-rise towers. The planned towers, some as high as 20 stories, was expected to be announced officially in by the end of April. The construction will occur in existing car parks, with all parking at the track that holds the Cox plate to be moved to the centre of the course. According to *The Age*, The Moonee Valley club had already briefed planning Minister **Matthew Guy** and racing Minister **Denis Naphine** on the plan. Guy told *The Age* that while he was not responsible for approving the master plan, he was 'supportive of inner-city urban renewal on sites such as this'. Flemington and Caulfield, both with major rail lines, are also reportedly keen to unlock their abundant land for residential development.

Hells Angels' construction bid

An *Age* investigation revealed that the Hells Angels tried to extort almost \$1 million from one of Australia's biggest construction companies during a dispute featuring Melbourne

underworld bosses. Hells Angels boss, **Peter 'Skitzo' Hewat** threatened a senior Hansen and Yuncken manager. The paper claimed that the dispute exposed the continuing presence of corruption in Victoria's building industry, as well as the failure of state and federal agencies to combat it. Apparently, it also raised questions about the role of a high-ranking building union official who intervened in the dispute alongside a 'fixer' for the Hells Angels.

Perfect de-fence against jumpers

The anti-suicide fences erected on the West Gate Bridge in 2009 have been credited with an 85 per cent decline in jumpers, the *Herald Sun* reported. Coroner **Paresa Spanos'** report also showed that there had been no evidence suggesting that suicides had been moved to other locations.

The fences had first been suggested in 2004, but were only implemented after the horrific murder of **Darcey Freeman**, the four year-old-girl who was thrown off the bridge by her father in 2009.

House prices finally drop

Melbourne's property bubble finally seemed to burst, with an article in the *Herald Sun* reporting that median house prices in the Victorian capital had dropped \$36,000 in three months. **Enzo Raimondo**, chief executive of the Real Estate Institute of Victoria, said that it was normal for prices to drop at the start of the year, but not to this extent, indicating that the market had turned after its incredible growth period. The market's staggering 20 per cent growth in 2010 had been caused mostly by the sting of seven consecutive interest rate rises. According to a report by Westpac and the Melbourne Institute, consumer expectations for house price growth had also plummeted.

Home to Gippsland

The Age said La Trobe City Council was planning the largest residential land release package in Gippsland since World War II to address a critical shortage in an area enjoying strong population and jobs growth. The state government rezoned more than 230 hectares for residential development in March and the council has asked for a further 574 hectares for housing. Most is farmland on the edge of the Latrobe Valley's major towns Traralgon, Morwell, Moe, Newborough and Churchill. If Planning Minister **Matthew Guy** agrees, the land could generate between 8,055 and 12,090 residential lots.

Roux projects halt

Hotel developer **Bernard Roux**, who gained the support of **John Brumby** and the Victorian government for his dream of building a Hilton resort in the Yarra Valley, has fallen from a life of luxury and success to bankruptcy, *The Age* reported. It was also claimed that Roux sought money for a \$100 million residential tower in Frankston that was never going to be built.

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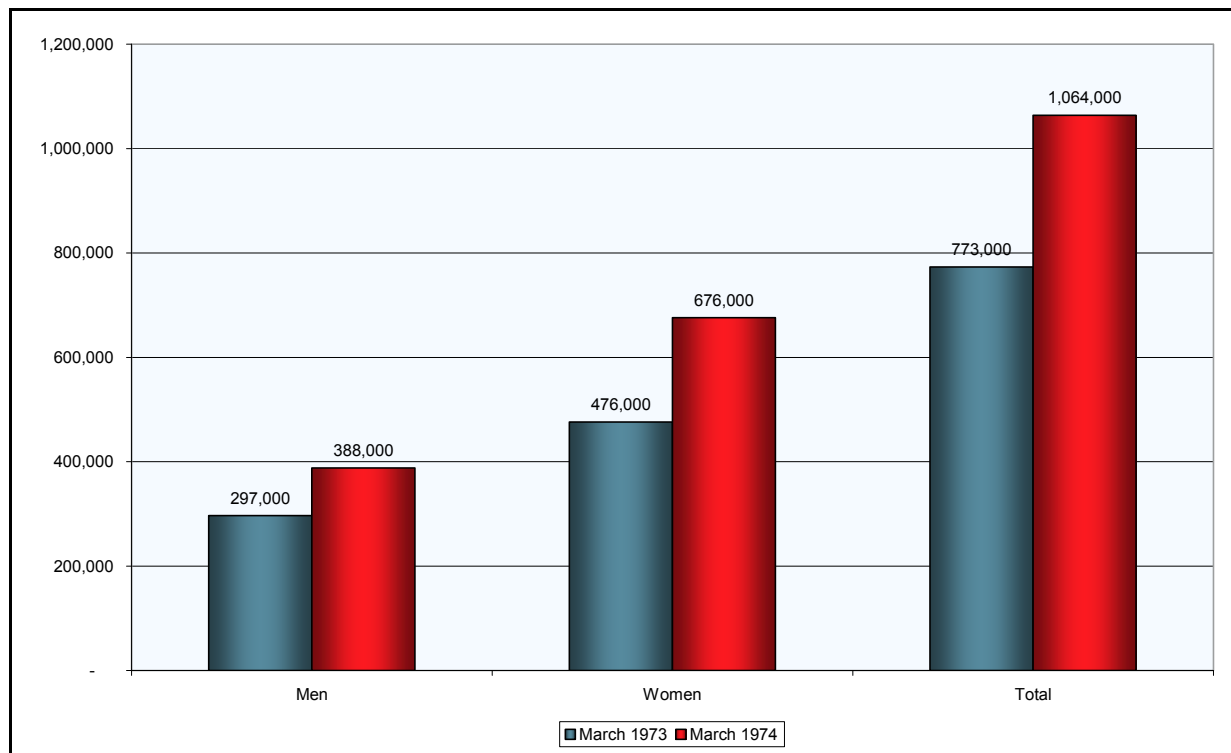
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Source: Roy Morgan Research October 1972 to March 1973 and October 1973 to March 1974.

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IMAGE OF PROFESSIONS SURVEY 2011:
POLICE NOW AT HIGHEST EVER RATING FOR ETHICS & HONESTY

In the annual **Roy Morgan Image of Professions** survey Australian **Police** (69%, up 7%) are at their highest rating in over 35 years of the survey.

A large majority, 90% (up 1% in a year) of Australians aged 14 and over rate **Nurses** as the most ethical and honest profession – the 17th year in a row since **Nurses** were first included on the survey in 1994.

Car Salesmen (3%, down 2%) were once again rated the least ethical and honest Profession – a position they have held for over 30 years.

Several other professions also gained record high ratings for ethics and honesty in 2011, including **Doctors** (87%, up 8%), **Dentists** (76%, up 8%), **High Court Judges** (75%, up 12%) and **State Supreme Court Judges** (75%, up 11%).

Other professions to rate highly include **Pharmacists** (87%, up 2%), **School teachers** (76%, up 3%), **Engineers** (71%, up 2%) and **University lecturers** (61%, up 1%).

Professions to record strong rises included **Public opinion pollsters** (34%, up 7%), **Ministers of religion** (51%, up 7%), **Bank Managers** (40%, up 7%), **Lawyers** (38%, up 6%) and **Directors of Public Companies** (24%, up 5%).

Car Salesmen (3%, down 2%), **Advertising people** (5%, down 3%) and **Real Estate Agents** (7%, down 3%) are once again the lowest ranked of Professions.

Interestingly, **Federal MPs** (14%, down 2%) and **State MPs** (12%, down 4%) both recorded their lowest ratings for ethics and honesty since October 2000 – only months after the introduction of the GST.

Of all 30 professions surveyed in 2010 & 2011 the majority, 21 professions, rose over the year, eight saw decline while only one profession, **Newspaper Journalists** (11%) was unchanged.

Michele Levine says:

“Roy Morgan’s annual Image of Professions survey for 2011 shows most professions improved their standing in the community for ethics and honesty over the past year as Australia emerged from the uncertainties provided by the worst part of the Global Financial Crisis.

*“The sharp rise in the image of **Police** may be in part explained by the number of law-enforcement observational series on our television screens which clearly resonate with viewers. And on Tuesday (April 26, 2011) we see Channel Nine launch the latest in this genre. ‘**AFP**’ will provide viewers with a look at the work of the Australian Federal Police.*

*“**Nurses** (90%, up 1%) were once again rated the most ethical and honest profession – the 17th year in a row. Also rating strongly and scoring new highs were the closely related medical professions of **Doctors** (87%, up 8%) and **Dentists** (76%, up 8%).*

*“Also rising strongly this year to new highs were both **High Court Judges** (75%, up 12%) and **State Supreme Court Judges** (75%, up 11%) and also **Police** (69%, up 7%).*

*“At the other end of the scale **Real Estate Agents** (7%, down 3%) and **Advertising people** (5%, down 3%) both recorded new lows and only finished above the perennially lowest ranked profession – **Car Salesman** (3%, down 2%). **Car Salesman** have now ranked as the least ethical and honest profession for the past 30 years.”*

These are the main findings of a Roy Morgan telephone survey conducted in late March on the nights of March 22-24, 2011, with 638 Australian men and women aged 14 and over.

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Michele Levine:	Office + 61 3 9224 5215	Mobile +61 411 129 093

"Very high" or "High" ratings for Ethics and Honesty:

All Australians 14+

*Not included in poll

Occupations	'83	'84	'85	'86	'87	'88	'89	'90	'91	'92	'93	'94	'95	'96	'97	'98	'99	'00	'01	'02	'03	'04	'05	'07	'08	'09	'10	'11	Dif	
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	
1 Nurses	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	86	86	87	86	88	89	88	90	90	94	90	89	91	89	89	90	+1		
2 Doctors	64	64	64	63	65	67	62	70	69	69	65	66	69	72	66	69	74	71	75	80	80	80	80	80	81	79	82	79	+8	
3 Pharmacists	*	*	*	*	*	76	76	72	76	79	78	78	79	80	80	80	86	83	83	89	87	86	84	85	86	84	85	87	+2	
4 Dentists	61	62	65	63	65	68	65	62	64	66	62	60	65	65	60	61	65	64	65	67	71	71	67	69	70	69	68	76	+8	
5 School teachers	55	55	54	57	56	55	57	61	59	62	61	65	69	68	64	71	71	70	74	79	79	77	74	78	76	73	76	76	+3	
6 High Court Judges	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	61	60	63	65	71	63	64	67	66	67	63	75	+12	
7 State Supreme Court Judges	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	61	61	61	64	66	72	65	65	68	67	68	64	75	+11	
8 Engineers	53	53	53	56	56	56	56	55	57	58	56	57	59	56	54	57	57	59	64	67	69	69	68	71	72	69	69	71	+2	
9 Police	53	53	53	56	56	53	53	54	54	53	54	56	59	55	60	62	62	58	65	64	64	65	65	66	65	62	69	69	+7	
10 University lecturers	52	51	51	51	51	53	52	53	56	55	53	54	52	50	52	57	56	54	64	66	64	66	64	67	67	61	60	61	+1	
11 Accountants	47	48	47	50	50	47	46	47	46	47	46	42	45	46	43	43	49	45	51	45	50	51	50	48	54	51	50	54	+4	
12 Ministers of Religion	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	59	55	56	58	56	54	48	48	53	52	51	50	45	44	51	+7	
13 Bank Managers	62	61	58	60	58	54	50	49	40	44	41	37	39	37	32	36	33	26	30	29	35	35	35	33	33	33	33	40	+7	
14 Lawyers	41	44	41	39	41	41	41	37	38	34	32	30	32	29	26	34	29	32	30	31	33	33	32	36	35	30	32	38	+6	
15 Public opinion pollsters	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	34	33	29	30	35	35	27	29	38	31	31	27	29	23	27	34	+7	
16 Public servants	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	30	29	28	28	30	+2
17 Financial planners	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	25	25	28	+3
18 Directors of Public Companies	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	20	18	20	17	18	17	20	18	17	16	17	23	18	21	22	17	19	24	+5
19 Union leaders	8	6	6	5	7	7	9	8	7	8	9	9	10	9	12	13	11	12	14	11	15	17	19	16	17	14	15	18	+3	
20 Business Executives	18	22	19	23	24	21	20	19	15	17	16	17	17	17	16	18	22	17	19	17	19	23	15	18	21	16	16	18	+2	
21 Talk-back radio announcers	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	18	14	17	17	21	17	19	17	18	15	19	17	-2	
22 Stock brokers	*	*	*	19	20	18	18	15	14	15	15	15	13	16	15	15	19	16	18	14	17	19	14	17	18	15	12	14	+2	
23 TV Reporters	*	*	*	*	*	16	17	15	14	15	16	13	12	11	12	14	12	18	18	17	19	17	19	17	13	16	14	16	14	-2
24 Federal MPs	19	19	13	16	13	14	15	13	10	10	11	10	9	13	9	7	13	11	16	16	17	20	15	16	23	19	16	14	-2	
25 Insurance brokers	*	*	*	13	15	13	13	12	10	12	10	11	10	9	12	11	14	11	14	10	15	15	13	11	15	11	14	12	-2	
26 State MPs	20	17	14	17	12	14	15	11	10	10	10	11	10	12	9	7	13	12	14	17	17	19	13	16	20	18	16	12	-4	
27 Newspaper Journalists	11	11	11	12	11	11	9	10	8	7	8	8	8	7	7	9	9	7	13	9	9	12	12	11	12	14	9	11	11	-
28 Real Estate Agents	11	9	10	10	11	11	11	11	9	9	10	9	11	10	10	8	11	10	8	8	11	10	10	9	10	10	10	7	-3	
29 Advertising people	9	9	8	11	11	8	9	7	8	9	9	8	10	7	8	7	9	10	8	10	10	13	12	10	9	9	6	8	5	-3
30 Car Salesmen	3	3	3	3	3	4	4	4	4	4	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	2	3	3	2	3	3	4	4	3	3	3	-2

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A.B.N. 91 007 092 944
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Article No. 1328
Available on Website: www.roymorgan.com
On April 21, 2011
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ROY MORGAN RESEARCH SET TO LAUNCH IN INDIA

As the sophistication and success of India's best marketers grows, so does the demand for the highest standard of market research to facilitate informed decision-making, improve marketing cost-effectiveness.

After announcing today the immediate launch in India of their world-renowned Single Source survey, Roy Morgan Research will be signing up 'Foundation Subscribers' to their study from early May.

As the world's largest study of its kind, the annual sample size will be around 260,000 respondents from all across the country. The survey will encompass the attitudes and values, habits and beliefs, political and social opinions of Indians from all socio-economic strata. But it is the brand preference and consumer behaviour insights spanning 15 major industries, more than 150 product and service categories, over 1500 brands that will be invaluable knowledge from a commercial perspective.

The large sample will enable marketers to drill down into specific product categories and target groups while facilitating comparisons across metropolitan, other urban regions and rural India.

For decades, Roy Morgan Single Source has been the market research *gold standard* in Australia. Successfully adapted for Asia, it has been embraced in Indonesia for 5 years now by leading banks, telcos, automotive, FMCG marketers and their advertising agencies.

Summing up the Roy Morgan Single Source product, one subscriber recently said, "it's easily the most valuable strategic planning tool available to marketers today, for discovering hidden opportunities, identifying the most lucrative targets, fine-tuning the most cost-effective advertising campaigns and predicting tomorrow's potential."

Roy Morgan India will conduct the first quarter's fieldwork during July-September and deliver the first database to clients in November. Interviews will continue in the field uninterrupted, with national updates available to subscribers every 90 days, delivered in Roy Morgan's proprietary 'Asteroid' software.

Michele Levine, CEO of Roy Morgan Research says:

"Roy Morgan Research has been in business since 1941 making us one of the oldest research companies in the world. We have a history of innovation and investment in our own new products and new ways of thinking. We are now keen to launch our Single Source survey in India without any further delay. Roy Morgan appreciates the valuable insights gained from discussions with advertisers, agencies and the media in India over the last few years. Those discussions have helped us understand the market's idiosyncrasies and unique needs. We will be contracting directly with each client company, as we do in all the other countries in which we operate. As you might expect, the strongest expressions of interest so far are from larger firms and early movers."

For questions or clarifications, call:

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

ADDRESS AT THE INAUGURATION OF THE HONOURABLE ALEX CHERNOV, AO, QC, AS THE 28TH GOVERNOR OF VICTORIA

The Honourable Ted Baillieu, Premier of Victoria, and Mrs Robyn Baillieu
The Honourable Chief Justice, Marilyn Warren, Lieutenant Governor of Victoria
Former Governors-General:

The Rt Hon Sir Zelman Cowen and Lady Cowen

The Rt Hon Sir Ninian Stephen and Lady Stephen

The Rt Rev Dr Peter Hollingworth and Mrs Ann Hollingworth

Mrs Lesley McGarvie

The former Governor of Victoria, the Hon Sir James Gobbo and Lady Gobbo

The Hon John Cain, former Premier of Victoria, and Mrs Nancye Cain

The Rt Hon Malcolm Fraser, former Prime Minister of Australia

The Leader of the Opposition, Mr Daniel Andrews

Other distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen.

I join others in acknowledging the traditional owners of the land, the Wurundjeri People of the Kulin Nations, and pay my respects to their elders both past and present.

It is a great honour to have been appointed the 28th Governor of this State, representing Her Majesty, the Queen of Australia. I am conscious of the trust that has been bestowed on me, and the heavy responsibilities of the office.

The role of Governor, which I gladly

accept, has two broad parts. The primary role is the discharging of the legal and constitutional duties associated with the office. My professional background will, I hope, be a useful foundation for this task.

The other very important role of the Governor is facilitating the advancement of the life and interests of this great State, in its many aspects. It will involve, amongst other activities, contributing to the economic social and cultural progress of the State and its citizens, not just in Melbourne but throughout Victoria. I look forward to serving the Victorian community as Governor in both areas.

This is a great State, rich in history and the arts, schooling and higher education, centres of excellence and research institutes, industries and agriculture, and other fields of endeavour. It is also a State that practises and promotes harmony amongst all groups in its community, whether they are descendents of the original inhabitants of our land, or of early settlers from the United Kingdom and other European countries, or more recent arrivals, many of whom have come here in difficult circumstances.

Just as my parents have found, each wave of settlers has been made welcome here, and each has made a positive contribution



to our community. Importantly, the cultural differences between the various groups have not hindered their joining together in progressing towards becoming one Australian people who respect the right of others to seek, within that framework, to fulfil their lives in ways that accord with their respective cultural and spiritual values.

And I remain fortunate in the support I have from Elizabeth in my new role. We are both conscious of the responsibilities of this office and of the distinguished service performed by our predecessors, noting the significant contribution made by our immediate predecessors, Professor David de Kretser and Mrs Jan de Kretser.

May I thank you all for the honour you do Elizabeth and me by your presence here today.

Alex Chernov

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LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Save the trees

Yarra Council continued its battle against strict new pruning regulations that, it claimed, would ruin streetscapes and drive down property values. Yarra Mayor **Alison Clarke** told the *Melbourne Leader* that up to 1,000 mature trees in the municipality would have to be 'drastically cut back or even removed' under the terms of the crackdown, announced by Energy Safe Victoria last year to reduce fire hazards and blackout risks. Clarke said the pruning would destroy habitat, make the streets hotter and less pedestrian-friendly and cost ratepayers about \$2 million over the next two years. ESV spokesman **David Guthrie-Jones** said the guidelines had been in place since 1999 but had been roundly ignored by councils. He said Yarra Council would not get a 'universal exemption', but he promised an individual risk assessment to try to address the council's concerns.

Gas compensation

The *Herald Sun* reported that a \$32.5 million settlement to the 750 homeowners of the Brookland Greens estate in Cranbourne was reached by the plaintiffs of a class-action, the City of Casey and the Environmental Protection Agency. Casey paid \$13.5 million of the settlement and the EPA \$10 million. Law firm Slater and Gordon received \$6 million in fees. However, the City of Casey continued legal action against nine other parties over advice it was given in 2002 to approve development on the site. Methane gas leaked at the site from a disused landfill dump in August 2008. An emergency was declared and 30 families were evacuated until the source of the leak was shut down.

Bottle-oh

According to a *Herald Sun* report, communities have been handed greater powers to block the

opening of new bottle shops. All grog shops and big buying liquor stores are now forced to apply to the local council for planning permission, under the new amendments made to the planning laws. Previously, operators had only needed to get a building certificate. In the past five years, 608 new bottle shops opened across Victoria, with the biggest growth in the poorer outer suburbs. Alcohol Policy Coalition spokesman **Michael Livingston** told the *Herald Sun* that the change to the planning laws was a great first step but more must be done to arrest the growth of outdoor bottle shops in the outer suburbs.

Smokers fuming

Yarra traders have hit out at a proposal to ban smoking in outdoor dining areas in some of Melbourne's most popular entertainment strips, including Brunswick Street, Smith Street and Bridge Road. As first reported by the *Melbourne Leader* in early March, Yarra councillors voted to consider wide-ranging bans in outdoor dining areas in restaurants and cafes; parks and reserves; at all council-run or council-sponsored events; sports and recreation facilities on council land; playgrounds; and, near the entrances of council-owned and managed buildings. Yarra would become the first council to ban smoking in all outdoor dining areas.

Mayor **Alison Clarke** said the council would test the level of community support for the bans before a decision was made later this year. 'Lung cancer is the second-highest cause of avoidable deaths in Yarra, so the fight against smoking-related illnesses still has a fair way to go,' Clarke told the *Melbourne Leader*. Cancer Council Victoria research showed 71 per cent of Victorians supported a ban in outdoor dining areas, with Quit executive director **Fiona Sharkie** saying it would drive down smoking rates and reduce the health toll.

But the president of the Smith Street Business Association, **Joe Arcuri**, said traders would be 'appalled and up in arms' if the dining bans were introduced. 'A lot of people committed a lot of money when the indoor smoking ban came in to build outdoor areas. To pull the plug on them now is ridiculous,' Arcuri said.

Yarra Council Rezone

It was advertised that an Electoral Representation Review of the Yarra Council district would be undertaken by the Victorian Electoral Commission. The review aims to achieve fair and equitable electoral representation for voters at the Council's general election. The VEC claims to have considered a range of information, including comments provided by public submissions, to form preferred options contained in the Preliminary Report. The preferred option given, was for nine councillors to be elected from three council wards, with minor changes to the current boundaries. The alternative given by the VEC was for seven councillors to be elected from two three-councillor wards and one single councillor ward. The one council ward would involve rezoning to create a smaller Merri ward from Clifton Hill to Alphington.

SPORT

Fix match fixing

The AFL has backed calls for up to a 10-year jail term for match fixers. *The Age* revealed that the AFL looks at players' banking and foreign records to check for unexplained wealth.

Concussion compensation

It was revealed by *The Age* that two retired AFL players had previously won financial compensation from their former clubs after their careers were ended by concussion.

Recently retired Melbourne player **Daniel Bell** was planing a compensation claim after sustaining career-ending head injuries.

Friday night lights

The Age believes that Seven, Ten, and Foxtel are close to completing a new five year agreement with the league to lock in exclusive AFL television rights for the start of next year. The paper reported that Seven was close to a compromise with the league to make all Friday night telecasts live. Also, under the landmark billion-dollar deal, pay TV operator Foxtel would get to show the finals live.

Jumps racing faces hurdle

On the first day of horse jumps season, Gelding Casa Boy broke an elbow just and was put down. According to *The Age*, two others, Chatillion and Olympic Light, fell but were not seriously injured in the first two races yesterday. In all, of the ten horses that raced yesterday, just seven made it around safely. After intense scrutiny following falls and fatalities two years ago, jumps racing again found itself in the spotlight. Racing Minister **Denis Napthine** promised before last year's state election that the Coalition would back jumps racing. *The Age* claims that Warrnamblool is recognised as the hub of jumps racing. Napthine lives nearby.

TOURISM

Chopper ride for prom visitors

In late March, a substantial section of the Darby River bridge on the Road to Tidal River was washed away by flash flooding, stranding visitors in Wilson's Promontory National Park. *The Age* reported that a massive police rescue



From left: Richard Hamilton, Affairs of State research guru; Bernie Finn, MLC; and Alistair Urquhart at the launch of the Football Chart at Parliament House

operation using helicopters was required to airlift almost 400 people from the park after more than 14 inches of rain in a 24-hour period. Parks Victoria hoped to re-open the Tidal River camping ground to a limited number of visitors over Easter, but it said flood-affected cabins would remain shut.

Black Hawk down

The Age reported that a military Black Hawk helicopter was stranded in Moran Reserve, St Kilda, when a part failure meant it couldn't take off after landing in the park. The paper said the helicopter had been taking part in counter-terrorist exercises that occurred throughout March, during which it dramatically buzzed between skyscrapers in Melbourne's CBD.

Archibald finalists come south

The annual exhibition of Archibald Prize finalists visited the TarraWarra Museum of Art in the Yarra Valley. *The Age* said this was the first time in two years that the exhibition had come to Victoria, and would be the paintings' only stop in that state. TarraWarra is a private museum with a focus on showing post-1950s Australian works. It was built by Sussan Corporation founders **Mark and Eva Besen** and run by former Heide director **Maudie Palmer**. Artworks by the 40 finalists in the competition will be on display at the museum from April 16 until June 26.

TRANSPORT

RAIL

Train cancellations

The Age reported that Metro had been quietly cancelling trains in mid-March on the Frankston, Werribee and Pakenham lines, as it struggled to deal with a lack of stabling facilities caused by a recent crash. Passengers reported being thrown from their seats as the X'Trapolis train failed to stop at the end of the Hurstbridge line, and crashed through fencing at Macleod station. *The Age* pointed out that the accident came just two weeks after an empty train crashed through the wall of a

Bendigo Bank in Sandringham.

Myki pruning

According to *The Age*, the total cost of the myki ticketing system could blow out to more than \$1.5 billion. The \$100 to \$150 million increase is due to the cost of extending the life of the old Metcard system until at least March 2012. A report to State Cabinet by senior Treasury and transport bureaucrats is believed by *The Age* to have recommended the government keep myki, but with a reduced rollout in regional Victoria. Premier **Ted Baillieu's** final decision on the embattled project will be made clear when his first budget is handed down on May 3.

Evaders don't pay fare

Research released by Metlink found that fare evasion is increasing on metropolitan networks. Ticket inspectors were expected to crack down at the end of April after it was found that 13 per cent of passengers travel without a ticket. It is estimated that fare evasion costs Victoria \$80 million per year.

Armed guards

Victorian Public Transport Minister **Terry Mulder** told the *Herald Sun* that the government's plan to put armed guards on all railway stations would provide better security for commuters. Eventually 940 Victoria Police Protective Officers would be involved in the program, but only 50 are to be deployed by the end of the year. Human rights lawyers voiced concerns about the use of under-trained guards with guns, and the Baillieu government came under pressure to revise the program. A few issues still to be ironed out, especially training parameters.

Transpolice recruiting off the rails (1)

An exclusive article in *The Age* reported a massive shortfall of transit police on Melbourne's rail network, revealing that on a particular day only 72 officers were rostered to cover the 15 metropolitan train lines, barely a quarter of the 250 who, Victoria Police and the government claimed, were being deployed. The low number contrasted to rail operator Metro's deployment of 250 ticket inspectors as part of their crackdown on fare evasion. The report was a blow for the Baillieu government, which was already facing growing criticism of

its plan to introduce Protective Service Officers at all stations after dark.

Transpolice recruiting off the rails (2)

Armed guards promised by the Baillieu government to boost safety at train stations will be granted police-like powers to apprehend and arrest troublemakers on the rail network. *The Age* said that the new crop of 940 'protective services officers', who will be deployed after 6pm, would be armed with semi-automatic firearms, capsicum sprays and batons. In a move that will alarm civil libertarians and widen tensions with the police union, the government was reported to be preparing to unveil laws that will give the new PSOs 'sufficient capacities and sufficient arrest powers' to deal with alcohol-fuelled violence and antisocial behavior at stations. Police Association secretary **Greg Davies** told *The Age* that he had 'very grave concerns that if the PSOs' powers are expanded, it will make them quasi-police officers, and once you do that, you're on the road to second-tier policing'.

Premium stations dropped

The *Herald Sun* revealed that 20 stations earmarked for premium status would not be upgraded. The station projects that were cancelled include East Richmond, Prahran and Windsor, as well as four stations on the Frankston line in an area considered important to **Ted Baillieu's** victory last election.

Transport going nowhere

A report by Auditor-General **Des Pearson** criticised the management of the Transport Connections Program set up by the Brumby Government. The project provided 32 councils and community groups with money to run local transport services, such as mini-buses, to places that had never had access to public transport. *The Age* said that the program received more than \$40 million in funding, despite little evidence that its projects were making a difference. The Baillieu Government said it planned to continue funding until at least 2014.

Train strain

The *Herald Sun* commented that the State government was under mounting pressure to use in its first budget on May 3 to start making decisions on major infrastructure projects. Since it was elected in November, the Coalition has mothballed or sent for review \$7.7 billion of Labor's infrastructure programs. Projects in jeopardy include the \$5 billion regional rail project, the myki ticketing system, and the Epping wholesale market. Committee for Melbourne chief executive **Andrew McLeod** said the Coalition and Opposition needed to put aside political bickering when it came to major projects. 'We need a 50-year plan that has bipartisan support so that things don't change every time there is a new government,' he said.

Expensive re-branding

Victorians paid \$25 million to erase the Connex brand from Melbourne and replace it with the



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logo of the company's more expensive but poorer performing successor Metro. Figures sought by *The Age* and released by the Baillieu government showed Victorians paid \$20.4 million for stickers and artwork to remove more than 11,000 references to Connex on the city's rail network. However, *The Australian Financial Review* claimed that it was a worthwhile investment in the long-term, as the government now owned the brand.

Regional Rail Link [map of proposed rail]

According to *The Age*, the proposed rail line through Melbourne's western suburbs will take an extra two years to complete. State Transport Minister **Terry Mulder** confirmed to the paper that the Regional Rail Link would go ahead, despite suffering a cost blowout. According to Treasury officials, the project could cost up to \$700 million more than planned.

Trains to get a break

As reported by *The Age*, a major safety upgrade to Melbourne's trains has begun. The installation of emergency brakes was supposed to occur three years ago, following a 2003 derailment in Waterfall, Sydney, which killed seven people. While in opposition, then shadow Transport spokesman **Terry Mulder** used a Freedom of Information request to discover that the upgrade was supposed to have been introduced in June 2008. The new system will automatically stop a train if a driver doesn't perform a regular task such as accelerate or brake for a set period of time. *The Age* said that Melbourne's trains currently have a 'dead man's break' that is supposed to stop a train if a driver becomes incapacitated. However, the 2003 Sydney derailment was caused in part by this systems failure. The replacement is a \$37 million program called the Vigilance Control and Event Recording System. It will be rolled out on the Moneng fleet in July with Siemens and X'Trapolis trains to follow soon after.

Infrastructure investment needed

The CEO of the Victorian Employers' Chamber of Commerce and Infrastructure, **Wayne Kayler-Thomson**, wrote an opinion article in *The Age* calling for continued investment in road and

rail infrastructure to match population growth.

Myki costs continue

The *Herald Sun* revealed that over \$200,000 of Victorian taxpayers' money was being wasted every day as the government continued to deliberate on whether or not the controversial myki ticketing system should be scrapped. The majority of this money was for the continued operation of the Metcard system, which was supposed to be phased out by Easter, but is instead still running at a cost of \$137,000 a day.

Good job

The Minister for Public Transport is seeking suitably qualified and experienced people to be appointed to the Public Transport Access Committee. PTAC is a Ministerial Advisory Committee that has been established to provide strategic advice to the Minister for Public Transport on issues concerning public transport access for older people and people with a disability. As per *The Age*.

ROAD

At last

The Age reported that former consumer watchdog chairman **Allan Fels** will head up a 12-month inquiry into Victoria's taxi sector, beginning in May. Professor Fels is an economist and lawyer, and has previously run reviews on issues such as petrol prices and executive pay. The paper says Melbourne has 4,700 taxis, and a standard taxi licence is worth about \$500,000. Fels thinks this price is too high, and said it 'suggests to me that there must be an above-normal profit'.

License to cab

In the Greater Melbourne Taxi Release, two competitive tenders last year sold 530 taxi licences for cars and vans. A report by *The Age* suggests that this made the State government the biggest player in an industry that it also regulates. The licences were released in two ways; either \$180,000 up-front for a car,

lasting 10 years, or \$28,550 a year for 10 years for a van. The 10-year lifespan allows the State to do it all again in nine years. It made the State government by far the biggest leaser of taxis in Melbourne and created a massive income stream. Announcing the scheme, **Lynne Kosky** said it would 'reduce waiting times and improve passengers' experience'. According to the article, the 'desperates' willing to drive have to work harder for a decreasing pool of money. Operators had to cut costs still further.

As standards fell, demand for taxis also declined. Taxi occupancy rates are reportedly at an all-time low of 27 per cent, which means an average taxi is occupied less than a third of the time. The head of the Victorian Taxi Association, **Neil Sach**, called the scheme a 'disaster', mainly because the federal government's overhaul of migration laws in February 2010, aimed at Indian students, meant there were fewer people to drive considerably more taxis. *The Saturday Age* established that the scheme was substantially driven by the Brumby Treasury as the global financial crisis gripped in 2008. A well-placed State Labor source told the paper 'Treasury was hunting for gaps in the last quarter of 2008. They saw that revenue from stamp duty might fall and they saw this as a way to plug holes in the budget'. Sach said Labor had argued that more licences were needed because the taxi business had expanded. 'But that was completely wrong. The whole industry saw it as a money-raising exercise'.

Road revenue takes its toll

City Link charges \$1.2 million a day from motorists, claimed the *Herald Sun*. Tolls have reportedly increased by almost three times the cost of living since the road was opened in 2000. Tolls have even outstripped the 72 per cent surge in petrol prices over the same period. The Victorian Employers' Chamber of Commerce and Industry said an alternative to City Link's monopoly was well overdue. 'We've long proposed an alternative city bypass not only to reduce reliance on the West Gate Bridge, but also to promote some competition,' a VECCI spokesman told *The Herald Sun*.

Speed cameras exposed

Victoria Police has released a list of some 400 sites rostered for mobile speed cameras. A new list is to be released each week and can be found published in the *Herald Sun* on Mondays.

Swan Street Bridge

Eastern -suburbs bound drivers using the Swan Street Bridge during afternoon peak hour told the *Herald Sun* that they had been 'driven to despair' by kilometre long queues along Alexandra Avenue, as well as a nightly routine of pushing in and of road rage. Apparently, impatient motorists illegally cross into the forbidden tollway-only lane, rush to the front of the queue and then cut across unbroken white lines in front of their law-abiding counterparts. The intercession has been blamed for 19 serious crashes causing injury in the past

five years. The RACV and other motoring groups have blamed the bottleneck, and bad driver behaviour, on road laws devoting one of the bridges to eastbound lanes for the small minority of vehicles using the bridge to access the CityLink tollway. VicRoads was urged by the groups to make life easier for the 18,000 motorists crossing the bridge each day, by scrapping the CityLink only lane.

Hoon crackdown

Revelations that an unsupervised learner driver was caught carrying nine passengers in his car prompted Premier **Ted Baillieu** to consider tightening proposed anti-hoon legislation. The announcement came as *The Age* revealed that 11 of the 30 road deaths in Victoria have been young people between the ages of 15 and 25. Baillieu said that social media websites such as Facebook and Twitter might be used as a medium for the anti-hoon campaign.

Less is Morwell in freight dispute

Two government authorities offered conflicting arguments in a legal case surrounding the collapse of a freight operation in Morwell, *The Age* reported. The Victorian Government Solicitor's Office claimed that the operation was unlikely to succeed, but, to the embarrassment of the government, a report from the Department of Innovation and Regional Development, now the Department of Industry and Innovation, argued that such a freight terminal was very viable. 'Existing freight demand in the region provides an available revenue stream,' the DIRD said in its submission to the Victorian Infrastructure Summit last year. The model used by the Morwell terminal, in which freight was swapped between trucks and trains at the centre, was to become a model for similar ventures in the country and city. The rationale was that freight would be railed direct to the ports, reducing truck traffic in cities.

AIR

No free parking

The Age reported that VicRoads was set to erect wire barriers along the Tullamarine Freeway that will prevent drivers from waiting at the side of the road to collect people from the terminal. The move revisited last month's controversy over airport parking prices. The Australian Competition and Consumer Commission determined that Sydney and Melbourne Airports were possibly extracting monopoly rents in their car parks. According to *The Age*, the price of short-term parking at Melbourne has gone up 50 per cent in five years.

Busy terminal

The *Australian Information Industry Association* reported that Melbourne Airport's international passengers exceeded 600,000 for the first time, with 630,979 arriving in January.

THE WORKPLACE

JOBS

VIP job

Major Projects Victoria was established in 1988 to provide high-level, expert project delivery services to Victorian government entities undertaking large scale 'one-off' projects outside their 'normal' capital works programs. Its mission is to deliver major projects and programs that achieve exceptional outcomes for the Victorian community.

Urban Design and Heritage Advisor

The City of Port Phillip is well known for its dynamic activity centres, a foreshore which stretches for nearly 10 kilometres, cultural diversity and magnificent heritage buildings. The council is seeking to appoint an experienced and passionate Urban Design and Heritage Advisor to its City Development team.

INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS

Salt in wounds

The Age reported that a covert operation was undertaken by the managers at the Wonthaggi desalination plant to infiltrate the workforce and undermine the union's ability to stage industrial action. When the allegations initially surfaced in November last year, the revelations led to an outcry and strikes. Now, *The Age* reports that the four men employed to undertake the controversial infiltration have lodged action through Fair Work Australia seeking large discrimination payouts from Thiess, the builder of the plant.

Bolt in hot water

Nine people, including former Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission chairman **Geof Clark**, have brought a charge of racial discrimination against *Herald Sun* columnist **Andrew Bolt**. *The Age* wrote that the claim was based on a series of articles published in the *Herald Sun* in 2009, wherein Bolt cast aspersions on the motives of light-skinned people who identified as Aborigines. According to *The Age*, the nine accusers will attest that the implication of Bolts' writings was that such people did so for financial, political or other gain. Both Bolt and *Herald Sun* have denied the claims, with Bolt claiming in court 'I don't believe in racial division, between black, white, or anything else'. The nine are reportedly seeking an apology, retraction of the offending articles from News Ltd websites, and an undertaking from Bolt not to publish similar material in the future, but no financial compensation. As of April 16, the plaintiffs have dropped their request for an apology from Bolt, and are only pursuing a case against his publishers.

Telstra hangs up

The Age reported that Telstra closed its Moe call centre on April 13, leaving its 114 staff out of a job. Company spokeswoman **Karina Keisler** said that a new call centre in the Docklands, employing 1100 people would take most Telstra customers' calls, and that any overflow would be dealt with by call centres in the Philippines.

Qantas prepares for strikes

According to *The Age*, Qantas has been sending managers to the US for training in ground-handling operations as it prepares for looming industrial action by its employees.

Escaping welfare a tough farewell

Weaning people off welfare and getting them into the workplace will prove more difficult and expensive in the current climate of low unemployment, a leading Victorian CEO told *The Age*. **Wayne Kayler-Thomson**, CEO of the Victorian Employers' Chamber of Commerce and Industry, warned that a lack of skills in the long term unemployed would make it extremely difficult for them to find jobs in a competitive market.

Fears of Ford failure

The Age's **Malcolm Maiden** wrote an opinion article criticising Ford Australia's handling of the recovery from the global financial crisis, warning that more than 1,500 jobs could be lost if the company fails to get its act together. Maiden noted that Ford sold only 50,000 locally made vehicles in 2010, half of what it sold six years ago, and that the trend towards smaller, foreign-built cars was likely to further the problem.

Wage intervention

The Australian Financial Review reported that a bid by unions to limit the use of contractors and temporary labour has encountered a major test. The building industry watchdog had, for the first time, intervened in a wages deal struck between a union and an employer. The Fair Work Australia case will have immediate implications in Victoria for more than 10,000 electricians to be covered by the deal and up to 30,000 construction workers.

COMMUNITY**Videogame censorship**

An *Age* special found that reform of Australia's censorship of computer games looks set to fail, after Victoria declared its strong concern that the move will legalise games with 'high levels of graphic, frequent and gratuitous violence'. Backed by support from the gaming community, the Gillard government was determined to fix the classification system for computer games, which allows unsuitable games to be rated for 15-year-olds, yet bans popular games for adults.

Baillieu government Attorney-General, **Robert Clark**, opposed the move. He echoed the

concerns of the Australian Christian Lobby, putting him on a collision course with Canberra, which requires the backing of all states and territories to change classification laws. Australia is one of the few developed nations with no R18+, or adults-only, category for computer games. According to *The Age*, this gap means that many violent games are 'shoehorned' into the MA15+ category and made available to children.

Some games, such as 'Grand Theft Auto', are censored in Australia but are still rated for 15-year-olds despite containing prostitution and drug-use themes.

In February, the Classification Board banned from Australia the latest version of the popular and long-running 'Mortal Kombat' franchise. It decided that the realistic depictions of 'brutal forms of slaughter' made it unsuitable for an MA15+ rating — angering thousands of players and raising the ire of the \$1.7billion computer game industry. Other classification reforms taking place in an historic 20-year shake-up include a Law Reform Commission review investigating industry self-classification. There are also several parliamentary inquiries running into the classification scheme, including a Lower House inquiry about the regulation of inappropriate outdoor advertising, and a Senate probe into the film and literature classification scheme.

Behind the veil

In a submission to a federal parliamentary inquiry into migration, Victorian Islamic Council President **Hyder Gulam** said that Muslims did not set out to create enclaves. According to census data, suburbs such as Broadmeadows, Coolaroo and Meadown Heights have high Muslim populations. In a related development, the *Herald Sun* reported that South Australian Liberal senator **Cory Bernardi** called for the burqa to be banned, labeling it 'un-Australian'. Also, Victorian Liberal MP **Kevin Andrews** expressed concern about religious enclaves, and criticised political leaders who fail to speak out against the rise of Islamic extremism.

Priests kicked out

Melbourne Vicar General Bishop **Les Tomlinson** confirmed in his official newsletter that two Melbourne Catholic priests guilty of sexual abuse had been removed from the priesthood.

Religious education bias

Buddhist community leader **Dr Sue Smith** complained in *The Age* of 'Christian bias' in religious education in Victoria. She claimed that if her group had access to government funding, they too could expand to hundreds of schools. Likewise, social commentator and Muslim **Waleed Aly** said it was a 'logical necessity' to 'get proselytisation out of the classroom'. Public debate on the issue was sparked by a *Sunday Age* revelation that the Education Department was forcing schools

to host Christian religious education whether they wanted to or not. It took a new turn when state Education Minister **Martin Dixon** granted \$200,000 in extra funding to Christian religious education provider Access Ministries to improve its training. Dixon, who *The Age* pointed out is a Catholic, told the paper that despite the controversy he had no intention of reviewing the system.

Philanthropy

Head of the Myer Family Company's philanthropic services gave an interesting interview to *The Age*. **Peter Winneke** argued that the image of the generous wealthy Australian was a myth, and that we need to create a culture of giving. Feedback on a follow up column gave a range of perspectives.

Pets in the penthouse

In the *Domain* section of *The Age*, **Simon Johanson** wrote an interesting piece about pet ownership in high density housing. According to Petcare Information and Advisory Service, a total of 22 per cent, or almost a quarter of all Australian households, are living in what could be considered medium or high-density housing. Body corporates, landlords and property developers have had to grapple with how to manage pets in apartments and rental accommodation. Some are reported to be doing it more successfully than others. Several large apartment buildings such as Eureka Tower have pet-friendly body corporate rules that encourage or facilitate tenants or owners with animals. Australand's Victorian residential general manager, **Robert Pradolin**, oversaw a pet-friendly approach at Freshwater Place in Southbank after living with his labradoodle BJ in an apartment. About 25 of the building's 530 apartments now have pets.



Autumn arrives in Melbourne.



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OUT AND ABOUT

This page

Centre and bottom right, photographs from the April launch of the Port Phillip Sea Pilot boat. The former governor's wife Jan de Kretser launched the vessel in Queenscliff.

Top, views from the top of Spring Street from the Affairs of State helicopter.

Opposite page

Scenes from Melbourne in Autumn.





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