

# LETTER FROM MELBOURNE

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**CHRISTMAS/SUMMER HOLIDAY EDITION**  
**MID-NOVEMBER to MID-DECEMBER 2009**  
**ISSUE 150**

## INSIDE

Anti-corruption commission, maybe	3
The Parliament of the World's Religions in Melbourne	3
Brown coal off the agenda (for now)	8
150 new tables for Crown, \$10m for problem gamblers	9
Victoria's most vulnerable not protected	10
Alcohol fight long term	16
Robert Doyle one year on	17
Goodbye Connex/Yarra Trams, hello MTM/KDR	20



*Recent Developments in Roy Morgan*  
*Readership Measurement - see Page 12*



14 Collins Street  
Melbourne, 3000  
Victoria, Australia

P 03 9654 1300  
F 03 9654 1165

info@affairs.com.au

www.letterfrommelbourne.com.au

**Editor** Alistair Urquhart  
**Associate Editor** Hamish Brooks  
**Subscription Manager** Juliette Beigler  
**Advertising Manager** Eddie Moir  
**Editorial Consultant** Rick Brown  
**Design** Ray Zhang

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.

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## EDITORIAL: OUR NEED FOR RESPONSIBILITY

A *Herald Sun* (with perhaps three times the circulation of *The Age*) survey found 85 per cent of people thought community services Minister Lisa Neville should resign in the wake of the Ombudsman's report in relation to child services, that children in (state) care were being so badly regarded/looked after. The minister has carried on as if nothing has happened. What the (our supposed) Westminster system and parliamentary democracy used to be about was that the minister should resign when matters within (her) ministry go quite wrong. What is the minister responsible for anyway... anything. The Premier has removed this part of the process of 'Our government in Victoria'. Being tough. Stonewalling. Never admitting that something is wrong. Is wrong.

Believe it or not. (Gosh, I would like to run a TV show on that topic). Proposed new laws designed (they are not here yet) to formalise the/a national code state that dogs must be walked at least once a day. The proposed laws would be designed to help overcome the problems that animal inspectors have had penalising bad owners... If the wonderful Hugh Wurth, RSPCA, has to be on national committee that comes up with this solution, then other bureaucracies and nanny laws have gone well too far. Grrrrr.

Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year to our subscribers, advertisers, panel of advisers, readers and other supporters and friends. It's been a big year. And we will have Victorian and a federal election before next Christmas.

## ABOUT THE EDITOR



Alistair Urquhart graduated from the Australian National University in Canberra, in Law, History and Politics, was admitted as a barrister and solicitor of the Supreme Court of Victoria, and remains a (non-practicing) member of the Law Institute of Victoria. Before that, he graduated from high school in Bethesda, Maryland, and had many opportunities to become aware of the workings of Washington DC. For 30 years, he listened every Sunday evening to the late Alistair Cooke and his *Letter From America*. His early career was mostly in the coal industry, where he became involved with energy, environmental and water issues, and later in the SME finance sector. His public affairs firm works with many engineering and information technology firms, other professional association and industry groups, on a wide range of issues, in Victoria, Canberra and overseas. Urquhart visits Canberra regularly. He may hold the record for miles rowed on Canberra's Lake Burley Griffin.

## INDEX

<b>STATE GOVERNMENT &amp; POLITICS</b>	3	<b>JUSTICE</b>	16
<b>THE BUSHFIRES</b>	5	<b>MELBOURNE</b>	17
<b>ARTS</b>	6	<b>GEELONG</b>	18
<b>EDUCATION</b>	6	<b>PLANNING &amp; BUILDING</b>	18
<b>ENVIRONMENT</b>	7	<b>LOCAL GOVERNMENT</b>	19
CONSERVATION	7	<b>SPORT</b>	19
ENERGY	8	<b>TOURISM</b>	20
WATER	8	<b>TRANSPORT</b>	20
<b>GAMING</b>	9	RAIL	20
<b>HEALTH</b>	9	ROAD	21
<b>INVESTMENT</b>	15	AIR	21
BUSINESS	15	PORTS	22
ICT	16	<b>COMMUNITY</b>	22
AGRICULTURE	16		

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## STATE GOVERNMENT & POLITICS

### You won't know us

Premier **John Brumby** will contest next year's election by portraying himself as head of a new government, 'only three years old', with plans and energy to confront Victoria's big challenges. The Opposition will contest the Labor strategy, with Liberal leader **Ted Baillieu** saying Brumby as cabinet minister, treasurer and Premier has been at the heart of the Bracks-Brumby Government since it was elected in 1999, and that Victoria has gone backwards since then, *The Age* reported. A poll in the same paper found the ALP ahead by a margin of 58 per cent to 42 per cent on a two-party preferred basis – a huge margin. Brumby is preferred premier for 56 per cent of voters, compared with Baillieu with only 25 per cent support. The poll of 1000 voters shows the government is highly regarded on the issue of economic management, indicating Labor has received credit for steering the state through the economic downturn.

### Big job

Labor has opened the door to setting up an anti-corruption commission in Victoria, after Premier **John Brumby** announced a surprise pre-election review of the state's integrity watchdogs. Former head of Victoria's Department of Premier and Cabinet **Elizabeth Proust** will investigate the performance of key integrity bodies including the Office of Police Integrity, the Ombudsman and the Auditor-General. Labor is confident Proust will endorse its approach, but Opposition leader **Ted Baillieu** said the Premier's decision to order a review was an admission that Victoria had a corruption problem and not enough had been done to stamp it out, *The Age* reported. The **Law Institute of Victoria** backed the review, which is due to report by the end of May, but has called for the investigation to examine whether Victoria's anticorruption bodies have too much secretive power.

### Out of ten

An article in the *Herald Sun* by **Stephen McMahon** noted six major policy areas of the

Brumby government to reflect on and gave scores out of 10 for each of them. Law and order got 5 out of 10; health, 6 out of 10; water, 7 out of 10; the economy, 8 out of 10; public transport and roads, 4 out of 10; and education 7 out of 10.

### Bitter irony

Freedom of information laws would be policed by an independent watchdog under an Opposition plan. Opposition leader **Ted Baillieu** said he would appoint a freedom of information commissioner should he win next year's state election, *The Age* reported. An editorial in the same paper said that the door is open for the Coalition to turn Labor's 1999 campaign against it, with a Saulwick poll suggesting **John Brumby's** Government may now be alienating regional voters, particularly hostile towards water policies that they regard as appalling. In 1999, Labor advertisements aimed at regional voters showed two taps, one flowing freely in Melbourne and the other down to its last drop in regional Victoria. Today, that image resounds with bitter irony for Victorians north of the divide.

### Ted's liquor licensing laws

**Ted Baillieu** is taking the Opposition to next year's election with a plan to reduce alcohol fuelled violence, where liquor licences will automatically be suspended when a venue accumulates sufficient demerit points, by (for example) allowing the presence and service of drunk or disorderly people or the presence and service of alcohol to minors on licensed premises. The plan also includes a five-star rating system that will reward liquor licensees who act responsibly and observe the law by giving them a discount on their liquor licence renewals where they had two or more consecutive years without breaking relevant licensing laws.

### Open door policy

Premier **John Brumby** and his ministers will no longer offer exclusive private meetings behind closed doors with companies in return for donations to the ALP, as the party seeks to polish its image ahead of next year's state and

federal elections. But Labor's fundraising arm, Progressive Business, will continue to hold special 'forums' at which companies will be able to pay to meet ministers in open rooms where other politicians and businesses are present. The decision comes in the wake of mounting controversy this year over the ethics of 'cash-for-chat' fund-raising exercises. **Jeff Kennett** has accused Labor of corrupting the democratic system by selling access to ministers, *The Age* reported.

### We believe!

Victoria's Coalition MPs have avoided the bitter split over global warming that has created chaos in the federal Liberal and National parties. State Liberal leader **Ted Baillieu** and National Party leader **Peter Ryan** said they were climate change believers and supported the introduction of an emissions trading scheme.

### Time for change for same

The Victorian Labor Party state conference **passed** a resolution calling for gay and lesbian couples to be given the same rights as heterosexual couples, including the right to state sanctioned marriage. The resolution calls on the Federal Government to change the marriage act to allow for equal access to marriage, regardless of the gender of either partner, *The Age* reported.

### Atheist outrage

The **Parliament of the World's Religions** began on December 3 at the Melbourne Convention and Exhibition Centre. It received \$2m from the Federal Government and \$500,000 from the Melbourne City Council. **The Atheist Foundation of Australia** says it approached all three levels of Government, seeking a total of \$270,000 for its conference, to be held at the same venue early next year, but has received no funding, *The Age* reported. The same paper published a 16-page lift-out on the Parliament including speakers and a program for the week. Australia's ambassador to the Vatican, **Tim Fischer**, has raised the plight of 10 Fijians for whom he has been lobbying in Rome when he addressed the Parliament of the World's



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Religions. British child rights activist **Christine Dodd**, coordinator of the Church's Network for Non-Violence, told the event that corporal punishment infringed children's rights and dignity, taught them that violence was a proper way to solve conflict and was on the same continuum as serious abuse, and should be made illegal throughout the world. The Obama administration secretly sent staff to Melbourne to ask religious leaders about winning hearts and minds in the Muslim world.

### Informal address

The Dalai Lama gave his only address to an Australian parliament on this visit, in Melbourne. Organised by the informal group, Victorian MPs for Tibet, whose chair is Liberal upper house member **Ed O'Donohue**, *The Age* reported. The Dalai Lama spoke for about 30 minutes on peace, love and understanding. It was his first visit to the Victorian Parliament House since 1992, but he did not meet **John Brumby** (the pair have met on a number of previous occasions) because their schedules clashed. Tim Fischer passed on the Lama's best wishes to the editor of this magazine when he shook his hand later in the day.

### How much?

*The Age* reported that Victorian MPs would have to declare publicly the value of their shareholdings under a plan to prevent conflicts of interest and corruption in State Parliament. Under current laws, state MPs are required to list only the companies in which they hold shares but not the number of shares or their value.....

### Well done

Former Victorian Farmers Federation president **Simon Ramsay** has won Liberal preselection for the upper house seat of Western Victoria Region, which stretches from Melton to Portland, *The Age* reported.

### A recent report

In a recently released report, Auditor-General **Des Pearson** said there was little assurance the money spent on car fleets for government

departments and local councils was operationally justified, and noted oversight systems were missing, the *Financial Review* reported.

### The Victorian of the year?

Victoria's Australian of the Year Award went to **Patrick McGorry**, 57, a professor at the University of Melbourne, who has devoted the past 27 years to the improvement of youth mental health.

### Worth a look

The **Victorian Government Lobbyists Register**, which presently lists 21 lobbying firms, is now on line, [www.lobbyistsregister.vic.gov.au](http://www.lobbyistsregister.vic.gov.au).

### A full team

The Institute of Public Administration Australia (Victoria) held its annual general meeting on 25 November, which included the election of three new board members, to round out a committee of ten. Chair Fran Thorn, Peter Allen, Dr Claire Noon, Carl Obst, James Van Smeerdijk, Dr Art Looi, Michael White, Ms Kerry Thompson, Dr Jim Hyde and Paula Giles.

### Up there

(Then) New South Wales Premier **Nathan Rees** moved swiftly to take control of the parliamentary wing of the New South Wales Labor Party, sacking two ministers who had been accused of undermining him and the party's chances of victory at the next election. The architect of Labor's \$6b energy privatisation plan, **Joe Tripodi**, was sacked from his job as finance minister and **Ian McDonald** was removed from primary industries as the party adjusted to the implications of the new powers Rees was given at Labor's State Conference in mid-November.

### Not for long

(However), New South Wales Planning and Infrastructure Minister **Kristina Keneally**, 40, who was born in America and took out Australian citizenship nine years ago, won the New South Wales Labor Party leadership vote, 47 to 21 over **Nathan Rees**, in the first week in December.

### Up there 2

The outgoing head of the New South Wales corruption commission, **Jerrold Cripps**, QC, has heavily criticised the relationship between property developers and the State Government, and said his organisation had insufficient resources for a major enquiry into political lobbying, the *Financial Review* reported.

### In the far north

Retired Supreme Court judge **Martin Moynihan**, who made his name in the historic Mabo indigenous land rights case, is set to become chairman of Queensland's Crime and Misconduct Commission, replacing **Robert Needham**, *The Australian* reported.

### Over there 1

Receptionist **Michelle Chantelois** claimed on Channel 7's *Sunday Night* program that South Australian Premier **Mike Rann**, 56, acted out a fantasy from a Hollywood movie when he had sex with her, a married woman, in his Parliament House office. While he admits they had a flirty friendship which ended in 2005, Rann continues to deny ever having sex with her. She is challenging him to take a lie detector test, which he is refusing as he moves to sue the Seven Network, saying that the truth will come out during the case.

### Over there 2

The South Australian Government announced its intention to implement a Lobbyist Code of Conduct, [www.premcab.sa.gov.au/lobbyist](http://www.premcab.sa.gov.au/lobbyist)

### Down there

Tasmanian Liberal MP and QC and Australia's longest serving politician, **Michael Hodgman**, said he would quit politics at the March 20 election, after 43 years, the *Herald Sun* reported. Perhaps to be replaced by his son.

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## THE BUSHFIRES

### The season begins

Australia's first 'catastrophic' fire danger warning was issued. The warning was declared to South Australian regions close to Port Augusta and Port Pirie on November 19. Catastrophic is the highest possible warning, and was created after Black Saturday. The *Herald Sun* reported that confusion may prevail across Victoria if the new code-red fire alert is issued this fire season, as some CFA workers struggled to explain the new national fire ratings. Towns are still waiting for updated or new fire danger rating information boards with the new code red warning. A spokeswoman for the Office of the Emergency Services Commissioner said that 4000 new boards would be rolled out across the state in December and denied the delivery after the start of the bushfire season is putting lives at risk. She said the new boards would not be arrow boards stating the day's ratings but would have a phone number and website people could call to find out the rating. Another CFA spokesman was unsure if the six new fire danger ratings were national or just for Victoria. CFA chief executive **Mick Burke** said the CFA's key message for the summer was to leave early – a warning still not getting through in some communities, *The Age* reported.

### Too late

Fire warnings that close Victorian schools might be issued as late as 5pm on the day before a catastrophic fire danger, *The Age* reported. Victoria's Department of Education website assures parents they will be given up to three days notice of a closure and a final notice by at least noon on the previous day. A Bureau of

Meteorology spokeswoman said the fire danger rating, which determines whether a school shuts, should be declared twice a day – at 5am and about 5pm.

### December is often a cold month

Bushfire watchdog **Neil Comrie** has begun a month-long holiday just weeks after being appointed to oversee the introduction of the Bushfires Royal Commission's recommendations. Despite being hired for a five-month consultancy, the former Victoria police chief commissioner went on holiday and won't return to work until January 2. Comrie will report to the commission at the end of March on the Government's progress.

### Best to make the mistakes now

Fire authorities wrongly issued an extreme fire warning for the Otways area in late November, in a bungled training exercise, telling residents a deadly blaze was heading towards them, *The Age* reported.

### Places of last resort

Fire authorities and local councils are racing to locate places of last resort for communities trapped by bushfires in Victoria's 52 most at risk towns, *The Age* reported.

### Interesting view

On the opinion pages of *The Age* **Jeremy Francis**, horticulturalist and founding member of Mogumber Soil Conservation Group in Western Australia, wrote that authorities must regulate vegetation types for fire safety. He believes the reluctance on the part of authorities to provide practical bushfire information of this type is frightening.

### No change?

Doubt has been cast on Victoria's preparations for this fire season after a senior lawyer for the Bushfires Royal Commission questioned whether new plans for days of extreme fire risk were any different than they were on February 7, *The Age* reported.

### This came through in the coverage

*The Age* reported that journalists covering disasters face an ethical vacuum in which the rules of their conduct are contrived on the spot, according to a review of Black Saturday media coverage. Authorities responsible for access to disaster scenes likewise lack guidance 'so when a disaster comes, people on both sides make up the rules as they go along', according to a draft report for Melbourne University's Centre for Advanced Journalism.

### He's entered the building

**Elvis**, which can drop 9000 litres of water or fire retardant, arrived in Victoria three weeks after the beginning of the bushfire season. It is one of 200 firefighting aircraft that Victoria will have access to during the fire season.

### Understated

A statewide minute's silence will be held for the 173 Black Saturday victims on next year's anniversary. Many flags will fly at half-mast on the February 7 anniversary. The low-key event will be held in Melbourne for those city-dwellers who want to pay their respects, the *Herald Sun* reported. Black Saturday survivors want to mark the first anniversary of the tragedy privately and have backed calls for commemorations to be low-key.

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## A pile of stories

The Bushfires Royal Commission has so far heard details of 41 victims of the blaze that destroyed Marysville. The circumstances surrounding the death of education researcher **Ken Rowe** were examined, perhaps that he received an emergency phone call about his property and left suburban Melbourne just in time to die at his Marysville property.

## Important job

The **Metropolitan Fire and Emergency Services Board** seeks a chief executive officer, [www.mfb.vic.gov.au](http://www.mfb.vic.gov.au).

## ARTS

### Knocking the Opera House off its perch

The Arts Centre's new chief executive, **Judith Isherwood**, is determined to challenge the Sydney Opera house as the country's top cultural precinct. The Opera house is the main reason many people cite for going to Sydney, she says. Isherwood has been at the Arts Centre for a month. She replaced former chief executive, **Tim Jacobs**, after spending the previous six years as the inaugural head of Wales Millennium Centre in Cardiff. She says one of the best way to raise the Art Centre's profile is to attract the world's best companies and artists, *The Age* reported.

### Well endowed

Following a large endowment from Lonely Planet founders **Tony** and **Maureen Wheeler**, Melbourne's Centre for Books, Writing and Ideas – the centrepiece of Melbourne's successful bid to become a UNESCO City of Literature – was renamed the Wheeler Centre: Books, Writing, Ideas. The Wheelers sold 75 per cent of Lonely Planet to BBC Worldwide two years ago for about \$200m and have a philanthropic foundation, Planet Wheeler, that operates in the areas of child and maternal welfare, education and health care in South-east Asia and Africa. Centre director **Chrissy Sharp** said the substantial amount they gave to the centre was a fantastic boon that eased the planning of events. The centre is based in a wing of the State library of Victoria and, in addition to staging events, will provide a

home for organisations such as the Melbourne Writers Festival, Victorian Writers Centre and the Australian Poetry Centre.

### Brumby will not let it fail

The Docklands movie and television studios are in deep financial trouble. The State Government-owned **Melbourne Central City Studios** lost nearly \$7m last financial year, a large fall from the profit of almost \$5m it declared the previous year. Opened in 2004, the studios have been hit by the global financial crisis, the 2008 American scriptwriter strike, and the enduring strength of the Australian dollar. State Government insiders insist the project, which is strongly backed by Premier **John Brumby**, will not be allowed to fail, *The Age* reported. In its defence, the Premier said the complex had helped secure more than \$550m in investment, including the tele-movie *The Pacific*, which generated about 2000 new jobs.

### Damn Faust but love the opera

Victorian Opera released their 2010 season program; it included a Christmas message from their chairman **Michael Roux**, and another from their music director **Richard Gill**, while revealing that next year opera lovers will be able to enjoy any number of wonderful plays including *The Damnation of Faust*.

### Move on to there

The **Australian Centre for the Moving Image** presents interesting multimedia exhibitions as well as various film festivals. They are currently running an exhibition, amongst others, *Dennis Hopper and the New Hollywood*, [www.acmi.com.au](http://www.acmi.com.au).

students regardless of their backgrounds, and how schools compare to those with similar enrolments. Most under performing schools face complex challenges that are difficult to overcome despite teachers' efforts. Most are in poor suburbs and towns, with high numbers of disadvantaged students, indigenous students or disabled children. However, in a more unusual trend, 63 schools – which the government has refused to name – were found to be struggling even though their students are from middle and upper-class families, *The Age* reported. The Federal Government will launch its own report card in two months time. It will compare groups of similar schools based on their results in the national literacy and numeracy tests. The State government ran an advertisement urging people to go online and find fair and accurate information about how well government schools are performing, allowing parents to make fair comparisons, [www.education.vic.gov.au](http://www.education.vic.gov.au).

### Not a bad start

*The Age* reported that not-for-profit syndicate GoodStart, made up of two Christian and two secular welfare agencies, won the bidding for the failed ABC Learning Centres, and plans to transform them from basic childcare into true early learning organisations. **Toby Hall**, chief executive of one of the partners, Mission Australia, said the group had taken over 185 centres in Victoria. All staff would be retained and offered a chance to upgrade their qualifications in line with new Federal Government requirements, he said.

### So? Next?

Researchers from the University of South Australia studied 10 suburbs across four cities comparing planned communities with their neighbouring suburbs. A common theme that emerged in the research by the Centre for Work + Life at the university found that some teenagers, regardless of age or socio-economic background, felt marginalised in these communities. The centre interviewed 174 teenagers from public and private schools in three master planned communities and nearby suburbs in Victoria, South Australia and Queensland, *The Age* reported.

## EDUCATION

### Spring lamb

A new reporting system, developed by Melbourne University education Professor **Stephen Lamb** – which allows parents to click on a website to see how their school fares in a range of measures, including literacy and numeracy, VCE results, retention rates and student well-being – went on line in late November. Parents can also see how much the school 'adds value' to

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## Everyone's having a blast

A Government plan to pay bored teachers to get out of the classroom is yet to result in one person being removed from the profession, despite the program being announced with much fanfare more than 18 months ago. Education Minister **Bronwyn Pike** announced the scheme in April last year, as part of the Government's education blueprint – a five-year strategy to tackle underperformance, overhaul teaching standards and make schools more accountable for student results, *The Age* reported.

## Can you hear them playing?

Concerned academics at Melbourne University's 115-year-old music school say the future of the prestigious institution is at risk and the importance of musical scholarship is being ignored. In an open letter, 14 signatories, including former Victoria State Opera music director **Richard Divall**, say an investigation into the future of the Victorian College of the Arts and music is too focused on the VCA and ignores the illustrious contributions made by the former music faculty to Australian society, *The Age* reported.

## Didn't fail at least

Melbourne University staff voted to withhold end of year student results, accusing management of treating staff with contempt. Unionised staff voted not to process results which means exam and essay marks for thousands of students were not uploaded into the university's computer system. Staff also resolved to continue industrial action over the holidays and next year in a bid to pressure the university into negotiating a new workplace agreement, *The Age* reported.

## ENVIRONMENT

### CONSERVATION

#### Thanks Tony

New Federal opposition leader **Tony Abbott** said Victorians would be the ones most affected by an emissions trading scheme.

## Becalmed

In a direct challenge to dire environmental forecasts from Canberra in regard to climate change related sea level rises, State Environment Minister **Gavin Jennings** has called for a calm and more reasoned examination of climatic threats facing Victoria, the *Herald Sun* reported.

## Conservation corridors

*The Age* reported that a plan to link isolated patches of vegetation will initially focus on the region between Melbourne's west and the Grampians, with funding also set for a link between Wilsons Promontory and the Gippsland Lakes. The promise is one of few tangible environmental outcomes from the Government's long-awaited land biodiversity white paper. Work on the Melbourne-Grampians link is set to begin next year, with \$1.5m to be spent in 2010 revegetating and protecting habitat on public and private land.

## Wrapped in tin foil

Taxpayer funded subsidies to the aluminium industry remain secret after the Government rejected a call for transparency from the state appointed environmental watchdog. The proposal was part of last year's State of the Environment Report – the result of a five-year investigation that revealed degradation of Victoria's landscape and serious deficiencies in state policies. The Government rejected 14 of the recommendations by former commissioner for environmental stability **Ian McPhail**. Another 275 were supported or considered as policy development. Among those not supported was that the Government review and make public its energy subsidies, including revealing the impact on the state's greenhouse gas emissions. Alcoa smelters at Portland and near Geelong were likely to cost Victorians \$4.5b by the time contracts expire in 2014 and 2016. The Government said energy contracts were commercial-in-confidence and established more than 20 years ago, *The Age* reported.

## Nearby

Alcoa Australia will lay off about 150 workers, with 90 of those jobs to be dropped from its Geelong operations, as the global financial crisis hit global demand and a strong Australian dollar erodes profitability. The aluminium giant's

rolled products division will sack one sixth of its workforce, calling for voluntary redundancies from its two operating locations at Point Henry near Geelong and Yennora in western Sydney, *The Age* reported.

## Stand up straight

Victorians wanting to diminish their carbon footprints after death are now being offered the option of vertical burial. Upright Burials managing director **Tony Dupleix** said that 'Our burials involve less energy intensive practices and using a biodegradable bag ensures a natural product is going into the ground.' More than 100 people have registered their interest in having an upright burial and the company has permission to carry out the internment in a cemetery near Darlington, about 20 kilometres southwest of Lismore, in the Western District. The upright burials are set to cost \$2,750; the average Australian funeral costs more than \$7,000. Dupleix believes principle rather than price is the main reason for interest in vertical plots, *The Age* reported.

## City folk in awe

Wallabies, wombats and wedge-tailed eagles are among thousands of native animals killed with Government approval this year. Nearly 2,000 permits to control 44 different species have been issued by the Department of Sustainability and Environment since January 1. Landholders were issued permits to catch or kill these animals, the *Herald Sun* reported.

## Randy devils

The Healesville Tasmanian devil breeding program is part of a national project that has increased the numbers of healthy devils in captivity to 145.

## Have a look

The National Trust's *Victorian News*, a 20-page colour magazine, brings together recent heritage concerns across the city and regional Victoria, [www.natstrust.com.au](http://www.natstrust.com.au).

## Getting warmed up

The Walk Against Warming was held on December 12 and began on Swanston Street outside the State Library, [www.waw.org.au](http://www.waw.org.au).

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## ENERGY

### Don't worry John, Tony's here

In a letter to Prime Minister **Kevin Rudd**, Premier **John Brumby** expressed concern that if the emissions trading scheme passes the Senate, Victoria could face power shortages unless coal-fired power stations are compensated with billions of dollars because new investments to improve services will not go ahead, the *Herald Sun* reported.

### Politics changes everything

The Brumby Government has shelved its plans to allow the mining and export of Victorian brown coal to India, amid fears of a voter backlash. Energy Minister **Peter Batchelor** has ruled out allowing Melbourne-based Exergen to launch a \$1.5b coal export scheme where it would mine, dry and export 12 million tonnes of brown coal a year to be burned in Indian power stations. The Government has no immediate plan to open coalfields for tender next year – which would suggest any future tender would happen after next November's state election. West Australian coal entrepreneur and ALP donor **Allan Blood** said Batchelor's office had assured him absolutely that the tender would occur next year, and that he was very disappointed that it would otherwise.

### Shouldn't this be front-page news?

The *Herald Sun* reported that a 140-megawatt hydro power station opened in north-east Victoria. Near Mount Beauty, the Bogong Power Station uses water from a nearby power plant and will supplement supply during peak demand, generating enough clean energy to power 18,000 homes. It is one of the largest hydropower stations built on the mainland in the past 25 years. Premier **John Brumby** said 'this project is unique because it delivers clean energy without the need for new dams and new water, by reusing water already used by the McKay Creek power station. It produces zero-emission energy while conserving our water resources'.

### Advanced metering infrastructure

The Victorian Auditor-General's report *Towards a 'smart grid' – the rollout of Advanced Metering Infrastructure* came hot on the heels of an Australian Information Industry Association event attended by over 100 people which discussed the same topic. The report's overall conclusions included highlighting a gap in the project's accountability framework and noted that there have been significant inadequacies in the advice and recommendations provided by the Government on the rollout of the project. Also, the department's project governance has not been appropriate to the nature and scale of the market intervention the project poses. In particular, its advice to government on risk assessment has been inadequate; the level of community engagement has been inadequate,

given the significant effects on consumers; and DPI has engaged with the project in only a limited way as an observer during its implementation phase.

### The green earth underground

Victoria's first geothermal power plant could be operational within three years after the Brumby government announced \$25m in funding for Greenearth Energy, which is assessing the potential of geothermal energy around Geelong. The Greenearth project, located about 11 kilometres north-west of Anglesea, hopes to provide enough power for more than 120,000 Victorian homes, *The Age* reported.

## WATER

### Getting a thirst up

November's hot weather caused average per person water consumption to rise to 200 litres per day. Managing director of Yarra Valley water and chairman of WaterAid Australia, **Tony Kelly**, said that at 45 litres over the 155 litre target for two weeks saw us destroy nine weeks of hard-won water savings, the *Herald Sun* reported.

### Union fighting

The construction of the desalination plant in Wonthaggi is at risk of significant delay because of a union turf war over representation of workers. Fair Work Australia is set to hear an Australian Workers Union application that seeks to exclude the Construction, Forestry, Mining and Energy union from the project.

### Cow water

*The Age* reported that the Health Department wanted cattle barred from the state's rivers in the interests of human health, according to a series of letters sent to the Department of Sustainability and Environment this year. The letters, sent by the Health Department's drinking water regulation unit, show officials wanted the 9,200 cattle grazing licences discontinued when up for renewal in October. Despite that advice, grazing licences for the 17,000 kilometres of river front – including rivers such as the Murray, Goulburn and Thomson – were renewed for five years. Research has linked cattle waste in waterways to human disease.

### Going up

With more than half of the state's regional water authorities posting losses last financial year, many consumers are set to face higher water prices. An Auditor-General's report found the water industry's net profits dipped by \$197m, or 44 per cent, in 2008-09, with many falling further into debt to fund infrastructure works. The report warns that water authorities outside of Melbourne are in danger of running out of money. Seven of the 13 regional water authorities and the two rural water corporation's lost money in 2008-09, the *Herald Sun* reported.



**Can't make it rain**

In a new 50-year water plan for the states north, the Northern Region Sustainable Water Strategy, rivers such as the Goulburn and Murray will have no new sources of water from the environment nor any improved guaranteed environmental flow levels.

**Orwell turns in grave**

Police files of people protesting against Victoria's \$3.5b desalination project are being made available to Aquasure, the consortium building the plant, to help it 'manage' protests and potential security threats, *The Age* reported. Privacy Commissioner **Helen Versey** is seeking an urgent briefing from the Government on the deal it struck. Following this report, the paper received a number of powerful letters to the editor, many of which compared the government's actions to those of totalitarian regimes. On the opinion pages of that paper, **Kenneth Davidson** wrote that public or private, the 150-gigalitre desalination plant is not needed. The additional water could be produced at a sixth to a quarter of the cost by a judicious mixture of conservation, recycling and diversion dams. Far from saving it money, this project is a burden on state coffers. The Office of Police Integrity has joined the investigation into the Government's decision to provide the files to Aquasure. Chief police commissioner **Simon Overland** has backed down on a commitment to reveal a list of projects where police have struck deals to pass on sensitive information about protesters.

**Read by car washers**

The **Victorian Water Industry Association Inc** represents seventeen water corporations and businesses in the state. Its newsletter, *Water Matters*, is an informative publication which

discusses a range of issues, [www.vicwater.org.au](http://www.vicwater.org.au).

**Harvest the storm**

The **Federal Department of the Environment, Water, Heritage and the Arts** has opened the second round of funding for its Stormwater Harvesting and Reuse projects as part of the \$1b *National Urban Water and Desalination Plan*, [www.environment.gov.au/water/programs/urban/stormwater-harvesting.html](http://www.environment.gov.au/water/programs/urban/stormwater-harvesting.html).

## GAMING

**Swapsies**

The Opposition revealed it would approve 150 new gaming tables for Crown – but only in exchange for a new \$10m support package for problem gamblers, the *Herald Sun* reported. It takes the number of gaming tables at Crown from 350 to 500.

**Into the pubs**

Tabcorp is in talks to buy Wesfarmers' \$200m-plus pub business as part of a strategy to diversify earnings in preparation for the loss of its privileged poker machine hold on Victoria. It will be the first foray into pubs for Tabcorp, which is facing the potential loss of its exclusive wagering licence in Victoria after 2012, the *Financial Review* reported. Tabcorp Holdings' wagering executive, **Robert Nason**, 54, resigned to head a new special-purpose unit at Telstra – customer satisfaction, simplicity and productivity.

**Diversifying**

The deal to allow over-the-counter TAB account services at Australia Post offices has been criticised by anti-gambling campaigners as

inappropriate and dangerous. From December people will be able to apply for a TAB betting account, make betting deposits and withdrawals and obtain a balance of their betting accounts at Australia Post outlets. Betting transactions will not be offered. Tabcorp said the service could be offered at more than 3,300 Australia Post outlets. Antigambling campaigner **Tim Costello** said Australia Post had made a mistake in signing up with Tabcorp. Tabcorp's Australia Post move is not the first move to generate more business by the company this year. Its decision to take bets on Good Friday, the holiest day of the Christian calendar, was labelled inappropriate, *The Age* reported.

**Change afoot**

More than 1,700 hotels in New South Wales and 249 in Victoria could have poker machine revenues reduced if the draft recommendations from a report into gambling by the Productivity Commission are implemented. According to industry consultant **Graeme Campbell**, the recommended changes to the poker machines business could trigger viability concerns and a significant decline in gaming revenue streams, *The Age* reported.

## HEALTH

**Approaching a miracle**

Thirty-two hours after they went into surgery at the Royal Children's Hospital, conjoined Bangladeshi twins Krishna and Trishna were separated and in a stable condition at the hospital, thanks to some superb work by the 16-strong surgical and anaesthetic team that operated on them.

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### **Respect**

Premier **John Brumby** launched a plan to prevent violence against women. Under the scheme, schools, sports clubs and workplaces will be encouraged to build cultures that reject aggression towards women. Sport and media personalities will be appointed 'champions and ambassadors' for the respect of women. Brumby says more than half the women in Australia will suffer some form of physical or sexual violence in their lifetime. He says a woman is killed almost every week by a male partner or former partner. Women's Affairs Minister **Maxine Morand** says violence inflicted by a partner is the leading contributor to death, disability and ill-health for Victorian women aged 15 to 44, *The Age* reported. Wednesday, November 25, was White Ribbon Day, a nationwide campaign to end violence against women.

### **Troubling Brouwer**

The report by ombudsman **George Brouwer** into children in state care has uncovered cases in which the Department of Human Services took a dangerously long time to intervene in instances where children were exposed to abuse. The Government has accepted all the Ombudsman's 42 recommendations, conceding it had failed to protect some of Victoria's most vulnerable children. It will also consider overhauling the Children's Court amid widespread concern that it is too adversarial, *The Age* reported. The *Herald Sun* reported that Community Services Minister **Lisa Neville** rejected demands that she step down following the release of the report. She came under sustained pressure in Question Time and a *Herald Sun* online poll found that over 85 per cent of voters called for her to go.

### **Child costs going up**

Child-care centres will be forced to meet minimum staff ratios and will be ranked to allow parents to compare quality. Private

operators claim the changes to the rules of operation could push daily costs up for Victorian parents by as much as \$25 for each child. The agreement between state, territory and federal governments to introduce minimum quality standards will also mean the introduction of mandatory requirements for qualified child-care workers and teachers from the middle of next year, *The Age* reported.

### **Finding cash**

Two Melbourne hospitals have been accused of exploiting Medicare by shifting millions of dollars worth of patient scans and diagnostic tests on to the Commonwealth. Some patients are left with out-of-pocket expenses, despite having come to the hospital as public patients who should receive free treatment. *The Age* reported that the practice is widespread among Victorian hospitals, whose state funding has to cover the rising cost of outpatient clinics.

### **Mainly for eye operations to correct myopia**

The Government is considering paying for more surgery to be done in private hospitals in an attempt to make up for critical problems in the public health system. Doctors are criticising the plan as shortsighted, saying it should not be adopted as a substitute for investing in public hospitals. A strategy document uploaded to the Health Department's website outlines the Government's plan to deal with escalating demand for elective and emergency surgery over the next five years, *The Age* reported. The *Herald Sun* reported that private hospitals say they could wipe out the nation's elective surgery waiting lists if the Federal Government was prepared to pay for surgery using their spare beds. The Australian Private Hospitals Association said private hospitals were operating at about 77 per cent capacity and could carry out an extra 323,000 elective operations every year.

### **Deathly heat**

More than 370 Victorians are believed to have died in last summer's heat wave – 10 times more than initially feared. The spike in temperatures above 40C on consecutive days in late January early February resulted in a 62 per cent increase in deaths on the previous summer. The executive director of regional and rural health and aged care services, **Chris Brook**, told a parliamentary hearing that the majority of the deaths were among over 75-year-olds. The committee also heard that Ambulance Victoria came under great stress last summer with 514 people in Victoria seeking treatment for conditions including heat stress, heatstroke and dehydration – up from an average of just 15. The Government is expected to release a comprehensive heatwave plan in late December, the *Herald Sun* reported.

### **Danger prams**

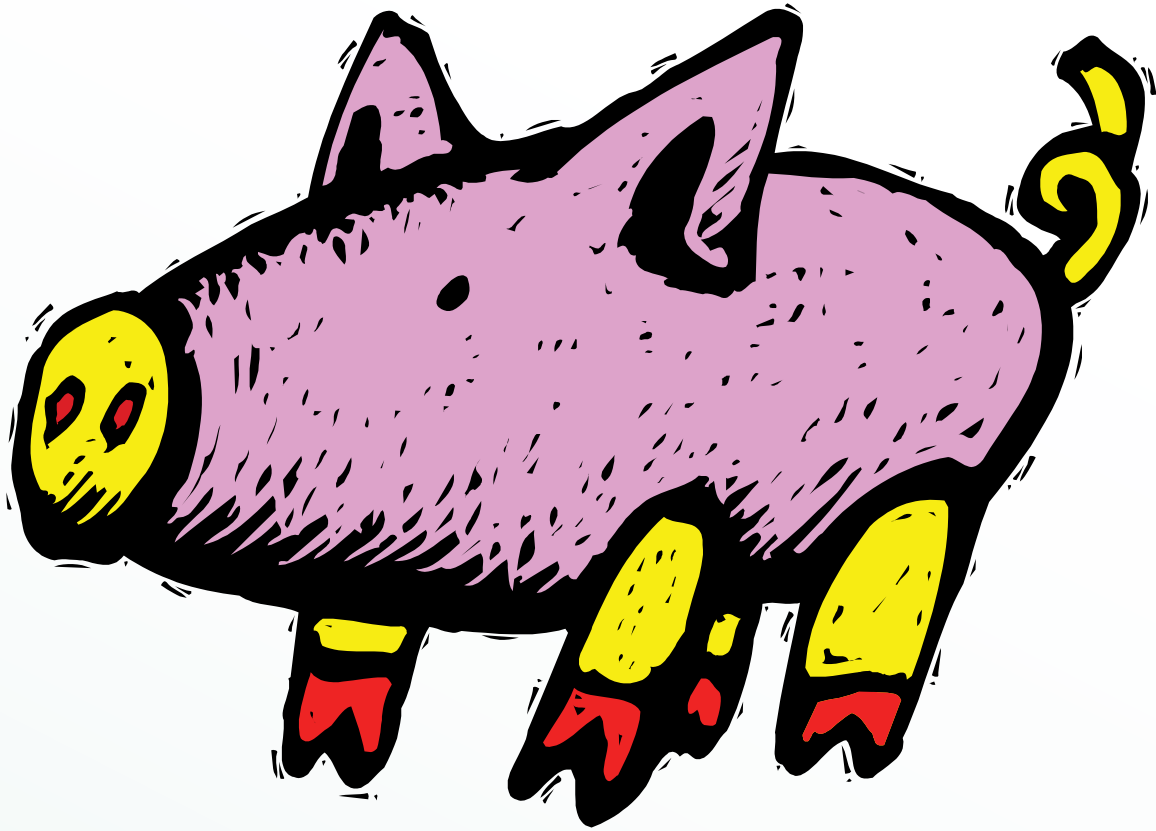
The *Herald Sun* reported that the popularity of lightweight three-wheeled prams is partly to blame for landing many babies and toddlers in hospital each year. Figures show 937 infants have been treated in Victorian hospital emergency departments for pram injuries since 2002-03, with more than half of them under a year old. The total includes more than 120 with head injuries, 41 suffering fractures and 143 with open wounds, figures by Monash University's Accident Research Centre show.

### **An insider's view**

In an e-mail circulated to all its staff, Barwon Health said it is currently facing a number of challenges that have the potential to inhibit the organisation's ability to develop and grow services. The budget projects a deficit of \$3m in the current year. A review resulted in 26 positions in Central Services and Human Resources being identified as surplus to requirements.



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# Roy Morgan Readership continues to lead the way.

*Roy Morgan Research is pleased that Fairfax Media and the MPA (Magazine Publishers of Australia) have followed ACP's lead in deciding to continue to use the Roy Morgan Readership Survey as their media currency.*

Through the tripartite Readership Research Forums, Roy Morgan Research is working closely with the newspaper and magazine publishers and media agencies on a range of issues including, among other things, topics of interest in newspapers and how online is emerging and transforming media.

**Newspaper Topic Involvement** is a new suite of metrics measuring the extent of readers' involvement in 22 different newspaper topics, ie whether they 'especially choose to read' the topic, are 'interested and read when have time', 'only read if something grabs attention' or 'never read the topic'. An additional measure is 'really enjoy this topic'.

Roy Morgan Research has been working on Newspaper Topic Involvement for some time.

Newspaper publishers received the data earlier this year; all media agencies received the data in ASTEROID software last week.

Combining 'especially choose to read' with 'interested and read when have time' produces Usual Readers — shown in the charts below: WebScheduler (released in September) is another new initiative designed to ensure the data is relevant to today's changing media scene (ie including on-line).

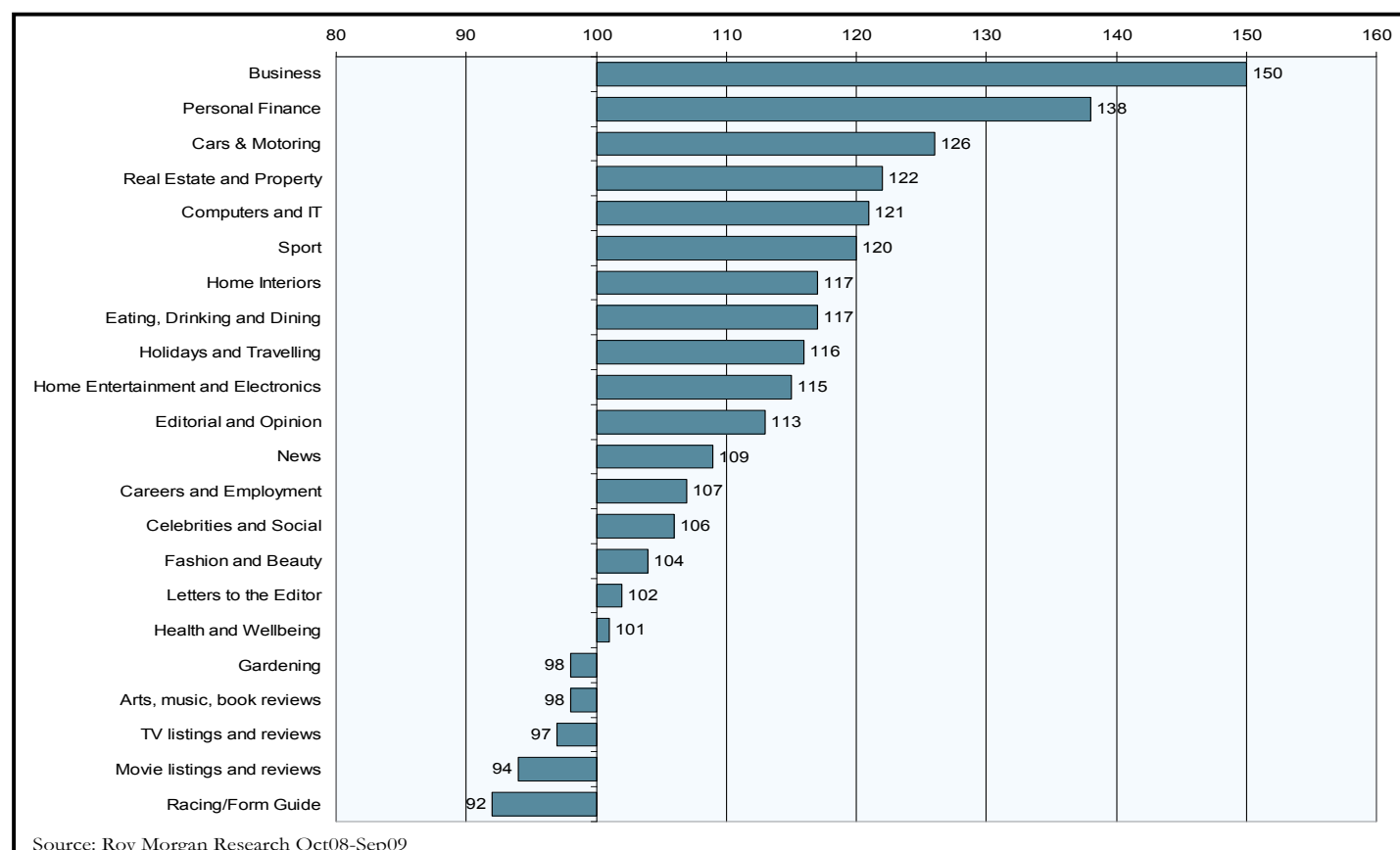
**WebScheduler** allows websites to be scheduled with other media — newspapers, magazines, TV and cinema (as part of the Roy Morgan ASTEROID multimedia scheduling system).

***Chart 1: Usual topic readers by male/female split:***





**Chart 2: Newspaper topics that New Motor Vehicle Intenders are more likely to usually read (average = 100):**



Source: Roy Morgan Research Oct08-Sep09

*Other areas Roy Morgan is working on with the publishers and media agencies include a cross-channel review of media imperatives; and a detailed articulation of the detail of what is already available in Roy Morgan Single Source, eg ‘Source of copy’ data, time spent with different media and other activities, the use of mobile as well as traditional computers for media and other internet activities, movie titles and more.*

**CAPI:** Roy Morgan Research has already begun the major development of *Computer Assisted Personal Interview* (CAPI) technology, and a move to multimode data collection. The Roy Morgan media research future will be a totally integrated data collection platform - comprising face-to-face, online, mobile, and telephone data collection methods.

CAPI combines the best of face-to-face interviewing of people in their own homes (highest response rates) and adds speed (answers are entered daily into the computer at the time of the interview so data is available for verification in near real time), flexibility (questions can be changed in near real time and more complex questioning is possible) and accuracy (data can be logic-checked in the field).

We have already undertaken two major Government CAPI projects, and after a full-scale pilot in February, the full CAPI service could be up and running as early as July 2010.

The second element of this major development is ‘Plus online.’ We emphasise ‘plus.’ Online alone is unable to achieve an adequately representative sample. Additional detailed data will also be collected using other methods, eg mobile — all operating from the same integrated platform.

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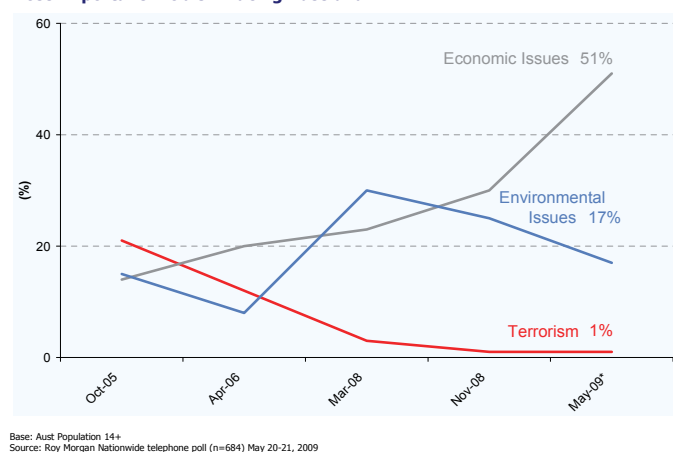
# State of the Nation Report

## “Discover the changing attitudes & priorities of Australians.”



*An accurate view of trends can only be gained over time. In fact, any conclusions reached as a result of changing trends over a narrow period of time is likely to be misleading (akin to assessing earthquake damage from one street Vs. a helicopter or even wider aerial view).*

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\*Roy Morgan Values Segments devised by Michele Levine of Roy Morgan Research and Colin Benjamin of the Horizons Network.

### Some of the trends outlined in the State of the Nation Report include:

- Ageing Population
- Increased education
- Increased workforce participation
- Increased wealth, debt & discretionary spending
- High and generally increasing Consumer Confidence
- Increasingly progressive attitudes and attraction to new ideas
- Australians' concern about the environment now being translated into action
- Change in leisure activities away from organised sport and family outings to more individual pursuits and online activities
- Increased international focus and interest in health and wellness is being played out in the food area.
- An increased proliferation of information and communication technologies.

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**A whimper**

A long running Victoria Police inquiry into The Alfred Hospital's former trauma chief, **Thomas Kossman**, found insufficient evidence to charge the surgeon over his billing practices, *The Age* reported.

**The opiate that kills**

The *Herald Sun* reported that 134 people died of heroin caused deaths in Victoria last year.

**Good jobs**

The Department of Health seeks appointments to **Boards of Directors of Public Health Services, Ambulance Victoria, and Rural Public Hospitals**. Ambulance Victoria is now a single statewide service following the integration of the three former ambulance services in 2008, [www.health.vic.gov.au/governance](http://www.health.vic.gov.au/governance).

**Read them**

Following the division of the **Department of Human Services and Health**, two glossy 16 to 20-page magazines are available, detailing many interesting aspects of health and community care, [www.health.vic.gov.au](http://www.health.vic.gov.au).

**Another job**

Shepparton-based **FamilyCare** seeks a chief executive officer, [execrec@macarthur.com.au](mailto:execrec@macarthur.com.au).

## INVESTMENT

## BUSINESS

**Luxury growth**

Chadstone is the biggest shopping centre in the southern hemisphere following the opening of a new luxury boutique section which features stores from Burberry, Chanel, Gucci, Coach, Hugo Boss, Tiffany and Co, Ralph Lauren and Omega, the *Herald Sun* reported. An estimated 5000 shoppers attended the new fashion precinct's opening. There are 530 shops in 175,600 square metres of chanting, with 9,500 parking bays and 18 million shoppers a year.

**Showing some leg**

David Jones managing director **Mark McInnes** and Premier **John Brumby** unveiled the first stage of David Jones' \$100m redeveloped Melbourne city store at the end of November, *The Age* reported. At the opening, 680 staff were rostered to work, taking charge of the 1,850 new brands available at the store.

**A special treat**

Shoppers are being treated the longest trading hours in history as retailers look to cash in on the Christmas dollar. The *Herald Sun* detailed the opening hours of major shopping centres. The Australian Retailers Association predicts \$9.3b will be spent state wide over Christmas, up 4.7 per cent on last year.

**Do more**

The Government has been accused of not doing enough for small business in its tendering process following the annual report of the six-year-old Office of the Small Business Commissioner. Deputy Liberal party leader **Louise Asher**, who is also state opposition spokeswoman on small business took umbrage with flaws announced in the annual report in the tendering process which resulted in a business being excluded from the Whole of Government eServices Panel – from which businesses are selected to undertake various work – and therefore from access to government contracts. A review of the matter by the Victorian Government Purchasing Board concluded that the structure of the one stage tender did not meet government policy, or the aim of making it easier for small to medium enterprises and eService bidders to do business with the government, the *Financial Review* reported.

**Doing their job**

Victoria's workplace ombudsman recovered \$8.76m in underpayments for workers last financial year. The ombudsman's office released a statement saying the money was shared among 4,552 workers who had been underpaid. Workplace inspectors investigated 6,216 complaints throughout the state and recorded 7,442 workplace law breaches. Fair Work Ombudsman executive director **Michael Campbell** said 99 per cent of the money was recovered without resorting to litigation, *The Age* reported.



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MELBOURNE CANBERRA SYDNEY

#### Moving up stream

Melbourne's fish market, which employs more than 200 people and supplies retailers and restaurants around the state, will move from West Melbourne to Brooklyn, near the Westgate Freeway in Ring Road interchange, the *Herald Sun* reported.

#### Defection

**Carla Zampatti** is defecting to rival department store David Jones under a deal that will see her label go to twice as many stores as she is in at Myer.

## ICT

#### Bedtime reading

The *Financial Review* reported that technology suppliers have cut prices by up to 25 per cent in response to moves by the Victorian Government to centralise the delivery of commodity competing services, the head of the rationalisation scheme has claimed. **Peter Blades**, the chief executive of Victoria's new state and infrastructure services corporation CenITex, said he expected computer costs for agencies would continue to fall as the program was rolled out to government agencies. The Government has projected it will extract annual operational savings of about \$40m a year. Blades said that while embarking on such a program might be unpopular with agencies that preferred to strike their own deals, there was little understanding across the different departments of the true cost of maintaining hundreds of different deals for largely similar infrastructure. He warned that across-the-board funding cuts to technology budgets, an approach used by the Federal Government under its Gershon review, in his experience might not work in Victoria. Instead, CenITex was working

with agencies by going through their financial accounts to do due diligence to find the real cost of technology to the Government. This included giving CenITex the ability to review the accounts of the department to find total costs rather than what was booked in under the computing budget. Blades confirmed that Victoria Police's commodity technology could possibly be taken over by CenITex, but hinted that his organisation could wait until a clearer picture emerged.

#### Eureka!

A new information technology service centre was officially opened in Ballarat in early December, adding \$61m to the region's economy over the next five years and 300 new jobs to an area of Victoria where unemployment is an ongoing problem. The \$10.8m centre at the University of Ballarat Technology Park accommodates about 50 IBM workers whose duties have so far been hosted on site at the University of Ballarat and by overstretched centres elsewhere around the country, the *Financial Review* reported.

## AGRICULTURE

#### Anyone for wheaties?

Australia's wheat crop is on track to surpass 3.4 million tonnes, making it twice as big as last year's and almost 60 per cent bigger than the recent five-year average, according to figures released by the Federal Government agricultural forecaster. However, the November heatwave, followed by heavy rains later in the month and more rain in early December, could threaten the predictions, *The Age* reported.

#### The urban farm boundary

On the opinion pages of *The Age*, Dr **Cate Burns**, a VicHealth public health research fellow at Deakin University, wrote that we need prime agricultural land on the city's outskirts to cater for a growing population.

#### Good jobs

The **Department of Innovation, Industry and Regional Development** has a number of positions available in its Dandenong and Bunbury locations, [www.diird.vic.gov.au](http://www.diird.vic.gov.au).

## JUSTICE

#### Getting on it

Premier **John Brumby** has promised an investigation of claims of increased drug use at the Dame Phyllis Frost Centre amid concern about the amount of contraband smuggled into Victoria's largest women's jail, *The Age* reported.

#### Long-term fight

Police chief commissioner **Simon Overland** said in a speech at the Turning Point alcohol and drug centre annual meeting at Melbourne University

that the battle to beat alcohol-fuelled violence may take decades. In a speech he delivered at Melbourne University, Overland said that no amount of police blitzes would stop alcohol-related violence and it has been too easy to obtain licences in Melbourne. He believes licensing hours should be restricted in the central business district and society has failed to deal with the destructive consequences of the growing binge culture. Nevertheless, Premier **John Brumby** says Melbourne's nightlife will be allowed to keep growing, defending the growth in bars and licensed cafes by saying they are an important part of Melbourne's culture and only certain large venues needed closer regulation. He was confident extra policing and the new licensing regime would reduce alcohol-related crime in the city within the next 12-18 months, *The Age* reported. Overland said his force cannot find its way out of alcohol-fuelled violence, with the state recording a jump in assaults over a year. More than 34,000 assaults were recorded up to September this year – 7.8 per cent increase over the previous year, *The Age* reported.

#### Nearby

Police chief commissioner **Simon Overland** called for alcohol price increases to combat rising alcohol related issues such as street violence. Police data showed in the past five years more than 80,000 revellers across the state have been locked up for being too drunk, the *Herald Sun* reported.

#### In his right hand

Police Chief Commissioner **Simon Overland's** right-hand man has been issued with a semi-automatic pistol due to security fears. Overland is a potential target for disgruntled crime and terror figures, the *Herald Sun* reported.

#### Maladministration

Victoria Police's forensic services will be overhauled following a report by Ombudsman **George Brouwer**, in which, for the second time in less than a month, he accused senior police managers of maladministration.

#### Flaws in police DNA

At least six criminal cases have been put on hold after flaws were found in police DNA evidence procedures. Chief Commissioner **Simon Overland** said he had banned police forensics scientists from giving evidence until further notice, *The Age* reported. He has ordered a restructure of senior police management practices in the wake of Ombudsman **George Brouwer's** report into Victoria's Forensic Services Centre in Macleod, where it was found more than 15 years of mismanagement and lack of accountability meant corruption could occur and go unnoticed.

#### Police leaving Labor

The *Herald Sun* reported that an independent survey of more than 2,000 officers, commissioned by the Police Association, show

support for Labor is only at 9 per cent, with the rest intending to vote for another party. The figures reflect a growing disillusionment with the Government performance on police matters, with an overwhelming majority stating it had performed 'worse' or 'much worse' in the past year.

#### Tattoo parlours banned

The *Herald Sun* reported that biker gangs the Comancheros and Finks – both well-established in other states – are in the process of establishing their first chapters in Victoria. A report by the Victoria Police says Finks members are already operating a tattoo parlour in Port Melbourne and are likely to be attempting to secure a locally-based clubhouse. Comancheros are trying find a location for a clubhouse in Richmond or Port Melbourne. The State Government refused to join other states in strengthening biker laws after a fatal brawl between bikies at Sydney airport in March. It rejected suggestions then that interstate motorcycle gang members would head to Victoria to avoid tougher laws in South Australia and in some other states. South Australia, Western Australia, Queensland, New South Wales and the Northern Territory have all enacted or are planning anti-association laws designed to disrupt and dismantle biker gangs. The Victoria Police Association said biker gangs had effectively been invited to set up shop here and have happily accepted the invitation.

#### Police are investigating

The Police Association inadvertently allowed a brothel to advertise in its monthly glossy magazine. It included an advertisement for the 39 Tope brothel in South Melbourne on specialist pages it uses to allow businesses to advertise products and services to its members. The brothel appears to specialise in Asian prostitutes, and was advertised in the October issue of the Police Association's *Journal*.

Association secretary Senior Sergeant **Greg Davies** said the inclusion of the advertisement had not been approved and was a mistake, the *Herald Sun* reported.

#### Transgressing themselves

The *Weekly Times* reported that new police powers, announced by the Government in early November, breached the Government's own human rights charter. Police Minister **Bob Cameron** introduced a number of new powers to Parliament, including giving police the power to conduct random searches, including strip searches, in designated areas. The Government assessment of the legislation concedes it is incompatible with the charter in providing powers to police to randomly search persons (including children).

#### Ready to judge

Two senior barristers with decades of experience in diverse legal fields have been appointed judges of the County Court. Attorney-general **Rob Hulls** said **James Montgomery**, SC, and **James Parish**, SC, would make a significant contribution to Victoria's justice system, *The Age* reported. Barristers' clerk **Suzanne Cameron** and the director of courts and tribunals policy unit, **Johanna Metcalf**, have become magistrates.

#### Ready to review

Monash University academic **Pam O'Connor** has been appointed to a review of Victoria's property law. The first stage of the review will focus on updating the Property Law Act of 1958, the *Financial Review* reported.

#### A stand against perjury

Several senior police have quit their union over a decision to fund the perjury trial of former assistant commissioner **Noel Ashby**. Superintendent **Richard Grant**, Superintendent

**Phil Green**, Detective Inspector **Glenn Davies** and Sergeant **Peter Kosta** handed in their police association memberships after its executive voted to pay Ashby's legal costs, the *Herald Sun* reported.

#### Specialising in traffic law

**Carmen Randazzo**, the magistrate forced to resign after investigation into irregularities in 10 speeding tickets is applying to be readmitted as a barrister, *The Age* reported.

#### Congratulations!

The *Herald Sun* reported that former police chief **'Mick' Miller** became the second member of the Neighbourhood Watch Hall of Fame.

## MELBOURNE

#### Men's and women's rights

*The Age* reported that the Scrutiny of Acts and Regulations Committee said, in its report on the right of some clubs to continue as single sex institutions, that freedom of association was a fundamental human right protected under Victorian law, and it needed to be balanced against the right to non-discrimination. 'The committee does not recommend a change that would prevent single sex clubs from continuing their operations or require them to seek an exemption [to antidiscrimination laws],' it says.

#### One year on

One year into his Town Hall rein, **Robert Doyle's** attitude and performance has pleasantly surprised many doubters. One reason why Doyle has proved popular inside and outside Town Hall is that he is not an ideologue or political warrior. Business leaders have also said nice things. Victorian Employers Chamber of Commerce and Industry chief executive

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**Wayne Kayler-Thomson** says Doyle has been a good spokesman for Melbourne, while Melbourne Business Council secretary **Don Parsons** describes Doyle as a big improvement on his predecessor. **Brian Weld** from the Master Builders Association, echoes this sentiment. Doyle recently declared he wants no homeless people to be forced to live on the streets by the time his term ends.

### Another part of Paris

Eighty seven-year-old, exclusive boutique Le Louvre is leaving the Paris end of Collins Street after its second-generation owner, **Georgina Weir**, sold the 1855 building to Queensland-based fund manager QIC for \$13.1m. It will move to another historic heritage protected building, 2 Daly Street, South Yarra, owned by the Melbourne Metropolitan Tramways board since 1927. Weirs mother, **Lillian Wightman**, established the Le Louvre boutique in 1922, reportedly to cater for the wives of wealthy city doctors.

### Fast lane

Motor racing great Sir **Jack Brabham** is to have a Melbourne laneway named in his honour. The small lane is next to Monaco House on Ridgeway Place. Sir Jack won his first Grand Prix in Monaco in 1959. Monaco Honorary Consul **Andrew Canning** said he suggested naming the lane after Sir Jack, an exceptional sportsman and a gentleman, *The Age* reported.

### Lightening strikes twice

The storms in late November matched those from earlier in the month with much lightning and rain. A teenage girl survived being struck by lightning, as did a train driver when the storms wreaked havoc with Melbourne's transport.

### Talking us through it

US President **Barack Obama's** new ambassador to Australia, **Jeffrey Bleich**, delivered one of his first public speeches in Melbourne at a Melbourne Press Club lunch in the River Room at Crown, on December 8. Combating the twin threats of nuclear weapons and climate change

are among the top priorities of the new US ambassador.

### A sight for sore eyes

Virtual Tourist put Federation Square fifth on its list of eyesores, alongside a library in Kosovo, a television tower in Prague and New Zealand's 1970s era Parliament building, the *Herald Sun* reported.

### Royal revolution

The Royal Melbourne Show will be held in the second week of school holidays instead of the first, as of next year. It will be swapped from the traditional Thursday before school holidays to Saturday, September 18, and the event will finish on Tuesday, September 28. The Royal Agricultural Society of Victoria says the change of date will allow more young families to attend.

### Sustain us

The **City of Melbourne** seeks a Manager of Sustainability, [www.jofisher.com.au](http://www.jofisher.com.au).

## GEELONG

### A big pier

Plans for a \$30m pier and waterfront development in central Geelong is expected to be announced. With Victorian Government Major Projects development facilitator **Kathy Timmins** telling Capital Gain the Government was happy with the response to a recent expression of interest campaign to revive the Yarra Street Pier, which was destroyed by fire in 1988, *The Age* reported.

## PLANNING & BUILDING

### A new tax

Five key building groups have released an open letter to Premier **John Brumby** criticising the planned tax on land in Melbourne's growth areas

claiming it will reduce housing affordability and Victoria's housing competitiveness over other states. Proposed legislation is before Parliament that would introduce a tax of up to \$95,000 a hectare on land brought within Melbourne's urban growth boundary. The tax is to be paid by the buyer of the property on the first sale or subdivision of the land after it is included in Melbourne's urban growth area. The letter from the Australian Property Institute, the Housing Industry Association, the Master Builders Association of Victoria, the Property Council of Australia and the Urban Development Institute of Australia said if the tax were introduced it would result in a decline in levels of development in the growth areas in Melbourne and cause a reduction in the amount of land available for new housing. **Peta Duke**, spokeswoman for Planning Minister **Justin Madden**, said the new growth areas tax was the best way to help pay for infrastructure needed by families who will move to some of Melbourne's newest suburbs, *The Age* reported. In mid-December, the *Financial Review* reported that the tax faces an uncertain future after opposition parties blocked the necessary legislation in the state's upper house. The Government is committed to bringing the bill back to parliament early next year.

### Double the dollars

Melbourne house prices could double to hit a median of \$1m in a decade, according to the Real Estate Institute of Victoria. REIV chief executive **Enzo Raimondo** said population growth and a shortage of housing stock would make million-dollar homes the norm, *The Age* reported.

### The Grollo

Rialto owner **Lorrenz Grollo** said his firm Equiset was planning a big environmental retrofit of the Rialto. It has been researching a retrofit for the past two years with local engineers. Grollo was part of a 22-person Victorian industry delegation touring sustainable buildings in New York, San Francisco and Chicago in mid-November, the *Herald Sun* reported. Lorenz did not visit his cousin **Daniel Grollo**, who evidently regularly

spends time in New York, while he was there, whom incidentally is competing in the Eureka Climb's celebrity challenge, when 89 floors and 1,958 stairs will be scaled. The climb raises money for disadvantaged youths and has more than 1000 entrants.

## A clear view

A permanent buffer zone around the Royal Exhibition Building, to protect views of the World Heritage-listed precinct, was approved by Planning Minister **Justin Madden**. It will restrict development in streets surrounding the site, with Madden amending the planning schemes of Melbourne and Yarra councils to reflect the new rules. The zone is designed to protect the heritage values of the Exhibition Building and Carlton Gardens by maintaining clear views of the building to reflect its historical significance, the *Weekly Times* reported.

## More jobs

The Government announced Australian construction company Baulderstone as its preferred builder for the \$128.5m Hamer Hall refurbishment. Redevelopment will include new connections to the CBD, St Kilda Road and the Yarra River, new foyer spaces and stairs, better disability access, escalators and lifts, improved acoustics, new auditorium seating and staging systems. The Government says the project will create more than 400 jobs and inject about \$373m into the state economy during construction alone. Work is expected to begin in mid 2010, the *Weekly Times* reported.

## Prudent investment

**Angus Reeds'** Prudentia Investments is undertaking a \$440m development, Wyndham Harbour, on the western side of Port Phillip Bay. It includes waterfront blocks, apartments, two new beaches, up to 1000 wet berths and 390 dry berths, as well as shops and cafes. Last year, Wyndham Council approved a plan for the project, designed by **Fender Katsalidis Mirams**. It will provide a reduced wetland to treat all stormwater runoff generated by the development. It has also promised to offset carbon emissions produced in the development through a 500 hectare forest regeneration project in the upper Werribee catchment, and says the

homes will have a six-star environmental rating, *The Age* reported.

## It's off

St Kilda's \$400m triangle project has been cancelled by Port Phillip Council at a cost of \$5m. 'The proposed development will be terminated, absolutely, from now,' said Mayor **Frank O'Connor**. Councillors agreed to a commercial settlement of \$5m over three years with developer Citta Group. In early 2008, after a long and controversial tender process, Port Phillip Council finally gave the green light for the project to Citta Group. By year's end the global financial crisis and the election of an anti-triangle council had put the project in real jeopardy, *The Age* reported.

## Clash of steel

The steel industry criticised the State Government for ignoring local purchasing rules in the Federal Government's multi-billion-dollar stimulus school building program. The Australian Steel Institute told a state Parliamentary enquiry that the Victorian Department of Education and Early Childhood Development was flouting specifications for local materials laid down by the Federal Government and substituting it with overseas content, the *Financial Review* reported.

## More supermarkets

Developers can be given greater scope to open more supermarkets in Melbourne suburbs to break the dominance of Coles and Woolworths under changes being pushed by the Federal Government. Consumer Affairs Minister **Craig Emerson** wants an overhaul of state planning laws, warning they could be unjustifiably restricting competition by limiting retail centres to specific locations, *The Age* reported.

## My goodness

Miegunyah, a Toorak mansion, sold for more than \$20m, a Melbourne record. It was sold by former Pacific Dunlop chief executive **Philip Brass**, who reportedly paid **Robert Holmes a Court** \$2m for the property in 1991.

## A landmark under the hammer

A historic St Kilda landmark, the former St Kilda Post Office, at 306-310 St Kilda Road, is up for

sale with an asking price of more than \$4.8m, *The Age* reported.

## Arch arrival

**Mark Stewart** has been appointed chief executive of building advisory service Archicentre. His move to Archicentre comes after seven years in the automotive sector as general manager of Assist Australia.

## Moving right along

The Building Commission and the Plumbing Industry Commission moved their operations to the Goods Shed North building at the Docklands precinct, alongside VicUrban, [www.buildingcommission.com.au](http://www.buildingcommission.com.au).

# LOCAL GOVERNMENT

## Young mayors

Liberal party member **Tim Smith**, 26, is Stonnington Council's new mayor. Labor Party member **Jane Garratt**, 36, was elected mayor of Yarra Council.

## Good job

The **Wimmera Development Association**, the peak economic development organisation for the Wimmera – Southern Mallee region, seeks an Executive Director, [execrec@macarthur.com.au](mailto:execrec@macarthur.com.au).

# SPORT

## Pot calling the kettle black

Soccer's ruling body, Football Federation Australia, has told the MCG it will need a \$130m taxpayer funded overhaul to install rectangular seating, should Australia be awarded the world's biggest sporting event in 2018 or 2022. Construction and removal of the temporary stand could take up to four months, potentially leaving the stadium without any AFL games until the finals. AFL chiefs, who were not told of the proposed MCG overhaul during recent discussions, are growing agitated over what they say is a lack of transparency by the FFA and FIFA, soccer's international governing body,

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the *Herald Sun* reported. *The Age* reported that AFL chief executive **Andrew Demetriou** has declared Etihad stadium off limits for the World Cup should Australia win the rights to host the sporting event.

### The last hurdle

Jumps racing will be stopped by the end of next year. A review of jumps racing by Racing Victoria found trials of safety measures to make jumps racing less dangerous to horses and riders had failed. Racing Victoria chairman **Michael Duffy** said the decision to ban jumps racing was agonising and that the industry's image and reputation had to be protected within the community. 'The recommendations in six previous reviews have been implemented without any sustained reduction in incident rates,' he said. The controversial decision has been accepted by the Government and cheered by animal rights groups. But the jumps industry and country racing organisations vowed to fight the decision, saying it pandered to the 'loony left', *The Age* reported.

### Radio station trade week

**Tim Lane**, one of Australia's most respected sporting broadcasters, left the ABC after more than 30 years, to join 3AW. Lane will call football each Sunday until the end of 2011, the duration of the current AFL broadcast agreement. He will call the 2010 grand final with the station's other recruit, **Brian Taylor**, who left Triple M for the job. In a straight swap, **Rex Hunt** left 3AW to call the footy at Triple M.

### Mettricon stadium

The naming rights of the \$267m rectangular stadium opposite the MCG has been whittled down to a shortlist, with home builder Mettricon the favourite in a deal that could be valued at as much as \$3m. The stadium will officially open on May 7 when it hosts a rugby league showdown between Australia and New Zealand. Sports Minister **James Merlino** said the new 30,000-seat stadium will be a great place to watch rugby league, rugby union and soccer, the *Herald Sun* reported.

### What about the lawn?

The South Australian government has committed \$450m to fund an extensive upgrade

of the Adelaide Oval, allowing stadiums to host AFL fixtures and potentially World Cup soccer matches, the *Financial Review* reported.

### Cheetah Woods plays around

**Tiger Woods**, married with two kids, had a bad month with a waitress from Los Angeles claiming to be his secret lover and police citing him for careless driving. At least four other women claimed to have had affairs with him.

## TOURISM

### Unofficially

The *Herald Sun* reported that in an unofficial poll, Tourism Victoria declared Brighton and Sandringham beaches the best option for city residents. It also gave the nod to other bay beaches Ricketts Point, Queenscliff, Sorrento and Portsea. Keep Australia beautiful chairman **Don Chambers** said Melbourne's inner-city beaches have a long way to go before they could be considered among the best.

### Wicked value

*Wicked*, the musical about the witches from *The Wizard of Oz*, played to 610,000 people in 13 months at the Regent Theatre, with 180,000 being interstate or overseas visitors who spent up big in Melbourne's hotels, restaurants and shops, the *Herald Sun* reported.

### In the bush

The 2009 Upper Murray WOW Festival brought together the towns of Jingellic, Tintaldra and Walwa and all the people living in between, and their guests and other visitors. It is all part of a plan to promote this wonderful area. If waves and beaches are not necessary, keep in touch for November 2010, [www.walwa.com.wow](http://www.walwa.com.wow).

## TRANSPORT

### RAIL

### The problem child

The *Herald Sun* reported that when the myki smartcard is introduced this year, the existing rule that allows commuters to use expired tickets in cases of late services will be lost. Myki's architects failed to take late and cancelled services into account when designing the system. Another benefit eliminated because of myki is free weekend travel for commuters with weekly, monthly or yearly tickets. 'This change is necessary because under myki, the entire state needs to be divided into zones, from zone 1 in Melbourne to zone 53 in Mildura,' myki spokeswoman **Ker Walsh** said. *The Age* reported that ticket inspectors on Melbourne trams increase their checks of tickets by 15 per cent once the introduction of myki is complete. The inspection plan is part of a deal worked out by the Government with Yarra Trams new operator KDR.

### Adieu

Connex took out a full-page advertisement in the *Herald Sun*, saying that they are proud to have been part of moving Melbourne forward and thanking their customers, staff, the government and other valued stakeholders for their support, ideas and involvement in helping revive the Melbourne train network over the past decade. In its final days, the operator was also forced to impound another of the city Siemens trains because it had overshot a train platform. It handed over control of the system to Metro Trains Melbourne on December 1, a company that will remove thousands of seats from the existing trains over the next two years to squeeze in more passengers. They didn't have a very good start with the Glen Waverley line closed for five hours on the day they took control, which included the morning rush. Metro chief **Andrew Lezala** blamed the bad start on a broken pantograph (a rod that transfers electricity to the train) and missing carbon for a short circuit. On the second day running the city's trains, Metro had another bad day of cancellations, with 38 trains not running, most due to the Glen Waverley line breakdown. Many



more services were badly delayed across the network. The State Opposition said the incident proved it had not been Connex's fault that Melbourne's trains were unreliable, but a lack of investment by the Government in better trains for the city. KDR took over from Yarra Trams on the same day and hinted at a plan that would see underused tram routes cut back and timetables abandoned in favour of more frequent trams in busy areas.

## It was Connex

A teenager has been charged over a suspected arson attack at Gardenvale Railway Station that caused severe disruption to peak hour services, the *Herald Sun* reported.

## Blue train...

The Department of Transport and Victorian Railtrack Corporation, in conjunction with the Heritage Operations Committee, is offering four of the former Vineland Sleeping Carriages for a long-term placement to an interested registered 'not for profit' organisation(s).

## Happy rail day

The **Australasian Railway Association 2009 Rail Industry Conference** in Adelaide presents a number of awards for excellence. Apart from the conference presentations, 250 rail enterprises large and small were an inspiration to the future of rail. Clean. Capacity. Climate. Happy.

## ROAD

### Duplicate to improve

The Victorian Employers' Chamber of Commerce and Industry released a state development blueprint calling on the Government and Opposition to commit to building a duplicated highway over a several hundred kilometre arc from Geelong in the west to Ballarat, Bendigo and on to Shepparton in the north before linking with the Hume Highway. Under the multi-billion-dollar plan, unveiled at a summit of business and political leaders at Parliament house, road links would also be improved between Geelong and Colac in the Western District, Ballarat and Horsham in the Mallee, and Traralgon and Sale in Gippsland, *The Age* reported.

### Clearways

*The Age* reported that after months of traffic confusion and protests from traders, the Government's decision to extend clearway hours

to boost tram speeds along one of Melbourne's busiest roads has been found to improve journey times by just a few seconds. The Government has argued that, along with improving travel times for motorists, the clearway will improve the speed of Melbourne's trams by freeing up road space and reducing interference from cars. And Yarra Trams' outgoing chief, **Dennis Cliche**, recently claimed that advocating extending clearway hours was one of the most significant solutions to tram speed it had delivered in its decade running the network.

### Taxi!

Widespread passenger dissatisfaction with Victoria's taxi industry has resulted in the Government's failure to meet performance targets for the second consecutive year. The Department of Transport annual report shows the customer satisfaction index at 60.3 out of a hundred in 2008-09, well short of the 64.4 target. But it is a slight improvement on 2008, when only 58 of every 100 passengers were happy with their cab ride, *The Age* reported.

### A bridge too far

Lawyer, transport lobbyist and independent candidate for Higgins, **Peter Brohier**, thinks we need a bridge across the heads of Port Phillip Bay, linking the Mornington and Bellarine peninsulas. He estimates the bridge would cost the Federal Government about \$4b plus another \$5b in ancillary works. The idea is not new. Melbourne engineer **David Broadbent** tried to muster support for a bridge across the 3 kilometre gap at the heads a decade ago and VicRoads had looked at the possibility as far back as the 1950s. RACV public policy manager **Brian Negus** supports projects within the \$38b Victorian Transport Plan as more urgent priorities, but said a bridge could be considered in 30 years time in light of Melbourne's projected population growth to 7 million, *The Age* reported.

### The youth

Young drivers are choosing the least safe cars, often with deadly consequences, new research from Monash University has found. Monash University's Accident Research Centre found that the types of cars people aged between 17 and 25 driver is a major contributing factor to the high road deaths in that age group. The study looked at more than 250,000 accidents involving young people in Australia and New Zealand over four years. Cars driven by young people are usually older models, and young

women in particular tend to drive cars that are both older and smaller than average, placing them at very high risk, *The Age* reported.

### Underway

VicRoads is upgrading the 38-kilometre M80 ring road which consists of the Western and Metropolitan Ring Roads. The first section to be upgraded is between Tullamarine Freeway and Sydney Road, where works commenced on Wednesday 25 November, [www.vicroads.vic.gov.au/m80upgrade](http://www.vicroads.vic.gov.au/m80upgrade).

### By bus

The Department of Transport is reviewing bus services in Melbourne, Port Philip, Yarra, Banyule, Darebin and Moreland and holding public workshops throughout November and December, [www.transport.vic.gov.au/buses](http://www.transport.vic.gov.au/buses).


### A good Purchase

The ACCC says the Government could do more to tackle unsafe vehicles as part of a series of advertisements promoting vehicle safety and linking road safety to occupational health and safety. At their annual dinner, executive director **David Purchase** gave a very practical talk where he promoted tougher sentencing for hoons. *The Age* reported that Purchase is campaigning for low powered scooters to be given access to bicycle and bus lanes, where they will ease congestion and be safe from careless motorists.

## AIR

### When dogs fly

A legally blind couple claimed Jetstar refused to allow them to fly with their guide dog, *The Age* reported. Federal Parliamentary Secretary for disability **Bill Shorten** summoned Jetstar to explain why the company would treat potential customers with such a lack of respect. Jetstar is not the only airline to have problems with guide dogs. Qantas left a blind woman distressed and stranded interstate at night because the airline would not let her guide dog on a flight. Two days earlier, Tiger Airways balked at letting the same woman fly with a guide dog. Tiger blamed an outsourced company for not understanding the airlines policy. Qantas head of communication **Olivia Wirth** said the Qantas counter staff did not have the authority to make the seat allocation but the airline took the matter seriously and apologised to the passenger,

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offered to pay expenses and was reviewing its processes.

### PORTS

#### Docking

A plan to turn Port Melbourne's Webb Dock into the city's next major container terminal should eventually include expanding the dock into Port Phillip Bay. The Port of Melbourne Corporation is expediting plans to bring large volumes of container shipping to Webb Dock, next to the Yarra River mouth in Port Melbourne. The Government is investigating whether the dock – which now handles car imports and exports, general cargo and some Tasmania-bound containers – can start taking large-scale container shipping by 2013, *The Age* reported. Melbourne's port is the nation's biggest, with 2 million shipping containers moving through each year. By 2035, it is expected the amount of goods coming into the port will have quadrupled to 8 million containers a year.

#### In his element

Tourism and Water Minister **Tim Holding** and his Parliamentary colleague, Barwon MP **Michael Crutchfield**, dived to the sunken HMAS Canberra's deck at 18 metres. The site where the ship rests, 2 kilometres off Ocean Grove and Barwon Heads, will not be open to recreational and professional divers, despite huge demand, until Parks Victoria has done safety checks, yet Holding was given a guided tour, the *Herald Sun* reported. Western Victoria Region member **David Koch** labelled the dive a

ministerial jaunt. Premier **John Brumby** backed Holding, saying there was no inspection of the ship and all the occupational health and safety rules were abided by.

#### Turbid message

More than 18 months after dredging began, the Port of Melbourne Authority announced on November 25 that the channel is at its required 14-metre depth. Roads and Ports Minister **Tim Pallas** said the project had been completed ahead of schedule and more than \$200m under budget. The project involved the removal of almost 23 million cubic tonnes of sand and clay from shipping channels. Monitoring of the environmental impact of dredging to the entrance of the bay will be brought forward by two years because of the quicker than expected environmental recovery, *The Age* reported. The *Herald Sun* reported that the dredging of Melbourne's shipping channels will continue for another six months and return every five years despite the project being declared complete. There will be continued dredging for years around several docks and ports along the Yarra River. The Port of Melbourne CEO **Stephen Bradford** said there will be maintenance dredging in the future, potentially every five years. His comments seemingly contradict the Government announcing the official completion of the project by unveiling a 10 metre abstract sculpture in Port Melbourne.

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### COMMUNITY

#### Shock collars for owners

New laws being proposed by the RSPCA could punish dog owners for not walking their pets. Under the legislation, they would have to regularly exercise their dogs, ensure animals are not kept chained up and give their pets adequate food and water. Magistrates could consider jail as a penalty in extreme circumstances. **Dr**







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**Hugh Wirth**, head of RSPCA Victoria, is one of four experts that the federal department of agriculture’s welfare division has appointed to draft national animal welfare guidelines. The proposed new laws are designed to formalise the national code, which states dogs must be walked at least once a day. The proposed laws would be designed to help overcome the problems that animal inspectors have had penalising bad owners, *The Age* reported.

### **Swim day**

The **Great Australia Day Swim 2010** is a 1.2 kilometre open water swim that begins at the Middle Brighton Pier on 26 January 2010, [www.greataustraliadayswim.com.au](http://www.greataustraliadayswim.com.au).

### **Vale**

**Lance Aubrey Endersbury**, AO, engineer, aged 83. **Gwyneth Eliot Higgerson**, community stalwart, aged 92. **Dr Michael Kloss**, leader in obstetrics, gynaecology and maternity services. **Les Mason**, graphic artist, a seminal force in the establishment of graphic design in Melbourne in the 1960s and 70s, aged 85. **Elizabeth Vivienen Conabere**, artist, writer, aged 80. **Julian Arthur (Lee) Duclos**, executive search, eccentric, West Brighton Club. **Suzanne Helene Ford**, Australian artist of photography, film and multimedia and one of the first women photographers to establish an independent practice, aged 66. **Lucky**, a Lake Bolac ewe which was the world’s oldest sheep, aged 23 years, six-month and

28 days, or over 180 in sheep years. **Howard Chandler Robbins Landon**, musicologist, aged 83. **Lt Col Beryl Mary Elizabeth Hogarth ARRC FRCNA**, aged 81. **Professor Rossiter Henry Crozier**, evolutionary and behavioural biologist, aged 66. **Robert ‘Mac’ Harvey**, teacher, singer, actor, dancer, fought in World War II, worked and lived in Malerargues in France for 20 years teaching, performing, writing and directing not only for the Roy Hart Theatre, but in Germany, Norway, Denmark and the United States, aged 84. **Glennys Bell**, the first female cadet employed in the ABC’s Sydney newsroom in the 1960s, highly successful journalist with Fairfax and then Australian Consolidated Press, aged 71. **Richard Meale**, Australian composer, aged 77. **Robert James Berry**, singer who made his theatrical debut, at age 16, in *Oliver*, aged 59. **James Thorpe Woodcock, AM**, researcher who had significant impact on the mineral processing industry, author, aged 83. **Bryan Francis A’Hearn. Alistair Smith**, established The Arab café at Lorne in the 1960’s, and the Wild Colonial Club and the Abominable restaurant at Mt. Buller, worked with aboriginal youth and unemployed people in various community based programs. **Colin Douglas-Smith**, obstetrician and gynaecologist, Olympic rower for Australia in the 1948 London Olympics, at age 74 he won four gold medals in rowing at the Australian Masters games in Perth, aged 91. **George Fountain Bickford**, businessmen, member of Riversdale golf club. **Alice Muriel Pringle**, the

last headmistress of The Clyde School, aged 95. **Edwin Duryea**, an actor, playwright and dancer aptly nicknamed ‘Teddy’, the man inside Humphrey B. Bear, bringing the character to life in its earliest television days and helping make him a star, aged 79. **John Metherall Lee**, director of music at Wesley College, aged 73. **Allan Gordon ‘Robbie’ Robertson, OBE, OAM**, an engineer responsible for the construction of every dam from 1951 to 1976, including the Upper Yarra, Cardinia, Sugarloaf, Greenvale and the Upper Thompson, engineering chief of the Melbourne & Metropolitan Board of Works, a committed community leader, deeply involved with Legacy, the RSL, and other organisations, aged 93. **Niel Ross**, teacher, electrician, inventor, aged 98.

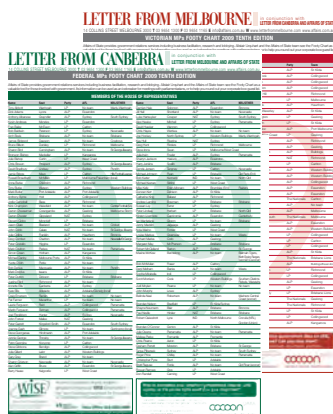
**Edward Albert Arthur Woodward**, English gentleman actor who did three movies with Australian filmmaker Bruce Beresford, aged 79. **Samak Sundaravei**, sometime Thailand Prime Minister, aged 74. **Richard Todd**, British actor who performed in *The Dam Busters* and *The Longest Day*, aged 90. **Liam Clancy**, Irish balladeer, last of the Clancy brothers troupe, aged 74. We recommend the wonderful obituaries in *The Age*, published six days a week.



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