

# LETTER FROM MELBOURNE

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



**Roy Morgan Consumer Confidence eases slightly as Australian dollar nears parity, page 13...**

Issue No. 158 12 SEPTEMBER to 18 OCTOBER 2010: Pre-election Edition

**Dirty campaigns developing well**

**Green opportunities**

**National Party concerns. Liberal preferences**

**Social housing demand**

**Water everywhere, even in the Murray. What to do next?**

**New police broom**

**Auditor's important and detailed role**

**Additional Fire Officer**

**Gambling challenges**

**Melbourne Museum turns 10**

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**WELCOME**

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 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 the 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. Over the years, Letter From Melbourne developed a federal and national coverage and an increasing synopsis of national business issues, so we started Letter From Canberra in early 2008. The only communications tool of its type, Letter From Melbourne keeps subscribers abreast of recent developments in the policy arena on a local, state and federal level. You can read it on a flight from Melbourne once a month or with a good cup of coffee.

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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. Alistair visits Canberra regularly. He may hold the record for miles rowed on Canberra's Lake Burley Griffin. For picture details, read the editorial.

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**CONTENTS**

STATE GOVERNMENT & POLITICS	3	AGRICULTURE	17
THE BUSHFIRES	5	JUSTICE	18
ARTS	6	MELBOURNE	21
DOCKLANDS	7	GEELONG	21
EDUCATION	7	PLANNING & BUILDING	21
ENVIRONMENT CONSERVATION	8	LOCAL GOVERNMENT	22
ENERGY	9	SPORT	22
WATER	9	TOURISM	23
GAMING	15	TRANSPORT	23
HEALTH	15	RAIL	23
INVESTMENT BUSINESS	16	ROAD, AIR, PORTS	25
ICT	17	COMMUNITY	26

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## EDITORIAL

The Victorian election campaign has been taking some time to warm up. It really started after the last sitting day of parliament on 7 October, when again the Government better controls the media space.

Believe it or not, the government advertising in recent months on TV and in the printed press on how well Victoria is going in education, health, transport and regional Victoria does not come from any political campaign budgets. It's just telling Victorian citizens what the Government is doing!

Specific election attractions so far include a \$1 million prize offered by the Liberals for ideas to smarten up Flinders Street Station. And a new Children's Hospital in south-east Melbourne at The Monash Medical Centre by Labor.

Despite the hard work of the Victorian auditor-general (there's a photo of some of his many reports inside) and a continual series of articles critical of the government in *The Age*, the *Herald Sun* details how Premier Brumby has the largest number of media advisers of any Australian government, which helps his capacity to get a large number of minutes in every hour of the media clock to explain his government's position.

The energy fight will be expressed in the detail and extent of closing down (part of/a) Latrobe Valley power station(s). The recent cover of an election pamphlet of Richard Wynne, MP for inner-city Richmond, suggests closing parts of a power station... Perhaps a Labor race with the Greens to close the last station.

Water will be on the voters minds, and includes the (federal) issue of the Murray Darling Basin which flows into regional Victoria where Labor has some seats that it could lose. The possibility/likelihood that the Liberals will exchange preferences with the Greens in order to gain control of the lower

house and hence the premiership for Baillieu would not please the Nationals who cannot bear some of the Green policies.

On the fire front, a new, and inaugural, Chief Fire Commissioner, whose role will oversee the three other Victorian fire chiefs, namely the CFA, MFB and the Department of Sustainability and Environment. Steady hands innovation.

A return to old school policing. Hmm. Doesn't seem to be any 'government' involvement here in a new approach to policing, as declared by police commissioner Simon Overland, has declared that his force has too many committees and that there will, again, be a better focus on policing the streets.

Transport-wise, lucky Richmond Station boarders have a comedian happy-chappy commentator to calm disgruntled travelers, with loudspeaker suggestions on how to make the day enjoyable, at least at the train station.

I have just returned from the annual Conservative Party conference, in Birmingham, a smorgasbord of public policy debate. Nearby photo shows me running up the stairs. We are running a couple of drinks evenings at the office in the coming weeks to share the methodology of the Conference, if not the politics.

The Cover of this edition was snapped recently as the editor headed out of the Port of Melbourne on a container ship.

Have a good election period. It will not be as nasty as the recent federal one.

I am not declaring the poll result at the moment.

## STATE GOVERNMENT & POLITICS

### It begins

Serious campaigning began for the November 27 state election when the Victorian Parliament rose at the week ending October 11, the last sitting week before the election. In chasing an historic fourth term, Labor is confronted with a strategic dilemma – how to maintain the fight against its traditional Coalition foes while countering a threat to inner-city seats

from the Greens, the Financial Review reported. Breaches of human rights for children in state care, a deteriorating ambulance service and questions about political dirty tricks dogged the Government in the last parliamentary sitting week. *The Age* reported that Premier John Brumby was forced into an election-eve reshuffle of his cabinet following the resignation of two senior cabinet ministers. In a dramatic final day of Parliament before the election, Police Minister **Bob Cameron** and Energy Minister **Peter Batchelor** revealed they were quitting politics to spend more time with their families. **James Merlino**, the current Sports Minister, takes over as Police and Corrections Minister. In all, nine MPs from across the parties said they were bowing out at this election.

### Dirty unit

The *Age* reported that Victorian taxpayers are footing the bill for a secretive operation run out of Premier **John Brumby's** office aimed at discrediting Coalition MPs and Greens candidates in the lead up to November's election. 'The dirt unit' is believed to be headed by one of Premier Brumby's taxpayer funded strategy advisers, **Chris Reilly**. Meeting weekly in the Premier's private office over the past year, the committee has overseen investigations into the political, business and sometimes personal histories of shadow ministers and, more recently, Greens MPs and candidates. A long-running examination of the business interests of Opposition Leader **Ted Baillieu** has been a priority for the committee, as it was for Labor before the 2006 election.

### Off sausage

The *Australian* reported that in a rare insight into how the sausages of daily politics are made, one of **John Brumby's** chief spin doctors was forced to reveal from a witness box the nature of the government 'master media plan' – a document worked on by almost 20 advisers on a password protected electronic file – and how government spin operates. The testimony was given as part of a dispute between the Brumby government and the Opposition over whether ministers' media plans should be subject to the Freedom of Information laws. The legal battle follows the leaking of the Government's public relations

strategy for the development of the Windsor Hotel. A follow-up report in the same paper said **Ken Coghill**, a former Labor MP and speaker of the Victorian Parliament who now lectures in governance at Monash University, says if media minders are to stay on the public payroll they should be accountable and subject to Freedom of Information laws. Political analysts said that Brumby's media unit should be funded by the ALP and not the taxpayer if its function is purely political and to ensure Labor's re-election.

### On the dog house

*The Age* reported that the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly, **Jenny Lindell**, announced an investigation into snooping by her Department of Parliamentary Services, including unauthorised access into the opposition's e-mail system. She insisted the incidents were a stuff-up by parliamentary IT staff and flatly denied political interference. Victoria Police have been called in to investigate the allegations.

### Snake eyes

*The Australian* reported that Opposition Leader **Ted Baillieu** is weighing a desperate throw of the dice. He faces an election in a month and a half and his vote is falling. The most recent Newspoll aggregates put the Coalition 10 points behind Labor in two-party preferred terms. Labor leads 55 per cent to 45 per cent. In the middle of the year, the parties were almost tied, with Labor on 51 per cent to the Coalition's 49 per cent. But Baillieu has a weapon: his preferences. Despite its poor polling, the Coalition is expected to make gains on November 27. Liberal preferences could let the Greens take as many as five inner-city seats from Labor. The Coalition could end up having the largest bloc in the state parliament, if not an overall majority. An excellent article in *The Australian* by **Christian Kerr**, which dissects the issue, quotes former Nationals leader **Pat McNamara**, **Jeff Kennett's** deputy premier, who believes the Greens would never support a Coalition government and warns against the unintended consequences of a deal that gives the Greens more influence.

### Federal echoes

The Opposition has rejected a government challenge to submit its election policies to state Treasury for costing, saying the figures would only end up in government hands. The Government's costings push came after Treasurer **John Lenders** said his research showed opposition leader **Ted Baillieu's** policies to date would cost more than \$3.3b and put the budget into deficit next year, *The Age* reported.

### Green Pike

Labor has stepped up its pitch to woo back inner-city voters from the Greens, with Education Minister **Bronwyn Pike** launching new ads identifying climate change, social justice and public housing as central planks for her campaign to retain the inner-city seat of Melbourne, *The Age* reported.

### Nearby

Federal Greens leader **Bob Brown** has thrown his weight behind his party's pitch to win their first lowerhouse seat in the Victorian Parliament. He launched the campaign of his friend and former legal adviser, **Brian Walters**, SC, a human rights lawyer who is trying to unseat Education Minister **Bronwyn Pike**.

### Clear the way

Labor's battle to hold crucial marginal state seats under threat from the Greens has hit another hurdle with **Phil Cleary** preparing to run as an independent for the seat of Brunswick. The sitting Labor MP, veteran **Carlo Carli**, is retiring after 16 years in Parliament, *The Age* reported. The paper also reported that the Greens could win the state seat of Melbourne and Richmond from Labor if they can repeat their federal vote at the November 27 election, but on federal voting trends they would fall just short of taking two other outer suburban seats, Brunswick and Northcote. A mid-October Galaxy poll reports Labor's two-party lead over the coalition shrinking to 51-49, showing that the state has a strong chance of having a hung Parliament after the election.

### A word with the boss

Victorian Premier **John Brumby** warned the new minority federal government off traditional state issues of law and order,

health and roads, while setting out the tough decisions the Commonwealth would need to take on tax reform and emissions trading, the *Financial Review* reported.

### Got to Lovell it

Victorian Liberal MP **Wendy Lovell** is suing Finance Minister **Tim Holding** after he did not apologise for accusing her of failing to properly disclose alleged ownership of Westpac shares. It was later revealed the shares belonged to Lovell's mother. The Liberal MP has now lodged a defamation writ and has issued a summons for Holding to appear in court on November 5. Holding alleged that Lovell had knowingly contravened Parliamentary requirements to disclose her investments. The writ said that Holding's main motivation was to smear the Liberal MP and maximise the damage to her reputation and thereby advance his political interests and the interests of the Australian Labor Party, the *Financial Review* reported.

### Nobbles

Auditor-General **Des Pearson** says the government's Public Finance and Accountability Bill could enable ministers to impose on the operations of the Auditor-General and give directions without consulting his office. He told Parliament's Public Accounts and Estimates Committee that the bill could result in his office being under threat of having funding withdrawn by a cabinet minister. The issue is embarrassing for Premier **John Brumby** in the lead up



The Auditor General's September and October reports. A busy man.

to the election because Labor came to office 11 years ago accusing Liberal premier **Jeff Kennett** of trying to ‘noble’ the auditor-general, *The Age* reported. The Ombudsman’s office joined Pearson in warning Brumby that the government legislation now before Parliament will undermine their offices’ effectiveness and independence. It was later reported that Brumby will change the legislation conceding that a narrow legal interpretation of the Public Finance and Accountability Bill could give cabinet ministers authority over the public sector watchdogs. But this was, he said, never the Government’s intention, and it would amend its legislation to make it clear that the Auditor-General and the Ombudsman are completely independent of the executive government.

### Victoria rules

On the opinion pages of the *Herald Sun*, **Phillip Hudson** wrote that three of our five most senior federal politicians happen to be Victorians. Under **Kevin Rudd** the Pineapple Mafia was in charge. Now the power has shifted south of the Murray River.

### One state under god

Premier **John Brumby** and Opposition Leader **Ted Baillieu** were questioned by Christian leaders in the first Town Hall style debate of the state election campaign. The leaders addressed members of the Australian Christian Lobby at Parliament House before taking questions on issues including late term abortion and recent changes to the Equal Opportunity Act, *The Age* reported.

### Still against it

Opposition leader **Ted Baillieu** restated his opposition to gay marriage following criticism from his former senior adviser that his stance on the issue was weak, cowardly and legitimised bigotry.

### Strom before the storm

*The Age* reported that Parliament’s Speaker **Jenny Lindell** said she decided not to call a by-election for disgruntled former state Labor MP **Craig Langdon**’s seat of Ivanhoe because it would be a waste of taxpayers money, coming within weeks of the November 27 election.

But Langdon accused the government of setting out to avoid a by-election – which would have cost about \$300,000 – because it was terrified of losing the seat.

### Logic vs fear

Immigration is essential to the survival of the state’s rural communities and must be encouraged, says the Victorian National’s leader, **Peter Ryan**. Ryan will be deputy premier if the Coalition wins the election, *The Age* reported.

### What’s your favourite colour?

Victorian farmers have called on the Liberals to rule out handing preferences and the balance of power to the Greens in the November 27 election, the *Weekly Times* reported. Both the Liberals and their coalition partners, the Nationals, have refused to answer questions about preferencing the Greens, whose policies, the Victorian Farmers Federation say, would do enormous damage to regional Victoria.

### Vale

Premier **John Brumby** cancelled all engagements in late September when his father, Malcolm, suffered a stroke that led to his death. The Premier returned to work a few days later, *The Age* reported.

### All in one go

*The Age* reported that more than 200 annual reports of Victorian government departments and agencies were tabled in State Parliament in mid-September. Meanwhile, Auditor-General **Des Pearson** was busy in August and September, releasing upwards of fifteen reports, ranging in size for 20 to 90 pages, which have formed a sizeable pile on *Letter from Melbourne*’s desk.

### Unwelcome records

*The Herald Sun* reported that Liberal MP **Ken Smith** leads the way in Parliament’s Lower House for suspensions, with 19 to his name. Former opposition leader **Dennis Napthine** is next with 17, and Warrandyte Liberal MP **Warren Smith** has been told to leave eight times. On the government side, **Marsha Thomson** has received marching orders three times, while deputy premier Rob Hulls and several other MPs have two strikes.

The suspension of members in the Lower House, which can be for up to 90 minutes, occurs when the Speaker considers the conduct of a member to be disorderly. Swinburne University professor of parliamentary democracy **Brian Costar** criticised Question Time in modern politics, saying it didn’t look good on TV.

### Election ads

Large advertisements in the metropolitan papers have the Victorian government explaining its good regional infrastructure and education plans, but the instalments do not have the word ‘advertisement’ on them. The advertisements are ‘formally’ not of a political nature.

### Hmmm

The wife of a Victorian Liberal MP is seeking a restraining order against him just months before the November election. An application for an apprehended domestic violence order against the MP – who cannot be named for legal reasons – was heard by the Magistrates Court, *The Age* reported. The *Herald Sun* reported that the couple are separated but not divorced.

## THE BUSHFIRES

### The circle of sue

More than 700 Black Saturday victims are suing the Singapore owned power company SP AusNet in a class action over equipment failure at Kilmore East, alleging that the company was negligent in not fitting a \$10 plastic anti-vibration protector to guard against metal fatigue. But in its 153-page defence and counter claim filed in the Supreme Court, the company makes no admissions of liability and instead accuses the Country Fire Authority, Victoria Police and the Department of Sustainability and Environment of failing to suppress the fires and adequately warning communities. All three, the company says, are liable for the personal loss, injury and damages experienced by victims of Black Saturday, *The Age* reported. The Financial Review reported that Premier **John Brumby** said the government would defend its emergency services against

accusations that they were responsible for the Black Saturday bushfires.

### Our prodigal

South Australia's Country Fire Chief will replace former Country Fire Authority chief **Russell Rees**, who quit after overseeing the failed response to the Black Saturday fires. Former CFA deputy chief **Euan Ferguson** will take over in November as the authority oversees recommendations of the Bushfires Royal Commission, *The Age* reported. *The Australian* reported that Ferguson was in charge of the Country Fire Service in Adelaide in 2007 when the deputy coroner **Anthony Schapel** found the CFS mismanaged the response to a fire in Port Lincoln that killed nine people and destroyed almost 100 homes. Ferguson withstood continued calls to resign.

Hence, **Mick Bourke** is the chief executive officer of the CFA, Ferguson is the chief officer and **Kerry Murphy** is the chairman. Nearby we have the Metropolitan Fire Brigade CEO, **Graham Fountain**, and the DSE chief fire officer, **Ewan Waller**. All are brought together under the chief fire commissioner, **Craig Lapsley**, to whom these three organisations report.

### Heavy rain

*The Herald Sun* reported that the DC10 VLAT (very large air tanker) firefighting jet that can carry 50,000 litres of water will not be used this summer after a trial found its water drops had the potential to injure people and smash property. The Government spent \$10.5m last summer on a 10-week trial of the DC10 VLAT used by firefighters in California. The Government will now spend \$12m on smaller planes, including two new Convair 580 fire-bomber planes, a new Erikson Airplane and four extra fixed wing aircraft, for this fire season.

### Burning money

The CFA's wages bill from its 1,636 staff has reached more than \$167m. Paid staff each earn an average \$102,078. In 2003-04, the CFA was paying out just \$89 million in employee benefits for 1,212 staff, ranging from office clerks to the chief fire officer or an average of \$73,432. The wages blowout is about to increase as the Government forces

the CFA to employ another 342 career firefighters to complement the 552 already on its payroll, the *Weekly Times* reported.

### Shock and crackle

Hard-hitting television advertisements that demonstrate the horrendous impact of bushfires should be aired every summer to remind Victorians of the dangers of bushfires, according to **Jack Rush, QC**, a lawyer who assisted the Bushfires Royal Commission.

## ARTS

### Our museum

*Titanic: The Artefact Exhibition* will not be leaving Melbourne until November 7. The Melbourne Museum blockbuster, which has attracted 280,000 visitors so far, was due to close on October 17 but organisers are extending the season after repeated sold-out sessions. *The Herald Sun* reported that Melbourne Museum will celebrate its 10th birthday with a party in October. More than 7.5 million people have visited the museum since it opened. It will celebrate the launch of the Dynamic Earth exhibition on October 21 and a family day on October 24. Dynamic Earth is the last exhibition in the redevelopment of the Science and Life gallery.

### It's a wonderland

The **Tim Burton** exhibition at ACMI in Federation Square is one of Melbourne's most successful shows welcoming its 200,000th visitor. Burton's weird and wonderful work, which includes films such as *Alice in Wonderland* and *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory*, has drawn visitors from around the country and of all ages. It has outdone ACMI's previous best of almost 150,000 visitors to the Pixar animation exhibition in 2008. ACMI's next major exhibition will be *Dreams Come True: The Art of Disney's Classic Fairy Tales*, opening on November 18. *Tim Burton: The exhibition* concluded on October 10.

### Athletic tragedy

The **Australian Ballet** will perform an all-new *Romeo and Juliet* next year in a season that celebrates the company's best original work. Choreographer **Graeme**

**Murphy**, who reinterpreted the ballets *Swan Lake* and *The Nutcracker*, is expected to deliver another masterpiece. The other full-length ballets in the 2011 season are *Madame Butterfly* and *The Merry Widow*, the *Herald Sun* reported.

### Holy musical!

*The Age* reported that whilst **Mary MacKillop** is to be canonised in Rome on October 17, she is also about to star in a musical written and scored by **Xavier Brouwer**, a Xavier College old boy and the son of the state ombudsman, **George Brouwer**. The semi-professional production of *MacKillop*, being bankrolled by a six-figure contribution from Catholic Super superannuation fund, will be staged in Melbourne for three shows in the 1000-seat Besen Centre in Burwood from October 23 after eight Sydney shows. Technically, this is not the world premiere of the work – a barebones version was performed before World Youth Day in Melbourne in 2008. This month's performances are being staged with a 30-piece orchestra, an 80-voice choir and opera singer **Joanna Cole** in the lead.

### Open art

The Melbourne International Arts Festival opened on 8 October for three weeks.

### Cheeky portraits

The *Herald Sun* reported that the 45 finalists in this year's Bald Archy Prize had their Melbourne unveiling at Chapel off Chapel Gallery in Prahran. The annual exhibition of cheeky portraits – a spoof on the prestigious Archibald Prize – has flourished into one of Australia's most popular art events since it began 17 years ago.

### It's the Truth

The Victorian Premier's Literary Awards 2010 winners were presented by Premier **John Brumby** on Tuesday September 28 at a celebratory dinner. Peter Temple won the fiction award for his much acclaimed novel, *Truth*, [www.wheelercentre.com](http://www.wheelercentre.com).

## On the way

*Les Miserables*, celebrating its 25th year in London, will return to Melbourne for a special 6 to 8 week season in 2011, as part of an international tour, the *Herald Sun* reported.

## Over there

Adelaide Writers' Week seeks an Executive Producer, [www.adelaidefestival.com.au](http://www.adelaidefestival.com.au).

# DOCKLANDS

## Makeover

The Docklands studio complex is set to get a funding injection in a bid to make it more attractive to television producers, *The Age* reported. Innovation Minister **Gavin Jennings** announced that the government plans to spend \$10m upgrading and modifying the largest of the complex's five sound stages to enable it to host two television productions simultaneously.

## Observe, the wheel

The future of the troubled Southern Star Observation Wheel is again in difficulty after contractors stopped work because they haven't been paid. About 70 steel workers building new spokes for the wheel at the BMC steel plant in Gippsland are now in danger of being laid off, the *Herald Sun* reported.

# EDUCATION

## Positive spin

*The Age* reported that Victorian students topped the nation in almost a quarter of this year's national numeracy and literacy tests but the state had one of the lowest participation rates. Victoria performed strongly in the year three, five, seven and nine tests in May, with scores higher than the Australian average in all 20 categories – but about 6.5 per cent of students did not sit the tests. Education Minister **Bronwyn Pike** has warned she will crackdown on any school that boycotted the NAPLAN tests. *The Financial Review* reported that the release of the latest national literacy and numeracy test results led to an outbreak of sniping among state politicians as to which state

is performing best. Education ministers cherry picked from a mountain of data to put a positive spin on the results. The ministers' opposition counterparts were similarly busy trawling through the results to gain political mileage.

## Holding back

*The Australian* reported that the Victorian Government has put just 40 per cent of its \$2.5b school stimulus package into the economy, saying it has delayed implementation because it wanted to get value for money in a relatively buoyant market. Figures from the Auditor-General showed how much the state's Building the Education Revolution program is behind schedule, with only 5 per cent of science and language centres completed, and 15 per cent of 'schools for the 21st century' projects finished. The Opposition and principals say the figures raise questions about the aim of the stimulus program and the decision by Victoria to take away control of projects from individual schools.

## Further disabling

Victorian principals are fed up with monster workloads and the Government's failure to properly support students with disabilities. Less than three months from the state election, a survey shows that principals' assessments of both the State Government and the Department of Education are the most negative since 2005. More than 70 per cent of government principals' told the Australian Education Union's Annual State of Our Schools survey that the Education Department's support for students with disabilities was less than adequate, *The Age* reported.

## Exceeding the due date

*The Age* reported that the national curriculum is not up to scratch and will not be ready to be introduced in Victorian schools in 2012, according to a state principals' body.

## About time

Private schools will no longer be the only beneficiaries of generous donations from corporates, after the Government established a charitable foundation to make it easier for businesses to support public, or state, schools, *The Age* reported.

## DOCKLANDS THE SECOND DECADE

### Second Decade of Docklands project – get involved

To mark the start of the second decade of development in Docklands, you're invited to be part of the evolution. Join us as part of an engagement process that will help identify clear directions and priority actions for delivery of the next decade.

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## No deal, perhaps

A Victorian government bid to increase state control over TAFE boards could be blocked in the upper house because of a row over the potential for boards to be stacked with political appointees. The Government wants to increase the accountability of TAFE colleges as the price for providing the sector with greater commercial flexibility. The Coalition is opposed to the changes and is canvassing support from the three Greens MPs in the upper house to block the legislation. Education Minister **Bronwyn Pike** defended the changes as a necessary strengthening of accountability when TAFEs needed greater commercial freedom in the new Victorian contestable market, *The Australian* reported.

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## Keating on TAFE

Former prime minister **Paul Keating** has raised concerns about the Victorian government's overhaul of vocational training, saying it could be shutting prospective students out of the system. New rules mean that students wanting to undertake a lesser qualification than one they already hold will not be eligible for a government funded place. The cost of a full-fee TAFE course can reach \$10,000 a year. Keating said it was important to consider the impermanent nature of Australia's modern workforce when determining skills policies. A later report in *The Age* found that Keating's intervention had an effect, after the government watered down its shakeup of tertiary education, allowing mature age apprentices, for instance, to pay under full fees for TAFE courses.

## What a day

The ultranet training day, which left 42,000 teachers and principals unable to log on to the new online portal when the system crashed at 9 am, has delayed the systems roll-out in schools. The Department of Education said just 12,000 of the state's 500,000 government students were on the ultranet. The ultranet, a virtual classroom that will enable parents to view their child's timetables, schoolwork, academic progress and attendance, is due to roll out in schools by the end of September, *The Age* reported.

## Nearby

The ultranet has little use unless every student from years 3 to 12 have a computer, according to the state's principals, who warn that to be effective,

the ultranet requires every student to have access to a computer, increased technical support and training for teachers. Victorian government schools have a ratio of one computer for about every three students, *The Age* reported.

## Then, the world

Australian universities have taken a hit in the latest round of world university rankings, with Melbourne University falling behind Sydney, and Monash University dropping from 45th to 61st place, *The Age* reported.

## Voices breaking

The October edition of the **University of Melbourne's** *Age* lift-out 'Voice' reported that the Parliament of Victoria hosted more than 100 University of Melbourne students from 17 countries to debate topics ranging from population policy to a new index measuring health and well-being at the inaugural three-day Global Perspectives Summit, 'Youth + Vision = Future,' convened as part of the Melbourne Model. The 8-page lift out gave a clear summary of how the Melbourne Model is progressing.

## They're great apparently

There are now full-page ads running in the major papers telling us how good Victorian government schools are, not part of the election campaign, mind you.

## L'Estrange move

Gunns chief executive **Greg L'Estrange** – responsible for 40 per cent of Victoria's native forest industry – said that while moving out of Tasmania's native forests was the priority, the principle also applied long term to Victoria. The Victorian Greens seized on the move and called on the Government to immediately end native forest logging and transfer the industry into plantations. The party will be campaigning on the issue before the November election. L'Estrange stressed that no decision had been taken on Gunns' Victorian assets, and the broader fate of native forest logging would remain in the hands of the community and the government. He shocked the Australian logging industry when he announced that native forest is not part of Gunns' future, *The Age* reported.

## Out of the wilderness

**Alec Marr**, executive director of the Wilderness Society for the past 12 years, claims credit for making the society one of Australia's most successful environmental groups, with 150 staff, 45,000-strong membership and \$15m budget. However, internal warfare broke out early this year when opponents objected to his management style and financial direction. Consequently, he has quit the society, *The Age* reported.

## Build down

**Tony Arnel**, Victoria's building and plumbing commissioner, chaired the recent World Green Building Council Congress in Singapore. Releasing the report *Tackling Global Climate Change, Meeting Local Priorities*, Arnel said buildings in the fast-growing urban areas

## ENVIRONMENT

## CONSERVATION



of the developing world were the single largest source of global greenhouse emissions but they also offered the lowest cost abatement opportunities. Buildings are the most cost-effective way to cut carbon emissions, the *Financial Review* reported.

### Kicking goals

Australian Football League chief executive **Andrew Demetriou** has become a director of not-for-profit research and lobby group the Climate Institute.

### Wombat awareness wealth

A deceased, anonymous American millionaire has left \$8m in his will to a small South Australian environmental group that protects wombats. The money will be paid to the Wombat Awareness Organisation over eight years from next year, *The Age* reported.

## ENERGY

### It's the 21st century

Households are set to get electricity discounts for letting power companies turn appliances on and off by remote control to avoid blackouts in heat waves. Air-conditioners, pool pumps and other power guzzlers would be rationed to try to stop mass meltdowns. Victoria's energy watchdog, the Essential Service Commission, is assessing what the system can do after digital smart meters are rolled out statewide over the next three years. Customers who agree to sign contracts allowing firms to turn appliances on and off when the power grid is stressed are expected to be offered lower annual supply charges or special tariffs. Energy Retailers Association of Australia executive director **Cameron O'Reilly** said appliances linked to the smart meter network could have temperatures tweaked or be stopped from chugging constantly in times of huge demand, the *Herald Sun* reported.

### Right...

The Greens want the Environment Protection Authority to use its newly strengthened regulatory powers to force coal-fired power stations to shut without compensation. The proposal drew criticism from the government and the

**Australian Industry Group**, which said it was economically irresponsible and could undermine investment certainty, *The Age* reported.

### The excessive force

Environmental activists protesting at Victoria's Hazelwood power station near Morwell faced a force of 250 police. Organisers were expecting about 300 protesters to International Day of Climate Action at the site, *The Age* reported.

### Green house gas?

A company proposing to build a coal power station in the Latrobe Valley is facing accusations it has not explained how it would meet new greenhouse gas emission standards, *The Age* reported. Dual Gas – a subsidiary of Melbourne company HRL – has resubmitted an application to the Environment Protection Authority to build a plant at Morwell using new justification technology to cut emissions from brown coal by up to a third.

### Community wind

Australia's first community windfarm will open next year at Leonard's Hill, about 10 kilometres south of Daylesford, after five years of planning. More than 250 supporters, including

Environment and Climate Change Minister **Gavin Jennings**, turned out for the announcement. Some \$8.4m of the project funding has come from local residents buying shares in the wind park. A portion of the income made from selling the green energy will go into a community fund, the *Herald Sun* reported.

## WATER

### Desal bomb

*The Age* reported that detail buried in a number of departmental and agency annual reports tabled in Parliament in mid-September contained highly sensitive figures that the Brumby government has fought to keep secret: the real cost of the Wonthaggi desalination plant, one of the largest public-private partnerships in the world. One report shows that taxpayers will pay at least \$15.8b to the Aquasure Consortium to operate and maintain the plant for 28 years – the equivalent of \$4.6b in today's dollars when inflation and other factors are taken into account – after it begins operations at the end of 2011.

In the first five years of the contract, the government will pay at least \$330m a year in the so-called water security payments, irrespective of whether any water is bought. Another report mentioned in the same article said that



The banks of Mannus Lake break, a new tributary to the Murray

the Government is under pressure to release confidential contract details of the plant as it wrestles with the publication of figures by its Department of Sustainability and Environment and Melbourne Water. Academics, the Opposition and the Greens called on the government to lift the cloak of secrecy on the details of the deal as Premier **Brumby** and Water Minister **Tim Holding** questioned figures published in their own Department of Sustainability annual report.

## Water policy

The Opposition has labelled the desalination plant and the north-south pipeline as unnecessary, setting the scene for a fight on water policy in the lead up to November's election. After going to the last election with a promise to build a desalination plant, the Opposition now

such as 'environmentally friendly' or 'unrestricted' supply plans. Melbourne's biggest retailer, Yarra Valley Water has already started work on a range of water options for households and businesses, including: a high security water tariff, where customers pay a higher price for

an unrestricted supply; a scarcity tariff, where customers pay a cheaper price on the basis they will consume frugally and face supply restrictions sooner than customers on more expensive plans; an environment tariff, where customers would pay extra to ensure their water is delivered using environmentally friendly methods such as green power, or ensure extra flows are returned to distressed rivers, *The Age* reported.

## The rain

The Murray River's famous Lower Lakes – on environmental death row

*The Australian* reported that according to the Murray Darling Basin Authority's cost estimates, taxpayers face a further bill of \$3b to buy back water rights from farmers in the Murray-Darling Basin, at least \$1b beyond the funding allocated so far to ensure stronger flows in the rivers and more water for Adelaide. Farmers are facing cuts of between 27 and 37 per cent of the amount of water they can take from the river system under draft plans announced by the Murray Darling Basin Authority. The cuts would ensure the return of an extra 3,000 to 4,000 billion litres of water to the Murray.

## The basin

*The Age* reported Victoria will carry a heavy load under plans to return the Murray River to health, with cuts to water extraction of up to 45 per cent slated for some parts of the state's north. As farming groups were urging federal Water Minister **Tony Burke** to intervene to save rural Australia from decimation, Victorian towns along the Campaspe, Loddon, Kiewa, Broken and Ovens rivers were told irrigation sectors faced massive cuts. An editorial in *The Age* said that unless balance is restored to water use in one of Australia's most important catchments, both environment and economy will suffer. In a more detailed report, the *Financial Review* reported that the Murray-Darling Basin Authority says the big cuts in water use it is recommending will reduce farm production by \$1b and lead to just 800 job losses, while irrigators warn of a major rural backlash and the collapse of communities. But the proposals in the authority's report could cost Government an extra \$2b. The authority estimates buybacks and infrastructure upgrades that have already been announced by the federal government will recoup only around half of the water required for the plan. Many political and legal hurdles lie ahead of enforcement of the authority's proposed cuts in water for agriculture. The sustainable diversion limits, which some claim will kill irrigation communities, could be struck down by the federal or state parliaments, or be blocked by constitutional issues.

## It's more than just rice

*The Australian* reported that restrictions on the water use along Australia's biggest river system could wipe out



says the \$5.7b plant under construction at Wonthaggi will be a costly white elephant. The Coalition says that if it wins the November election, it will shut down the \$750m north-south pipeline that is bringing water from the northern states to Melbourne, and only reopen it in the event of a critical human needs emergency. It says it will honour existing contracts for the desalination plant, *The Age* reported.

## Water with that?

Water retailers are preparing a shakeup in the way Melburnians pay for water, with customers to be offered options

last year – have swollen to close to 150 cm higher than the nadir of 2009, thanks mostly to summer downpours in northern Australia and September floods in Victoria. The Murray Darling Basin is having its fourth wettest year (to date) on record, the Bureau of Meteorology said. More water is still moving down the river, and reconnection to the sea could, serendipitously, coincide with the release of the draft Murray-Darling Basin plan (it happened a day or two later), which will determine the amount of water in the basin that will be taken out of the farmers' hands and given to the environment, *The Age* reported.

16 per cent of the irrigated agriculture industry – worth up to \$1b a year – and have severe social and economic impacts on rural communities in the nation's food bowl. The proposed cuts would cost the government between \$6.9b and \$9.2b if water were bought at current prices. Despite the cost, the authority warned that a failure to cut water use would risk an irreversible environmental, economic and social decline across the basin.

### One of the communities

In the *Financial Review*, **Angus Grigg** wrote that when the town of Griffith was proclaimed in 1916, it was with the sole purpose of supporting the Murrumbidgee Irrigation Area, which had just been established. Far-sighted politicians envisaged a food bowl to feed the new federation. But the surrounding area was no fertile Babylon. The semi-arid plain was considered too barren to contemplate settlement before the MIA. It meant that Griffith relied on irrigation from day one. That's why its future is under greater threat from cuts to available irrigation water than almost any other district. Under the guide to the proposed Murray-Darling basin plan, those who draw water from the Murrumbidgee River will have their allocations cut by between 32 and 43 per cent.

### Nearby

Banks could use proposals for big cuts in water for agriculture to foreclose on loans to farmers and refuse to lend them funds to restructure their businesses, the Murray Darling Basin Authority has warned, the *Financial Review* reported. *The Age* reported that Australian National University professor **Quentin Grafton** said that the water cuts proposed for the Murray-Darling Basin won't be as severe as the recent years of drought, leading him to predict the social and economic effects will be modest and manageable. His claims are at odds with the dire projections made by farming groups.

### Cap causing cries-foul

The Australian Competition and Consumer Commission has warned that a Victorian cap on allowing water rights buybacks risks undermining the establishment of an effective national water market. The commission is highly critical of the Government's 4 per cent

cap on water trading in its first publication of Australia's new water market rules. The ACCC claims the policy artificially segments the market and prevents irrigators in financial distress from obtaining the best price for their water, *The Australian* reported.

### Happily spent

*The Financial Review* reported that the Government has announced a \$10.4m 'interim response' package to help waterlogged communities recover from their worst floods in more than a decade. Most of the money would be allocated to community infrastructure projects and businesses, including farms, according to Treasurer **John Lenders**.

### Oh, sweet saturation

*The Age* reported that tens of thousands of species that struggled to survive the drought could enjoy revived ecosystems for up to a decade as a result of the flooding rains saturating northern Victoria during early and mid-September.

### Country losses

Large financial losses continue to trouble water authorities across rural Victoria, as their city counterparts begin to enjoy the fruits of rising household water prices. Coliban Water posted its third successive loss in excess of \$28m. It now has debts close to \$220 million, and it conceded it would carry those debts for 20 years or more. Grampians Wimmera Mallee Water was close to \$17m, *The Age* reported.

### Interesting job

The **Department of Sustainability and Environment** is looking to appoint Commissioners of the Victorian Environmental Water Holder, [www.careers.vic.gov.au](http://www.careers.vic.gov.au).

## GAMING

### An albatross of their own choosing

The Brumby government has missed out on \$109m in gambling tax revenue because lotteries provider **Intralot** is delivering just 14 per cent of the sales it committed to deliver last financial year. Intralot's bad sales performance of

\$55m for 2009-10 was a fraction of the \$395m it has forecast to deliver in its 2007 agreement with the government. The result was revealed in the Victorian Commission for Gambling Regulation's annual report. The report said that in March 2009 the commission began a review of Intralot's operations with a view to assessing Intralot's compliance with its obligations to the state of Victoria and whether any of these areas may be contributing to Intralot's failure to meet sales forecast, *The Age* reported.

### Gambler's paradise

*The Age* reported that Australian-rules football boosts the Victorian economy by \$1.64b each year, with gambling the fastest-growing area of football related spending, according to a report on the game's economic impact. Australian Football League chief executive **Andrew Dimetriou**, responding to the report, admitted the league's board had grappled with concerns about the growth of gambling, with betting agencies saying football related betting had reached \$200m a year in Victoria alone. 'We've got to be very careful to continue to make sure we don't expose the code to corruption,' Dimetriou said. The report found football's tentacles spread through the economy, providing more than 4,000 full-time jobs.

### A blight

On the opinion pages of *The Age*, **Jason Dowling** wrote that gambling now presents as great a threat to the integrity of sport as performance enhancing drugs did in the 1980s and 90s, but the AFL Commission has taken a head-in-the-sand approach, revelling in the endless bounty of gambling license agreements while running an integrity system designed only to catch dummies. Gambling is now as ubiquitous in football as meat pies. Punters will bet on every facet of the grand final – score margins, first goals, which players get more goals or disposals.

## HEALTH

### Election time

Nothing says 'election time' like the promise of a new hospital, and that is exactly what Victorian **Premier John**

Brumby has offered voters, the *Financial Review* reported. After getting the last Parliamentary sitting day out of the way, Brumby said Labor would, if re-elected, build a \$250m Children's Hospital at the Monash Medical Centre in the city's south-east. But the announcement also immediately opened up another campaign staple when the Opposition attacked the Government over the transparency of the funding of its promises.

### The law and health

*The Age* reported that health professionals' fears about the legal consequences of discussing errors with patients may be stopping them disclosing their mistakes and apologising. Researchers from the University of Melbourne's schools of law and population health questioned 51 doctors and nurses from across Australia with experience in conducting 'open disclosure' – candid conversations with patients following adverse medical events. Most – 90 per cent – pointed to legal fears as a major or moderate barrier to open disclosure and 84 per cent said they did not have enough training to do it properly.

### Social justice credentials

*The Age* reported that Premier **John Brumby** unveiled a \$42m package in a bid to reinforce Labor's social justice credentials. The package aims to shift the focus of government policy from trying to find emergency accommodation for people already on the street, to preventing people from reaching crisis point by tackling the root causes of homelessness. The policy was condemned by the Opposition as being too little, too late, from an 11-year-old government. The Herald Sun reported the Victorian Council of Social Service chief executive **Cath Smith** said she looked forward to the government announcing further money for public housing. An extra 29,000 public houses need to be built over the next four years and the building program should be financed by both the state and federal governments, she said.

### Meanwhile

The median weekly rent in the metropolitan area reached \$340 in March, up 5 per cent on the past year,

according to the **Office of Housing**. The median weekly rents for a one-bedroom flat, a two-bedroom house and a four-bedroom house are \$280, \$350 and \$380, respectively, *The Age* reported.

### Another federal echo

*The Age* reported that euthanasia is back on the Victorian political agenda, with MPs from across politics calling for Parliament to debate the issue after November's state election.

### Chocolate isn't good for dogs

The advertising industry's self-regulatory code is under fire for failing to effectively reduce children's junk food marketing, after the advertising watchdog initially dismissed a complaint against a television advertisement screened during children's shows depicting primary school students playing with Oreo biscuits. The **Obesity Policy Coalition**, which includes Vic Health, Cancer Council Victoria and Diabetes Australia, claims the industry-funded Advertising Standards Bureau has rejected a string of its complaints because the industry is able to exploit loopholes in the self-regulatory system, *The Age* reported.

### Hmmm. How sad

*The Herald Sun* reported that a man who died after waiting more than three hours for an ambulance pleaded for help nine times before paramedics arrived. **Stephen Lim**, 56, went into cardiac arrest in Burwood East, three hours and 19 minutes after he first contacted Ambulance Victoria. Ambulance Victoria and Victoria Police have launched an investigation and will provide reports to the coroner. *The Age* reported that paramedics were called to work overtime to prevent a repeat of the incident. A spokesman for Ambulance Victoria, **James Howe**, said the service had called on employees to work extra shifts to cater for high demand expected after the grand final rematch and the Parklife concert in Melbourne.

### Nearby

The Government has promised 105 new paramedics for metropolitan Melbourne – but the first of the new ambulance officers will not be on the job until at least the middle of next year, *The Age*

reported. In a pre-emptive strike on a potentially damning Auditor-General's report into Victoria's ambulance service, the \$81m election policy will also see three new 24-hour ambulance stations. The Auditor-General's report revealed the number of paramedics in country Victoria had failed to keep pace with the increasing number of emergency cases. The report concluded that the ambulance service has delivered the worst emergency response times for six years.

### Pass the aeroguard

The flesh eating Bairnsdale ulcer has been found in possums at Point Lonsdale, adding a new animal to the list of species that could be passing on the rare disease to humans. **Austin Hospital's** deputy director of infectious diseases, **Paul Johnson**, said the finding was significant for scientists long baffled by the transmission of the disease, also known as *mycobacterium ulcerans* or Buruli ulcer. He said it reinforced the need for people to protect themselves against mosquito bites in the area, *The Age* reported.

### Almost perfect over there

Western Australia has implemented the toughest anti-smoking laws in the country. Smoking is now banned in cars with children, between the flags at beaches and within 10 metres of playgrounds. There will also be smoking restrictions in alfresco areas, and retailers will be banned from displaying tobacco products, *The Age* reported.

### Good job

**Arthritis Victoria** seeks a chief executive officer, [arthritisvictoria@tallentpartners.com.au](mailto:arthritisvictoria@tallentpartners.com.au).

## INVESTMENT

### BUSINESS

#### Hybrid investment

*The Herald Sun* reported that Toyota has announced an investment of more than \$300m to build a new engine plant at Altona. The company has committed to produce up to 140,000 **Hybrid Camry** and four-cylinder new generation

# Roy Morgan Research

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**Finding No. 1197**  
Available on Website: [www.roymorgan.com](http://www.roymorgan.com)  
On October 21, 2010  
See [Roy Morgan Online Store](#)

## **Roy Morgan Consumer Confidence eases back 1.5 pts to 127.7**

### **‘Good time to Buy’ (64%) highest since January 2006**

Consumer Confidence has fallen to 127.7 (down 1.5pts in the week since October 9/10, 2010) according to the weekly Roy Morgan Consumer Confidence Rating conducted on the weekend of October 16/17, 2010. Weekly Consumer Confidence is now 0.6 pts higher than a year ago, October 17/18, 2009 (127.1).

The slight fall has been mainly driven by Australians having less confidence about their financial situations and less confidence about the next 12 months.

In terms of personal finances 33% (down 2%) of Australians say their family is ‘better off financially’ than a year ago compared to 28% (up 3%) that say their family is ‘worse off financially’ than a year ago.

Now 41% (down 2%) of Australians expect their family to be ‘better off financially’ this time next year compared to 17% (up 2%) that expect their family to be ‘worse off.’

Of Australians, 47% (down 1%) say that Australia as a whole will have ‘good times’ financially during the next 12 months compared to 18% (up 4%) that say we’ll have ‘bad times’ financially.

In terms of the economy as a whole, in the long-term 44%, (up 3%) of Australians expect Australia to have ‘good times’ economically over the next five years compared to 14% (up 2%) that expect ‘bad times’ economically.

A clear majority of Australians 64% (up 5% – **and the highest since January 2006**) say ‘now is a good time to buy’ major household items compared to only 14% (unchanged) that say ‘now is a bad time to buy’ major household items.

#### **Gary Morgan says:**

*“Consumer Confidence has eased slightly to 127.5 (down 1.5pts) as confidence about people’s financial situations slipped slightly with 33% (down 2%) of Australians saying their family is ‘better off financially’ than this time last year and 41% (down 2%) of Australians expecting to be ‘better off financially’ this time next year.*

*“In contrast to these movements, 64% (up 5%) of Australians now say ‘now is a good time to buy’ major household items – the highest this indicator has been for nearly five years, [since January 2006](#). The soaring Australian Dollar, which briefly reached parity with the US Dollar last Friday night, is likely responsible for this surge as imported consumer goods like TVs, stereos, refrigerators, washing machines and whitegoods all become more affordable for households as the Australian Dollar strengthens.”*

This weekly Roy Morgan Consumer Confidence rating is based on 1,052 face-to-face interviews conducted Australia-wide with men and women aged 14 and over on the weekends of October 16/17, 2010.

The latest Roy Morgan Consumer Confidence Monthly Report is now available on the [Roy Morgan Online Store](#).

The latest Roy Morgan Consumer Confidence Monthly Report provides detailed demographic breakdowns for Age, Sex, State, Region (Capital Cities/ Country), Generations, Lifecycle, Socio-Economic Scale, Work Status, Occupation, Home Ownership, Voting Intention, Roy Morgan Value Segments and more.

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21 October, 2010 | [www.RoyMorganOnlineStore.com](http://www.RoyMorganOnlineStore.com)

Welcome to the latest issue of our Market Research Updates.

With the AFL and the NRL Grand Finals both having been and gone, this week we share some insights into the characteristics of the different team supporters and how they differ. We take a look at some other interesting topics including Advertising Recall among Intending Car Buyers, Satisfaction with Car Driven plus Incidence of Chronic Illness. We also provide the very latest findings in Customer Satisfaction, New Vehicle Buying Intention, Consumer Confidence and Australian Voting Intention.

We hope that you find this issue an interesting read and we welcome any feedback you may have on our Market Research Updates.

### LATEST FINDINGS

#### **Roy Morgan Consumer Confidence gains strongly (up 6.3 pts to 129.2)**

Consumer Confidence has jumped to 129.2 (up 6.3pts in the week since October 2/3, 2010) after the RBA left interest rates unchanged at 4.5% for the fifth straight month according to the weekly Roy Morgan Consumer Confidence Rating conducted on the weekend of October 9/10, 2010. Weekly Consumer Confidence is now 1 point higher than a year ago, October 10/11, 2009 (128.2). The strong rise has been mainly driven by Australians having more confidence about their financial situations and rising confidence about the next 12 months.

[For more information visit www.RoyMorganOnlineStore.com](http://www.RoyMorganOnlineStore.com)

#### **Local car manufacturers have highest advertising recall among Intending Buyers**



Ford (74.8%) has the highest advertising recall amongst the 2 million plus long-term new car buying intenders\*, closely followed by local rivals Holden (72.9%) and Toyota (70.7%). Local manufacturers top the ad recall list, whilst Mazda is leading the mid volume importers marginally ahead of Honda.

[For more information visit www.RoyMorganOnlineStore.com](http://www.RoyMorganOnlineStore.com)

#### **ALP (55.5%, up 1.5%) increases lead on L-NP (44.5%, down 1.5%)**

The ALP Government (55.5%, up 1.5% since the Face-to-Face Morgan Poll conducted on the weekend of September 18/19, 2010) has increased its lead over the L-NP (44.5%, down 1.5%) according to the Face-to-Face Morgan Poll conducted last weekend, October 2/3, 2010. If a Federal election were held now the ALP would retain Government according to the latest Face-to-Face Morgan Poll.

[For more information visit www.RoyMorganOnlineStore.com](http://www.RoyMorganOnlineStore.com)

#### **Incidence of Chronic illness, Higher in country Australia**

The incidence of lifestyle related conditions including high blood pressure and cholesterol, along with chronic illnesses such as diabetes, cardiovascular disease, angina, heart attack and stroke is significantly higher amongst residents of country Australia than amongst city dwellers.

[For more information visit www.RoyMorganOnlineStore.com](http://www.RoyMorganOnlineStore.com)



## Autobarn ahead of Supercheap Auto and Repco in Customer Satisfaction



Autobarn customers were the most satisfied in the car accessories and car care products stores category. Overall, the average satisfaction rating of the auto stores surveyed was 83.9%. The best performer being Autobarn with 86.8% of their customers either 'very' or 'fairly' satisfied.

[For more information visit www.RoyMorganOnlineStore.com](http://www.RoyMorganOnlineStore.com)

## Collingwood vs. St Kilda: It's not just Football where they Differ

St. Kilda played Collingwood in the 2010 AFL Grand Final. Special Roy Morgan Research available on AFL Supporters reveals that despite matching up for Australian sport's biggest annual game — there are several differences between the two sets of supporters in this year's AFL Grand Final.



[For more information visit www.RoyMorganOnlineStore.com](http://www.RoyMorganOnlineStore.com)

## Australian Geographic Shop top in Customer Satisfaction

Australian Geographic Shop has emerged as the top non food retailer in terms of satisfaction, with 91.5% of its customers satisfied. Both Dymocks and JB Hi-Fi had the second highest score with 90.4%. As the only store in the top 10 to record an increase (albeit less than 1%) in its customer satisfaction levels from the previous quarter, the Australian Geographic Shop was able to take out the top spot.

[For more information visit www.RoyMorganOnlineStore.com](http://www.RoyMorganOnlineStore.com)

## Woolworths and Aldi increase Customer Satisfaction whilst Coles and IGA lose ground

Aldi remains in top place with IGA and Woolworths both vying for second position. Woolworths continued to gain ground, increasing satisfaction levels by 2.9% points in the last 4 months. Aldi performed the strongest in August, recovering from their lowest ever recorded satisfaction level in July.



[For more information visit www.RoyMorganOnlineStore.com](http://www.RoyMorganOnlineStore.com)

## Chemist Warehouse tops Customer Satisfaction of Chemists



Chemist Warehouse is the number one chemist for customer satisfaction, followed by My Chemist and Terry White. The report found Chemist Warehouse led customer satisfaction of chemists with 90.1% of its customers satisfied. My Chemist and Terry White both had 89.5% satisfaction.

[For more information visit www.RoyMorganOnlineStore.com](http://www.RoyMorganOnlineStore.com)

## Long-term Car Buying Intention down, but remains well above the long-term average

An estimated 2,117,000 Australians intend to buy a new car in the next 4 years (excluding Fleet, Government and Rental Buyers).

This is marginally down on the July 2010 figure of 2,189,000, but remains comfortably above the long-term average\* of 2,053,000.



[For more information visit www.RoyMorganOnlineStore.com](http://www.RoyMorganOnlineStore.com)

## Ikea ahead of Harvey Norman in Customer Satisfaction for furniture stores



Ikea has the highest level of customer satisfaction of furniture stores, just ahead of Harvey Norman. Ikea led customer satisfaction with 86.2% of its customers either very satisfied or fairly satisfied, followed by Harvey Norman (85.7%), Freedom (83.2%) and Fantastic Furniture (67.6%).

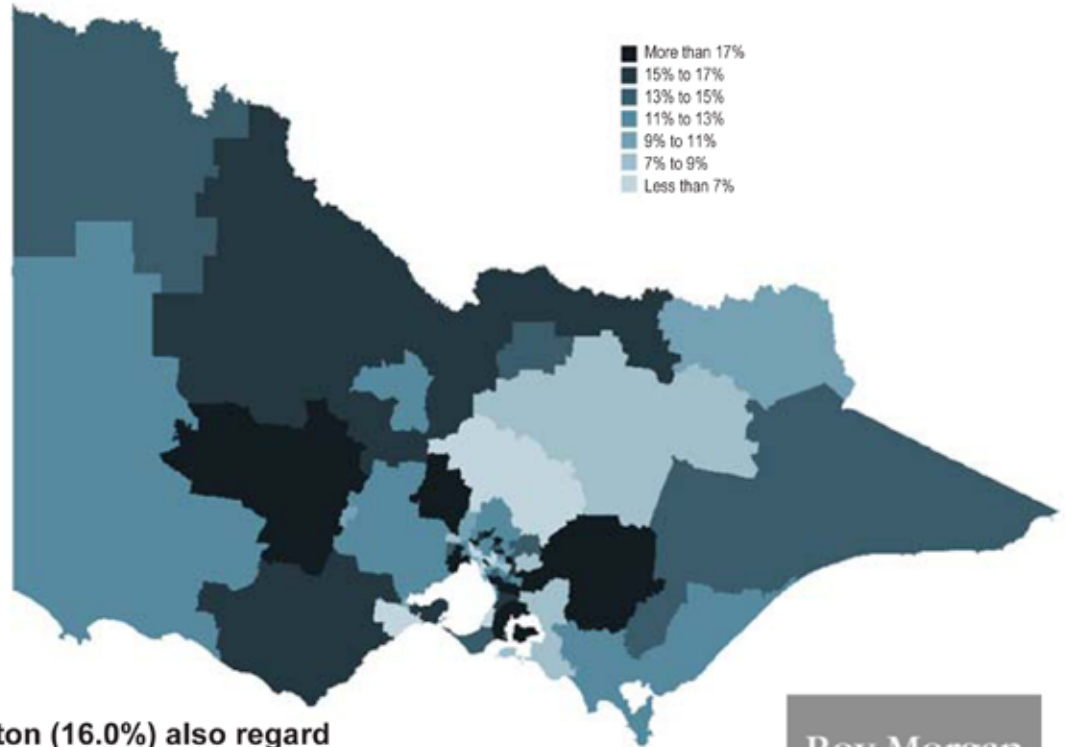
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# IMPORTANCE OF REDUCING CRIME AND MAINTAINING LAW & ORDER

Do the areas around Melbourne City see Crime as such an important issue as the media lead us to believe?

Reducing Crime and Maintaining Law & Order continues to be a huge issue for the Brumby State Government heading towards election day in November.

According to Roy Morgan Research electors in the Liberal held seat of Hastings (32.0%) are the most likely to regard Crime as an important issue followed closely by Eltham (27.3%) and Lyndhurst (24.9%). The marginal ALP electorates of Gembrook (21.9%), Mordialloc (19.6%), Ripon (19.1%) and Frankston (16.0%) also regard Reducing Crime and Maintaining Law & Order as an important issue.



Roy Morgan  
Research

Hastings	32.0%	Ferntree Gully	15.8%	Northcote	12.4%	Ballarat West	10.0%
Eltham	27.3%	Cranbourne	15.5%	Melton	12.3%	Sandringham	9.4%
Lyndhurst	24.9%	Rodney	15.3%	Broadmeadows	12.3%	Brunswick	9.4%
Pascoe Vale	24.4%	Bendigo West	15.2%	Tarneit	12.1%	Albert Park	9.0%
Altona	23.1%	Murray Valley	15.1%	Carrum	12.1%	Bass	8.8%
Derrimut	22.2%	Nepean	14.8%	Narre Warren North	12.0%	Prahran	8.5%
Gembrook	21.9%	Bulleen	14.7%	Lowan	11.9%	Mount Waverley	8.3%
Mill Park	20.8%	Morwell	14.7%	Bendigo East	11.7%	Monbulk	8.2%
Macedon	20.7%	Shepparton	14.6%	Warrandyte	11.6%	Scoresby	7.8%
Bayswater	20.1%	Clayton	14.2%	Ivanhoe	11.6%	Benalla	7.7%
Williamstown	20.0%	Kilsyth	14.0%	Ballarat East	11.6%	Keilor	7.5%
Narre Warren South	19.7%	Dandenong	13.9%	Footscray	11.4%	Melbourne	6.7%
Mordialloc	19.6%	Gippsland East	13.9%	Lara	11.4%	Caulfield	6.6%
Doncaster	19.5%	Kororoit	13.7%	Preston	11.4%	Essendon	6.5%
Ripon	19.1%	Evelyn	13.5%	South-West Coast	11.3%	Mornington	6.4%
Narracan	17.3%	Mildura	13.2%	Mulgrave	11.1%	Brighton	6.4%
Bellarine	16.7%	Niddrie	13.0%	Gippsland South	11.0%	South Barwon	6.1%
Malvern	16.4%	Bundoora	12.9%	Yuroke	11.0%	Hawthorn	5.9%
Polwarth	16.3%	Kew	12.8%	Benambra	10.9%	Box Hill	4.7%
Swan Hill	16.2%	Bentleigh	12.8%	Oakleigh	10.6%	Seymour	4.0%
Frankston	16.0%	Mitcham	12.7%	Geelong	10.2%	Burwood	3.2%
Thomastown	15.8%	Yan Yean	12.5%	Forest Hill	10.1%	Richmond	2.4%

Marginal ALP State Electorate Seats  
Marginal LNP State Electorate Seats

Source: Roy Morgan Research July 2008 – July 2010  
Victorian Electors n = 19,952



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engines a year in Victoria from 2012. The federal government has invested \$63m to attract the plant upgrade, while the state government has committed about \$10m. The move, which has been two years in the making and was almost derailed because of the global financial crisis, will secure 3,300 existing jobs, including those of 320-engine on workers at Altona. *The Australian* reported new figures show the Hybrid Camry, the first subsidised project in the federal government's billion-dollar green car scheme, is continuing to sell well below expectations. The federal money comes from the **Green Car Innovation Fund** with the condition that of the 100,000 engines a year that Toyota produces, up to one-sixth will be for hybrid vehicles.

### Growing up

The laneways of Melbourne have become high streets. Shops in our city labyrinths have doubled in little more than a decade. In 1997 there were 152 retail outlets in 27 laneways; now there are 283 shops in almost 50 laneways. The Melbourne Retail Strategy Report Card reveals that Hardware Lane, Degraives St, Centre Place, Block Place and Red Cape Lane in QV recorded the biggest growth. Hardware Lane has experienced a 1,167 per cent increase. It began with just three outlets in 1997, but now has 38 retailers. The number of retailers in Degraives St has risen by 150 per cent, the *Herald Sun* reported.

### Got the chocolates

*The Age* reported that the oldest family-owned chocolate manufacturer and retailer in Australia, Haigh's Chocolates, has secured the last shop at the new five-star InterContinental Hotel at 495 Collins Street.

### Blake's trio of Leos'

The *Herald Sun* reported that for the past 30 years **Leo Blake** and his family have built a small but highly successful supermarket business that has largely flown under the radar of the wider shopping public, and also of his infinitely bigger rivals, Coles and Woolworths. But lately Coles and Woolies have paid closer attention to Blake's trio of Leo's Fine Food and Wine supermarkets in Kew, Heidelberg and Glen Iris, just as he plans to expand.

### Sadly

Former state Liberal minister **Roger Pescott** has been declared bankrupt, with forest-oriented investors claiming millions of dollars, *The Age* reported.

### ICT

#### C'est la vie

About 455,000 Victorian country households will lose their analogue TV signal on May 5, the *Herald Sun* reported. The Federal Government said 76 per cent of homes in regional Victoria had already switched to digital TV. It means about 109,000 families have about seven months to buy a digital TV or set-top box to keep watching TV after May 5.

### AGRICULTURE

#### Headers up

According to the **Victorian Farmers Federation** grains group president, **Russell Amery**, this year's wheat crop is the first big crop growers will harvest since the demise of the wheat single-selling desk, which in itself will present challenges to growers who want to store their grain and not sell off the header.

Amery said improvements in headers in the past two decades meant grain was stripped more quickly. This meant grain handlers had to deal with the same amount of grain, but in a two to three-week shorter window. Amery said some farmers would choose the method they thought best to store grain on their farm. They might use silo bags, or dump it on the ground or build their own bunkers, the *Weekly Times* reported. Also, importantly, rail infrastructure to get the grain to port is not like it used to be. Trucks will not fill in the gap, on time, for this rail discrepancy.

#### The end times

*The Age* reported that Premier **John Brumby** said that Victoria faced its biggest locust plague in 75 years. Brumby declared war on locusts, with the first regional locust control centre opening in Mildura in mid-September. Department of Primary Industries entomologist **Gordon Bird** said locusts last reached Melbourne in 1974, but may well this year. There were ads in the main papers saying that locusts are now hatching in areas of regional Victoria. Pull over if locusts obstruct your vision, [www.dpi.vic.gov.au/locusts](http://www.dpi.vic.gov.au/locusts).

#### Save the locust

The Victorian government has grossly overestimated locust damage, according to Mitiamo sheep farmer **Eris O'Brien**. He believes the millions of eggs forecast to hatch in north-west Victoria will not be as bad as expected. He says the locust plagues could, in fact, be a benefit to farming regions in the long term. He founded a website, [www.savethelocust.com.au](http://www.savethelocust.com.au), the *Weekly Times* reported.

## Need help

Farmers have urged the Brumby government to create a road funding program to boost spending on country roads, improve the flow of agricultural produce from the paddock to market and ease the pressure on struggling local councils. The pre-election policy platform of the Victorian Farmers Federation says a new Roads to Market program would make supply chains more efficient, improve road safety and ensure more local government funds are available for other community services. On railways, the federation has renewed its push for the standardisation of the rail freight network, calling for a \$160-million investment. The pre-election pitch also urges the government to do more to protect high-quality farmland on the edges of cities and towns from being eaten up by housing and other developments, *The Age* reported.

## JUSTICE

### Problems

Secret files stolen from ASIO and police and anticorruption agencies were discovered during a drug raid in Melbourne, raising fears of a major breach of national security and crime intelligence. Police are investigating whether the former head of intelligence and phone tapping at Victoria's Office of Police Integrity stole documents. The files were discovered on September 10 by detectives searching a house in Melbourne's north as part of a drug investigation. They found boxes containing sensitive national security and law enforcement documents, including files from ASIO, the OPI and West Australian police, *The Age* reported.

In the fallout from the security breach, Office of Police Integrity director **Michael Strong** conceded the discovery of the agency files, as well as the ASIO and West Australian police documents, had damaged the credibility of his organisation. An editorial in the same paper said that the OPI's loss of credibility clinches the case for reform. As security breaches go, it doesn't get much worse. In the Office of Police Integrity's chequered history since its creation in 2004, nothing compares with the revelation that a police drug raid on

a Melbourne home found boxes of secret documents from the OPI, ASIO and West Australian police.

*The Australian* reported that at the time a former senior OPI employee is suspected of taking home secret OPI documents, the watchdog was involved in a string of highly sensitive probes, including alleged police involvement in gangland murders and an aggressive eavesdropping operation against the top echelons of Victoria Police.

### Strong language

*The Herald Sun* reported that Office of Police Integrity director **Michael Strong**, a former County Court judge, accused Opposition Leader Ted Baillieu of being unbalanced and ill informed in his criticism of the OPI. Baillieu has said that he would disband the OPI if the opposition won the November election.

### Why?

Victoria police Chief Commissioner **Simon Overland's** leak of confidential intelligence from a telephone tap in a covert murder probe has been cleared by the federal Attorney-General's Department after a secret legal opinion from an unnamed barrister. The clearance means police officers throughout Australia can now disclose intelligence from telephone taps without facing action, despite strict provisions in the Telecommunications (Interception and Access) Act, according to former police union chief **Paul Mullett**, *The Australian* reported.

### No joke

*The Herald Sun* reported that police officers have been caught joking about the electrocution of an Indian train passenger, atop a train in India, in a racist e-mail scandal. They circulated video footage of the man being killed and suggested it could be a way to fix Melbourne's Indian student problem. Some of the force's highest ranked officers are being implicated in the scandal, which also involves pornographic material. The correspondence was discovered during an investigation into the circulation of inappropriate e-mails through the police computer system. *The Age* reported that one police officer has quit and another is facing serious disciplinary action

over the e-mail that is causing friction between Australia and India. The Herald Sun reported that the Indian Foreign Office summoned the Australian High Commissioner to India, **Peter Varghese**, over the e-mails.

### The appearance of yielding

*The Herald Sun* reported that police were handed the telephone records of more than 50,000 Victorians in the past year without having to explain why they needed them. Victoria Police spent more than \$1.25m checking the private and business telephone records of an average of almost 140 people every day during 2009-10. Chief Commissioner **Simon Overland** appears to have yielded to criticism of police using phone checks to try to trace leaks to the media. He has asked for a review of the force's approval process when authorising telephone record checks.

### New broom

*The Herald Sun* reported that police diverted resources to covertly investigate that paper's phone records to save face over an embarrassing whistleblower leak. Detectives secretly obtained call lists to find out who senior writer **Geoff Wilkinson** had spoken to. In an article the same paper, Wilkinson asked how the force's hierarchy can justify a two-month investigation to find the source of the story that caused nothing more than serious embarrassment for them, when they claim to be stretched for resources? The official answer is they are obliged to investigate a criminal offence, he wrote, such as the leaking of a confidential document to a reporter. The truth is more likely to be that the hierarchy, starting at the very top, is obsessed with controlling the flow of information on police matters.

### Back to the streets

A move by Victoria Police to go back to basics by returning police to the streets shows that the model adopted by former chief **Christine Nixon** has failed, according to the police union. Her replacement, Simon Overland, revealed he believed police have lost their way in responding to emergencies and ordered a review to ensure front-line police spent more time on the streets. Police Association secretary Greg Davies said

the wide-ranging plan was a rejection of Nixon's committee-driven style, *The Age* reported.

### Raped on the knuckles

A rift between Director of Public Prosecutions **Jeremy Rapke** and his deputy, Chief Crown prosecutor **Gavin Silbert**, was sparked by Rapke's decision to appoint an inexperienced solicitor – **Diana Karamicov** – to the important post of Associate Crown Prosecutor, the *Herald Sun* reported. Attorney-General **Rob Hulls** set up an independent body to review the promotion but this has not resolved the ill feeling. *The Age* reported that Rapke has been forced to reject claims that he had an inappropriate relationship with Karamicov. As we go to press, everyone is happy again, after lots of media coverage.

### New media

*The Australian* reported that upper house Liberal backbencher **Bernie Finn** used the social networking site Facebook to criticise Chief Commissioner **Simon Overland**, saying he was incompetent and a political appointee of the Brumby government. Premier John Brumby jumped on the comments, saying it was bad space for the opposition to be publicly denigrating Overland and the state's police. Opposition leader Ted Baillieu was forced to reiterate support for Overland.

### Big brother admonished

Victoria Police has been castigated for striking a deal to make available secret police files of people protesting Victoria's \$5.7b desalination project to the private consortium building the plant. The Office of Police Integrity has ruled that the agreement – overseen by the Government in a bid to ensure the project is finished on schedule – failed to properly comply with privacy and human rights laws. In his 62-page report, the Commissioner for Law Enforcement and Data Security, **David Watts**, said he had found no evidence police provided AquaSure with sensitive personal files. But he found that the memorandum did not adequately take account of Victoria's human rights, information privacy and law enforcement data security laws and did not establish the mechanisms

necessary to support compliance with them, *The Age* reported. Victoria Police will no longer make deals with private companies over the exchange of personal information. Chief Commissioner **Simon Overland** admitted that the deal with AquaSure should never have been done. 'The MoUs [memorandums of understanding] are drafted by lawyers, so we just don't race doing these things in a slapdash fashion, but I do accept the criticisms that are being made,' he said. Police have struck at least 36 memorandums of understanding since January 2008. Premier **John Brumby** said the desalination agreement had been properly worded, and the report into the deal found there had been no breach of the law.

### Hmmm

*The Age* reported that Brumby government MPs used their numbers on a law reform committee to shut down an inquiry into police deals to pass on secret personal information, less than two months before the state election. The inquiry was directed to investigate several police memorandums of understanding with private authorities. The opposition criticised the decision as an orchestrated and ruthless suppression of information that should be open to the public.

### Shameful

The *Herald Sun* reported that Ombudsman **George Brouwer** found the Parkville youth detention centre for offenders aged 10 to 21 should be closed. He found conditions breached government regulations and prison standards. Community Services Minister **Lisa Neville** admits there are times of overcrowding and offenders are more violent. The number of youths jailed has jumped 35 per cent to almost 100 in two years. The report says: '[A] whistleblower alleged that staff allowed detainees to gather at the Justice Centre's oval or in the courtyard to engage in physical violence to resolve their disputes.' *The Australian* reported the investigation found the Department of Human Services had failed to meet its legal and human rights obligations and the appalling state of the facility meant it should be closed and rebuilt.

### The law moves on

The legal rule of double jeopardy will be overhauled, allowing some people to be tried twice for the same crime if a crucial witness confesses to having given false evidence, or if new DNA evidence emerges, if the opposition wins the state election, *The Age* reported. *The Financial Review* reported that the Law Institute of Victoria has warned the Opposition that its proposal to amend jeopardy rules may lead to slipshod justice and called on the Government to maintain its principled position in support of the rule despite moves by other states to water it down. The institute warned that the removal of double jeopardy would stigmatise those acquitted of crimes, and leave victims of crimes without a final resolution of a case after a trial.

### Compliments

An editorial in the *Herald Sun* asserted Attorney-General Rob Hulls is to be applauded for taking the lead in pushing for a new law to help journalists protect the identity of confidential sources. Hulls is so committed to the cause that if he fails to convince the Commonwealth and other states of the need for a national law soon, he will go it alone with Victorian legislation. What Hulls is urging is the adoption in Australia of the New Zealand model, which gives journalists a presumption against having to reveal the identity of sources in court.

### Media shortcomings

Victoria's Chief Justice **Marilyn Warren** is so unhappy with the way the media have been reporting on the state's courts she suggested that the courts should publish their own online newspaper every week. She also proposed that the courts should provide commentators to appear on YouTube. These are among a series of suggestions Warren put forward to overcome what she saw as the shortcomings of the media's coverage of courts. She used her **Richard Searby** oration at Deakin University to criticise the media for generally focusing only on the outcome of court cases instead of the process of judicial reasoning, *The Australian* reported.

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### Just sounds dodgy

The Auditor-General criticised the Brumby government's partnerships with the private companies that run many of the state's prisons. The report on prison accommodation found the Government could not show Victorians were receiving value for money from the public-private partnership deals. Auditor-General **Des Pearson** also reported that weakness and poor practice by the Department of Justice meant it could not be assured it was getting the services it paid for, *The Age* reported.

### Age defends Bolt

The *Herald Sun's* **Andrew Bolt** is in court again. This time he is being sued over opinion pieces in which he argued that there was a new fashion in academia to identify as Aboriginal. Bolt described artists, writers, academics and activists who identified as Aboriginal but who also had European heritage. Up to nine people say Bolt has breached the Racial Discrimination Act and are suing him for causing hurt and humiliation. An editorial in *The Age* said that the court case is a threat to free speech. It should not be illegal to proclaim a view that may insult or offend. As Liberty Victoria's Michael Pearce, SC, said: 'Hurt and offence are caused by all sorts of speech all the time.' The editorial asserts that there is nothing wrong with questioning whether someone with a distant Aboriginal relative should qualify for benefits or enter competitions set aside to encourage indigenous Australians. A controversial view? Yes. Even a hurtful one to some people. But one that should be unlawful? That would be a dangerous limit to free speech in this country.

### And here's your Taser

Police recruits will get just 10 weeks training before being sworn in and sent to stations in a push to fast track the deployment, the *Herald Sun* reported. The move could cut 13 weeks off the current system but has raised concerns safety could be sacrificed for political gain. Under the plan, newly sworn officers would be confined to station duties and not be armed. Victoria Police confirmed it was considering swearing in recruits at 10 weeks to give them more workplace experience. Police Association state secretary Greg Davies said the idea had been used elsewhere to good effect but there are potential pitfalls and safety was a major concern.

### Nearby

*The Age* reported that a secret police report has exposed failed training methods that have left officers without the skills to defuse violent and potentially fatal confrontations. The report has been released to the Federation of Community Legal Centres under freedom of information laws.

### Heroin

Police are searching for one of Australia's largest heroin importations amid concerns it will lead to a flood of the drug in Sydney and Melbourne and further enrich one of the nation's most powerful bikie gangs, the Comancheros, *The Age* reported.

### Learnt to mediate

**Rob Cornall**, a secretary of the federal Attorney-General's Department for more than eight years until 2008, has

joined specialist Melbourne mediation firm McFarlane Legal, *The Australian* reported.

### Crime fighter!

Victoria Police have a new \$16m helicopter fitted with the latest crime-fighting technology, *The Age* reported.

### A big job

The **Deputy Premier** and **Attorney-General** of Victoria invites expressions of interest from candidates interested in becoming the next Solicitor-General of Victoria, [www.careers.vic.gov.au](http://www.careers.vic.gov.au).

### Looking for lawyers

The **Victorian Managed Insurance Authority** is seeking expressions of interest from suitably qualified and experienced law firms to provide legal services in respect of: General Insurance; Medical Indemnity and Associated Services; Asbestos and Dust Diseases and pre-1985 Workers Compensation Claims Management; Domestic Building Insurance; and General Legal Advice to the VMIA, [www.tenders.vic.gov.au](http://www.tenders.vic.gov.au).

## MELBOURNE

### A real winter

The *Herald Sun* reported that Melbourne experienced its coldest September for 16 years. **Dr Harvey Stern** of the weather bureau said the year had started off with the longest ever stretch of days above 20 followed by one of its longest ever stretches of sub 20C days. *The*



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*Australian* reported that the average maximum temperature in Melbourne was 16.6C, well below the month's long-term average of 17.2C.

### Welcome John

An Age Dymocks Book Event will see **John Howard** launch his memoir, *Lazarus Rising*, at the River Room at Crown, Whiteman Street, Southbank on November 8.

### Let there be daylight savings

Daylight savings in Victoria started at 2 am on Sunday, October 3, moving clocks forward one hour, until Sunday, April 3.

### Another success

The Royal Melbourne Show ran from the 18th to 28th of September.

## GEELONG

### Fun on two wheels

The 2010 UCI Road World Championships (for cycling) were held over five days at the end of September and the beginning of October. Over 200,000 people attended the event which attracted a worldwide television audience of 400 million. Norwegian sprinter **Thor Hushovd** won the men's road race in a bunch finish on Moorabool Street.

## PLANNING. BUILDING

### What the government wants

Changes to Victoria's planning laws that could sideline councils and allow developments to be fast tracked will be delayed until after the November election. The planned changes to Victoria's Planning and Environment Act, outlined in a draft bill released last December, would for the first time allow developers – with the authorisation of the planning minister – to prepare planning scheme amendments, including exhibiting the planning changes, receiving submissions and presenting the amendments to the council for approval. The amendments could relate to subdivisions, commercial or residential developments or height limits, and would require the planning minister's final approval, *The Age* reported.

### Hear-no-evil, see-no-evil...

Planning Minister **Justin Madden** agreed to appear before an upper house inquiry into the \$260m redevelopment of the Windsor hotel, challenging the Opposition controlled committee to hear his evidence. The committee resolved to call the minister to appear, with opposition planning spokesman and committee member **Matthew Guy** keen to quiz Madden on court evidence given by a senior adviser to Premier **John Brumby** detailing the government's media plan. Guy said Victorians should

know whether the government master media plan included information about the Windsor Hotel and whether it was seen by Madden or Brumby. *The Age* reported that Madden says he never asked his former media adviser about the media plan that triggered the Windsor Hotel scandal or whether she acted alone. In a fiery appearance before a parliamentary inquiry into the hotel redevelopment, the minister revealed he had not sought an explanation from his staff about the media plan, which suggested a sham public consultation process.

He had seen his former media adviser, **Peta Duke**, at the time the media plan was accidentally leaked to the media to wish her well, but hadn't asked where the ideas came from. On the opinion pages of *The Age*, **Paul Austin** wrote that John Brumby and his ministers have a nasty habit of courting ignorance when scandals erupt on their watch. It looks like a hear-no-evil, see-no-evil strategy. Whatever it is, it betrays a failure of ministerial responsibility and accountability.

*The Age* reported that Guy moved a resolution for the opposition controlled upper house inquiry to subpoena Premier John Brumby to give evidence. Brumby signalled he would not appear before the inquiry if summoned to give evidence.

### It's happening

The demolition of parts of the historic Windsor Hotel and the construction of a 91-metre tower have effectively been given the green light after the National Trust lost a legal bid to stop the hotel's \$260m redevelopment, *The Age* reported. Probably, the hotel will remain as it is for another year.

### First rejection in a while

The *Financial Review* reported that Planning Minister Justin Madden has rejected a combined planning permit application and rezoning of land for a proposed Woolworths big-box hardware store in North Geelong, based on evidence from an independent advisory committee, and is awaiting advice on another ten sites across the state.

## A world first

A 32-storey apartment block at the Carlton end of Swanston Street will feature – in an architectural world first – the image of indigenous leader **William Barak** across the 100-metre-high, sculpted side. When complete in 2014, Barak's image on the Portrait building, on the former Carlton & United breweries site, will be in direct line of sight of the Shrine of Remembrance, nearly 3 kilometre away, *The Age* reported.

## Growing up

*The Age* reported that more than 20 per cent of all new homes approved in Victoria this financial year have been high-rise apartments, as Melbourne's population boom is making it build up as well as out. Almost 40 per cent of new homes approved in the state in the first two months of the 2010-11 financial year have been either high or medium density.

## Go Dees

Prominent Melbourne pollster and local resident (and *Letter from Melbourne* pollster) **Gary Morgan** is fighting plans by Thakral Holdings – owner of the Hilton on the Park and the MCG Hotel – to build about 80 apartments at the rear and beside the former MCG hotel in proceedings before Victoria's planning tribunal. Morgan, who lives next to the proposed development, said the MCG Hotel should be celebrated and the redevelopment was inappropriate for the site. He said the hotel should be restored to what it was in the 1870s and should be made part of the tourist and historical precinct. Architect **Bruce Trethowan** prepared a statement of evidence for Morgan regarding the heritage issues surrounding the development proposal. 'Melbourne Football Club was founded at the MCG Hotel and the Melbourne Football Club is one of the oldest football clubs in Australia, if not the oldest,' he said. The case is continuing before the Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal, *The Age* reported.

## Times change

Tough times in Britain have prompted the sale of three British government-owned Australian properties, including two top end homes in Toorak and a

mansion in Sydney suburb of Vaucluse. British diplomats will be expected to live in more modest city apartments, according to the British Foreign Office. A spokeswoman said the residences would be put on the market next year and replaced with properties 'more fit for purpose', *The Age* reported.

## Out with the Brits, in with the Chinese

A Chinese conglomerate has bought the heritage listed Stonnington Mansion site in Malvern for \$28.5m. The 1.5 hectare block of land is bordered by Glenferrie Road and Somers Avenue, *The Age* reported. In 2007, the historic Stonnington Mansion building without the land was sold to art dealer **Rodney Menzies** for more than \$18m.

## In and about town

Melbourne's live music scene could win greater protection from the encroachment of residential developments under a deal between the music industry and the government. The deal commits the government to work towards bolstering the protection in planning laws for live music venues from new residential developments, *The Age* reported.

## A new plan

The **Growth Areas Authority** is calling for submissions on its Growth Area Framework Plan, [www.dpcd.vic.gov.au](http://www.dpcd.vic.gov.au).

## LOCAL GOVERNMENT

### Drivel

The *Herald Sun* reported that a feud between Mount Alexander Shire Council and retiring Police Minister Bob Cameron has helped win a reprieve for Chewton Swimming Pool. The council has been trying for the past six months to close the pool as part of a proposal for a \$14m aquatic and leisure centre in nearby Castlemaine. But the local community, supported by the Victorian Trades Hall Council, has fought the move and surrounded the pool with a tent embassy to prevent any demolition attempt by the council. Cameron recently intervened, accusing the council of dishing up drivel in attempting to justify closing the pool.

## SPORT

### Best remembered as the year of no result

The grand final replay between St Kilda and Collingwood saw 40,000 tickets – double the original allocation – released to members of both clubs. Collingwood won the replay of by 56 points in front of 93,853 fans. Both AFL chief executive **Andrew Demetriou** and Premier **John Brumby** expressed disappointment to the MCC for not ticketing the reserve, where there were 6,000 vacant seats on the day. After the drawn grand final, many people's plans to the following weekend were thrown into disarray, particularly those who'd planned a wedding. But one gets the feeling the reality was exaggerated by various media during the week.

### Prices Still Keen

The *Financial Review* reported that Melbourne real estate agents were scrambling to reschedule home auctions as owners pulled their properties from the market to avoid clashing with the AFL grand final replay. *The Age* reported that Melbourne's auction market posted one of its strongest performances in months, despite the disruption caused by the grand final rematch. The auction clearance rate hit 74 per cent, well above the average of 69 per cent seen in August and September, on the morning of the replayed grand final, according to the Real Estate Institute of Victoria.

### Went off without a hitch

Discus champion **Danny Samuels** pulled out of the Commonwealth Games in India, declaring 'no gold medal is worth risking my life for'. Just hours after her outfit was delivered, Samuels said the threat of terrorism had frightened her out of going to Delhi, the *Herald Sun* reported. A number of other athletes, including cyclist **Travis Meyer** and table tennis player **Stefanie Sang** pulled out at the Delhi games citing security and health concerns. Australia's chef de mission, **Steve Moneghetti**, said he wasn't worried by the discovery of a snake in one of the athletes' village rooms before the start of the Commonwealth Games. As the games were underway, reports of poor crowds

and illness among athletes, particularly swimmers, leading to concerns that the pool facilities were contaminated, dominated the newspapers. All seems to have ended happily, and the games now move onto Glasgow in 2014.

### Southern upgrade

The MCG's 20-year-old Great Southern Stand will be refurbished, beginning in June next year. The \$55m renovation of food outlets, toilets, entry points and function rooms is being funded by \$25m from the Melbourne Cricket Club and \$30m from the Government. The works are expected to be completed in time for the 2013 AFL season. Premier **John Brumby** said the MCG was one of the globe's great stadiums and the renovations needed to keep up with world-class standards, *The Age* reported.

### Together again

*The Age* reported that **Phar Lap's** skeleton was reunited with his hide for the first time in eight years, when his bones were unveiled as part of a new exhibition at the Melbourne Museum. Skeleton and hide will be displayed alongside each other until January next year. It is the first time the two have come together since the horse's death in 1932, when owner David Davis sent Phar Lap's hide to Victoria, his skeleton to New Zealand and his heart to Canberra. The heart was evidently not strong enough to withstand the trip from Canberra.

### The down low

Carlton captain **Chris Judd** won this year's Brownlow medal, beating hot favourite **Dane Swan** and previous winner Gary Ablett. It is the second time Judd has won the prize. The first time was six years ago as a 21-year-old when he was playing with the West Coast Eagles. Meanwhile, **Gary Ablett** has accepted huge money from the new Gold Coast Sun's football club to transfer from Geelong. He is reportedly being paid in the vicinity of \$1.9m a year over five years.

### Footballers and their supporters

**Letter from Melbourne** is looking forward to publishing our MP footy chart next year when there will no doubt be

some changes following the 27 November state election. In the meantime, we will not be summarising the details of the lives of players such as **Brendan Fevola**, who seems to yearly find himself a new controversy.

## TOURISM

### Travelling circus

**Oprah Winfrey** is hitting Australia for the first time. She will travel to Australia in December, with about 450 people – enough to book out an entire Qantas A380. Only they won't be booking it out, they'll be guests of the national airline, travelling free. They won't spend a cent while they're here either, as **Tourism Australia** foots the \$1.5m bill for their trip. The *Herald Sun* reported that Victoria is putting about \$500,000 towards their visit, including a shopping trip to Melbourne. She will bring 300 audience members from Chicago on the shopping jaunt. It is the first time the world's most popular TV host, who has a personal wealth of more than \$2.5b, has taken the program outside North America. Victorian taxpayers are chipping in as part of a national \$4m package, including the \$1.5m in federal money and \$2m from the New South Wales government. Oprah is planning for an audience of about 3,000 people for two episodes in the forecourt of the Opera House.

### Getting nostalgic for the games

Former New South Wales Olympics Minister **Michael Knight** has called for Sydney to host the 2017 International Expo, in a bid to boost international tourism arrivals and provide the impetus to redevelop Sydney's ageing tourism infrastructure, the *Financial Review* reported. *The Herald Sun* reported that the Sydney Olympic Cauldron is being given permanent heritage protection to coincide with the 10th anniversary of the 2000 games. It is the youngest item to be placed on the New South Wales Heritage Register.

### Swimming pools in national parks

Business groups have made a pitch for more five-star hotel developments around national parks, warning that

Victorian tourism could fall behind unless it can accommodate more cashed up visitors. In a regional policy paper, industry groups urged the government to identify sites along the great Ocean Road, in the Grampians, on Phillip Island and at other top destinations for luxury accommodation and recreational use. The Victorian Employers' Chamber of Commerce and Industry has also urged the Government to overhaul the planning system and cut red tape to make it easier for investors to build around national parks, *The Age* reported.

### The day after next

After 12 years, Queensland's hallmark slogan, 'Beautiful one day, perfect the next' has run its course and is set to be replaced in October.

## TRANSPORT

### RAIL

#### It's on

High-speed trains capable of travelling at 350 kilometres an hour between Melbourne and Brisbane are back on the political agenda with the federal government and opposition supporting a landmark study, in response to calls for action to preserve land corridors to future proof the economics of the project. The study argues that at these speeds, high-speed rail becomes competitive with air travel. The study was released jointly by AECOM, one of the world's experts on modelling fast trains for governments, and Australia's peak infrastructure body group, Infrastructure Partnerships Australia. It urges the government to identify new routes and either buy the land or put in planning protections to ensure future land price increases do not make a high-speed rail network a prohibitive option.

It mentions that such a rail project would have a big impact on the taxi, airline and airport industries. A key recommendation of the report is that the construction phase begins in five years on an incremental basis, starting with Sydney to Newcastle or Canberra, on the basis that it avoids the \$15b cost of developing a new airport to serve Sydney.

## Nearby

*The Age* reported that federal government documents suggest high-speed rail will not be viable because the areas between Australian cities are too sparsely populated and the distances between them too great. But Labor and the Greens say the documents underline the need for a \$20m study into the idea. The study was a Labor election promise, and the Greens negotiated to bring forward the completion date of the reports to July. A minute prepared for Transport Minister **Anthony Albanese** by his department, and obtained by the Seven Network, said viable high-speed rail operations needed at least 6 million passengers a year, but more typically 12 to 20 million passengers a year. Currently, there are about 7 million annual passenger trips between Melbourne and Sydney.

## Up there

*The Age* reported that the Queensland government fired the starter's gun on the \$3b-plus float of QR National after the 10 mining companies dropped their competing offer for the state's coal rail network. A prospectus was released by mid-October. The Australian reported that the Queensland Coal Industry Rail Group, financed by major companies including BHP, Rio Tinto and Xstrata, and headed by former New South Wales premier **Nick Greiner**, was unable to convert an expression of interest into a hard cash offer.

The float of QR National is the biggest since the Telstra T3 offering of 2006 and the prospectus began hitting in-boxes and mailboxes on October 10. *The Age* reported that the signal for mum and dad investors considering buying in should remain at caution, according to many analysts. A follow-up report, found that the \$6.1b float is relying on Asian demand for coal to back an ambitious earnings growth story, with the sell-off aiming to give Queensland Premier Anna Bligh a boost to the budget bottom line ahead of an election next year. The rail company will be priced between \$2.50 and \$3 per share depending on demand, which would deliver the Queensland government more than \$5b when it lists on the Australian Securities Exchange in late November.

## Kenneth Davidson on infrastructure

On the opinion pages of *The Age*, **Kenneth Davidson** wrote that over the past decade the Bracks/Brumby government has spent \$6.6b on new road projects (as well \$7b in water). Over the same period, the Government invested only \$322m in fixed public transport infrastructure.

It is scandalous that the government has not been required to justify some \$14b in infrastructure spending against cheaper and arguably more efficacious alternatives. These alternatives were set out in official publications such as Melbourne 2030, Planning for Sustainable Growth in 2002 and the Environment Protection Authority study on water policy in 2006.

The common thread in all these infrastructure projects is the absence of proper process – especially the lack of open and independent cost-benefit analysis and environmental impact statements – which allows Parliament and the public to evaluate alternative ways of reducing congestion or drought-proofing water supplies in a growing city while minimising damage to the environment.

## Down the track

A fleet of new trains for Melbourne ordered by the Brumby government last year will cost almost \$3m more per train than identical vehicles bought just a year before. The jump in price came after the government ignored its own findings on the number of new trains that would be needed to keep up with surging rail patronage. The rising cost of the 38 new Alstom X'Trapolis trains for Melbourne is due to currency fluctuations that changed the cost of the European made vehicles. The increased cost was revealed by Auditor-General **Des Pearson** in his annual review of state government finances, *The Age* reported.

## Coping well

The cost of running Victoria's public transport has more than doubled in six years, despite the state's trains, trams and buses travelling only 26 per cent further. The cost jump is partly due to increased payments to Melbourne's privatised train, tram and bus operators, *The Age* reported. Public Transport

Minister **Martin Pakula** defended the figures, saying the doubling of the cost of public transport since 2004 was a massive investment that ensured it was coping well.

## Hooray!

*The Herald Sun* reported that after 304 days, more than half a million train services and \$9m in fines, rail operator Metro finally met its performance targets for the first time. During September, Metro actually performed better than its predecessor Connex did at the same time last year. Metro also cancelled fewer services in September than Connex did 12 months ago. Metro ran 88.8 per cent of its services within five minutes of the timetable over the month. Metro spokeswoman **Geraldine Mitchell** said there had been a consistent pattern of improvement over the preceding four months.

## Intimidation issues

The chief executive of Metro trains said he was intimidated travelling on the city's trains late at night, *The Age* reported. **Andrew Lezala**, speaking at a Melbourne Press Club lunch, said 40 per cent of the people who use Melbourne's railway system felt unsafe at certain times of day. 'I ride the railways a lot and I sometimes feel intimidated. I'm not a particularly shy guy. So I know we have an intimidation issue,' Lezala said.

## Tram, bam, thank you ma'am

*The Age* reported that Canadian transport giant Bombardier, the world's biggest tram manufacturer, beat France's Alstom to win the \$300m contract to build 50 trams. Each tram will cost \$6m – about \$1m more than for comparable orders for trams in other cities. Commonwealth Engineering made hundreds of the city's existing trains and trams in the 1970s and 1980s at the Dandenong plant, which is now owned by Bombardier. The last tram made at the factory rolled off the production lines in December 1993. Public Transport Minister Martin Pakula, who is also Industrial Relations Minister, said most of the manufacturing work for the fifty new trams would be done in Dandenong.



## Next stop

A Tourism and Transport Forum report, co-authored by **Simon Barrett** from LEK Consulting, says bus and train fares will need to rise in peak hour if public transport is to be sustainable. It also argues that there should be a congestion tax on cars, meaning public transport could still be cheaper than driving during busy periods. The TTF, representing public transport providers, says fares cover only a third of the annual \$5.2b costs, with state governments subsidising the rest. The report says the number of public transport trips has risen at twice the rate of population growth in the past five years and new revenue sources must be found, the *Financial Review* reported.

## Overkill on evening violence

Melbourne's 10 most violent railway stations need a full-time police presence to combat half of all station assaults, the Public Transport Users Association says. With almost half of all assaults occurring at just a few stations and 48 per cent of attacks taking place during the day, the state's key public transport lobby group says the state opposition's plan to have every station staffed by two Victoria Police protective services officers after 6 pm is overkill and fails to tackle the problem of daytime violence. In a clear pitch to the government as the election campaign warms up, the association has revealed its own plans for targeting rail related violence, *The Age* reported.

## Nearby

Metro wants to hire an extra 500 staff in a bid to crack down on violence and anti-social behaviour on the railways. The operator plans to use staff to close off platforms at busy times to control the flow of passengers on to overcrowded trains. Unstaffed suburban stations are struggling to cope with booming patronage, with passenger numbers at Tottenham station near Footscray doubling in five years. The plan has been put to the government, which will need to find tens of millions of dollars a year to finance it, the *Herald Sun* reported.

## Cash flow

The government authority behind Victoria's \$1.35b myki card, the Transport Ticketing Authority, has not maintained

effective control over cash collection, Auditor-General **Des Pearson** said. Opposition transport spokesman **Terry Mulder** questioned how the Brumby government was spending so much on a ticketing system with cash handling that cannot be verified, *The Age* reported.

## Angry and relieved

*The Age* reported that Footscray residents, who were told in July that their houses would be demolished to make way for a regional rail line, have criticised the Brumby government after it emerged many of them will not lose their homes after all. Final maps for the \$4.3b rail project also appear to indicate that trains using the new line will not stop at North Melbourne.

## ROAD

### Slow down toll

Police will launch one of the biggest road blitzes in Victorian history between mid-October and the end of the year, amid fears the state's road toll will rise beyond 300 deaths. There were 290 people killed on Victorian roads last year, 303 and 208 in 2007. At October 10, there had already been 238 people killed in 2010, compared with 209 at the same time last year, the *Herald Sun* reported.

### Shut the gate

For the first time since it opened almost 40 years ago, the Westgate Bridge was fully closed to traffic for two nights, to allow for the installation of four freeway speed limit gantries. The bridge was shut overnight on Tuesday, October 12, and Tuesday, October 19. The government selected Tuesday nights because they are the quietest in traffic volumes. Cars and trucks were diverted to other roads, *The Age* reported. When the bridge opened in 1978, it carried an average of 40,000 vehicles daily. Now it carries about 165,000 vehicles daily. The works will improve the bridge's PKI capacity by 30 per cent. Detour routes are available at [www.m1upgrade.com.au](http://www.m1upgrade.com.au).

### Getting there

ConnectEast chairman **Tony Shepherd** says traffic using its Melbourne EastLink toll road is improving. He said that about 200,000 people a day were now using the road, which missed key traffic volumes

after opening in June 2008. The company is now trading well, the *Financial Review* reported. Note the TV advertisements suggesting the EastLink option

## On the bus

The *Herald Sun* reported that Public Transport Minister **Mark Pakula** said Melbourne commuters needed to change their attitudes towards bus travel. Speaking at a debate with his Liberal and Greens counterparts, he said every Melburnian should have public transport within 400 metres of their home. 'For too long, buses are being viewed as a form of transport used by the poor, school children and the elderly,' he said. 'Culturally, we need to change the way we view buses.'

## Bus stop

*The Age* reported that the government has largely shelved a series of studies recommending how Melbourne's bus network could be overhauled. Sixteen reports by consultants on improving Melbourne's buses have cost taxpayers \$4.5m since 2007. The government has implemented just 153 out of 711 recommendations, *The Age* reported. Payments by the government to bus operators have risen in recent years, from \$305m in 2006 to \$542m this financial year.

## Anniversary of a tragedy

*The Age* reported that the Westgate Bridge collapse, whilst under construction, claimed the lives of 35 men, many of whom were crushed as they ate their lunch in huts under the section of the bridge that tumbled 50 metres into Yarra River mud. Now, black-and-white photographs of the collapse, taken by homicide detective **Frank Coates**, have been displayed to the public for the first time at the Victoria Police Museum in Melbourne. The new Westgate Bridge opened in 1978, eight years after the collapse. The exhibition marks the tragedy's 40th anniversary, and opened on October 15.

## Speed log

The *Herald Sun* reported that maintenance logs on the state's fixed speed cameras are to be thrown open to scrutiny for the first time. The government pledged to release

the information after reports exposing speed camera breakdowns on EastLink. Opposition leader **Ted Baillieu** called an independent inquiry into speed cameras. The Opposition gained access to four months of logs on EastLink, which showed one camera at the Wellington Road site had to be replaced after taking rogue images, and others contained corrupt data and had communication blackouts.

**Keating’s (non)convictions**

After beating an infringement notice in a Sydney court for driving through a red light, former Prime Minister **Paul Keating** urged Australians to follow his example in taking on the system. Ordinary people, he proclaimed outside the court, should have the courage of their convictions and challenge infringement notices they believed were wrong, *The Age* reported.

**Not going well**

Local traders and Stonnington and Yarra councils have vowed to continue their fight against clearway extensions despite a Supreme Court ruling that they were the lawfully imposed, the *Herald Sun* reported.

**How’s your breath?**

A five-year analysis of drink-driving data from the *Herald Sun* shows that some 17.2 million people were breath tested by police during the period, with 105,880 motorists over the limit.

**Rear-view**

The Government is currently reviewing the Road Safety Act 1986, [www.roadsafety.vicroads.vic.gov.au](http://www.roadsafety.vicroads.vic.gov.au).

**Discuss**

**VicRoads** has prepared a public discussion paper about how Victoria’s system of licensing motorcycles could be improved, [www.arrivealive.gov.au/motorcycleGLS](http://www.arrivealive.gov.au/motorcycleGLS).

**AIR**

**Avalon international**

The Victorian Employers’ Chamber of Commerce and Industry chief executive **Wayne Kayler-Thomson** said Melbourne

must take on Sydney as Australia’s premier airport entry point for Victoria’s success to continue, and that Avalon Airport must be given international status. A major expansion of operations at Melbourne and Avalon, and the provision of rail links, should be the next step on the Government’s horizon.

**PORTS**

**Tax anew**

In a detailed article in *The Age*, Victorian Employers Chamber Of Commerce and Industry chief executive **Wayne Kayler-Thompson** wrote that the Victorian government is proposing a new export tax.

It is known innocuously as the Freight Infrastructure Charge and, when it is introduced next year, will put prices up for all of us and hurt exporters. The charge has been proposed ostensibly to reduce traffic congestion around the Port of Melbourne but the real agenda seems to be to raise \$1b to help pay for the Government’s \$38b transport plan. This is despite the fact that most (some 3,000) trucks in the port area don’t actually enter the port. Only 3.3 per cent of vehicles travelling in the port precinct along the West Gate Freeway actually enter the port itself. Most trucks use the Wholesale Fruit and Vegetable Market, the Wholesale Fish Market, the Dynon rail yards and many factories and warehouses in the inner west.

At \$180 a truck, the mooted FIC charge would be the equivalent of another \$90 per container on trucks, blowing our export competitiveness out of the water. Roads Minister **Tim Pallas** says the charge will push importers and exporters to use rail to move their goods instead of trucks (rail operators won’t pay the charge). It will also encourage trucks to visit the port at night or on weekends, he says, when there will be no charge!!

**COMMUNITY**

**Ban on thongs in pub**

The Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal has approved a ban on uncovered shoulders and thighs for a community event to be held at the Dandenong Oasis, a municipal pool. Participants aged 10 and over must ensure their bodies are covered from waist to knee and the

entire torso extending to the upper arms, according to a request by Dandenong City Council and the YMCA for an exemption to the Equal Opportunities Act. The ban was compared by the Human Rights Commissioner **Helen Szoke** to a ban on thongs in a pub, in that it is not easy to resolve. Liberty Victoria said the ban was reasonable because the event was to be held out of hours, on August 21 next year. A spokeswoman for the City of Greater Dandenong said the ban would help Muslims feel part of the community, the *Herald Sun* reported. *The Age* reported that Greater Dandenong mayor **Jim Memeti** said the centre had held regular women-only swimming sessions for the past two years, and that this one-off celebration would occur during the same hours.

**Neighbours**

The *Herald Sun* reported that nuisance neighbours resulted in more than 17,000 calls for help by residents last year. The behaviour of neighbours was one of the top complaints received by the Victorian Dispute Settlement Centre, along with fence disputes and vehicle property damage.

**Almost there**

*The Age* reported that from October more than 50 sporting grounds in the City of Moreland in Melbourne’s inner north will be available only to clubs with juniors as well as girls or women participating in competitive or non-competitive physical activities, heralding



**Letter From Melbourne is appreciated in Rome.**

a possible end to the days of men-only sports clubs. Three clubs in Moreland are yet to meet the requirements and face a ban on the use of council facilities from October unless they broaden the diversity of their membership. In addition to requirements for females and juniors, clubs that demonstrate participation by people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, including people with disabilities, will be given priority access for the use of council facilities.

### Our Premier

*The Age* reported that premier **John Brumby** has won the 2010 Mahatma Gandhi Peace Award for helping stage last year's Parliament of the World's Religions in Melbourne. The government contributed \$2m to the forum, which brought together Victorians and delegates from around the world to share traditions, cultures and friendships.

### A bit of bad luck

Broadcaster **Derryn Hinch** announced he has liver cancer. *The Herald Sun* reported that Hinch believes a liver transplant may be the only way he can beat the cancer.

### Warrior Jeff

The *Herald Sun* reported that **Jeff Kennett** wants a return of the compulsory national service scheme to foster greater community spirit. The former Victorian premier and 'nasho' said Australians were unchallenged, untested and too focused on themselves.

### When the saints go marching in

Footy club songs and popular music have been banned from Catholic funerals under new guidelines sent to priests and funeral directors, the *Herald Sun* reported. The guidelines for Catholic funerals, sent by Archbishop of Melbourne **Dennis Hart**, also declared a funeral should not be a celebration of the deceased's life. Secular music is never to be sung or played at a Catholic funeral, such as romantic ballads, pop or rock music, political songs or football club songs, guidelines say. But outspoken Catholic priest father **Bob McGuire** described the guidelines as insensitive. Funeral service operator **Adrian Nelson**

said footy was an important part of life and club songs were popular requests. The new guidelines say any celebration should be done at a social occasion before or after the funeral.

### Vale

**Dame Joan Sutherland**, Australian opera singer who became one of the greatest coloratura sopranos of the 20th century, dubbed La Stupenda by Italian audiences, retired from the stage 20 years ago, married for 56 years to pianist and conductor **Richard Bonyng** who survives her, aged 83.

**Klytie Pate**, potter, aged 97. **Eric Hatchley**, guide dogs pioneer, aged 81. **Glenn Bourke**, on a five-week holiday to New Zealand died in a light plane crash when the plane caught fire on take off with a group preparing to go skydiving at Fox Glacier, aged 18.

**James Henry Shelton**, KCVO, head of the government ceremonial and hospitality branch within the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet where he served 6 prime ministers – Menzies, Holt, Gorton, McMahon, Whitlam and Fraser, aged 90. **Richard Innes Peek**, KBE, CB, DSC, former Royal Australian Navy chief, aged 96.

**John Alan McKellar**, comedy writer, the title of his revue, *A Cup of Tea, a Bex and a Good Lie Down* entered the vernacular after running for a year at Phillip Theatre, along with such titles as, *I Wouldn't Want To Live There*, as well as *Is Australia Really Necessary?*, aged 80.

**Eugene 'Curly' Veith**, built Melbourne's biggest parcel delivery company, Veith Transport, which had a fleet of 175 trucks, set up Mission Enterprise Limited to channel funds to worthy causes, aged 95. **Alfred Roy Parsons**, AO, a foreign service officer including High Commissioner in London, aged 85. **John Edward Probert**, marketing manager at the Ford Motor Company, oversaw the transition of the Ford Australia Tennis Open from Kooyong to the new location at Flinders Park, now the Melbourne Tennis Centre, aged 70.

**Hedley Beare**, AM, educator, Christian thinker, wrote columns for 15 years in *The Melbourne Anglican*, professor of education at Melbourne University,

aged 77. **Malcom Douglas**, Kimberly conservationist, aged 69. **Malcolm Brumby**, Premier **John Brumby's** father, served in World War II on the HMAS Quiberon, aged 84. **Peter Baillieu White**, aged 51. **Dr Brian Kelly**, aged 68. **Neville John Wilson**, aged 72. **Thomas Savage**, aged 66. **Graham Oliver Tibbitts**, aged 84.

**Dr Adam Sutton**, past member of the School of Social and Political Sciences at the University of Melbourne. **Anthony Rowand Crowther Hewison**, former headmaster of St Michael's Grammar School.

**Peggy Strafford Warner**, author, journalist, aged 95. **Dr Charles Neil Halkyard**, aged 87. **Digby Coultas**, aged 78. **Eileen Francis Hannan**, aged 96. **Mike Dalling**, AM. **Trevor Robert Nixon**, MBE. **Dr Alan John Christophers**, aged 94.

**Timothy James Mercer**, long-time supporter and contributor to the WH Pincott Club. **Marshall White**, founder of Marshall White & Co. Kaye Keck, educator. **D. S. Henderson**. **E. R. Mather**.

**Most Reverend Patrick Dougherty** DD. **Reverend Father Hubert Hunter**, SSC. **Mike Dalling**, AM. **Lady Meryl Derham Cohen**, aged 93. **Dr Lesley Anne Mitchell**, aged 51. **Ian Douglas Nethercote**, aged 64.

**Francis Phillip Champion de Crespigny**, aged 92. **Michael Eager**, mining professional. **Wayne F Hall**, artist, poet, gentlemen. **Tim Warren**, former chairman of the Shell Companies in Australia. **Helen Frances Adamson RRC**, former director Royal Australian Army Nursing Corps, aged 83.

**Ivy Inwood**, champion of free range and organic farming who farmed free-range eggs for more than 45 years. **David Rowbotham**, poet, aged 86. **Jack McRae**. Flying Officer **Robert Hal Keig**. **Adam Ian Laidlaw**, BEM, AFSM, aged 84. **Archdeacon John Rodney Oliver**.

**Ian Donald Cameron**, stockbroker, father of the British Prime Minister **David Cameron**, aged 77. **Bernard Josef Philberth**, priest, philosopher, scientist, aged 83.

**Mayurdwajsinhji Meghrajji III**, the last of the Indian princes who ruled their own states before the country gained independence from Britain in 1947, aged 87.

**Tony Curtis**, one of the last great stars of Hollywood's golden age, most famous for his performance in his best-loved comedy *Some Like It Hot*, aged 85.

**Norman Wisdom**, British comic actor famous for his slapstick film roles aged 95. **Eddie (Edwin John) Fisher**, singer, actor, aged 82.





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