



Senator Claire Moore

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THIS WEEK:

The parliamentary year ended in chaos, confusion and ill-temper.

The kids stay on Manus, the Prime Minister offered, of all things, a conscience vote on discrimination and the technology legislation passed through the parliament in the shape of the 'Encryption Bill' which needs to go back to committee.

If it wasn't for Labor our security agencies would have lacked the modern tools to better protect the safety of all Australians over the Christmas –New Year holiday period from immediate security threats.

There is no doubt this legislation is flawed, even the Liberal majority on the intelligence committee inquiry acknowledged that it required major re-drafting accepting 172 amendments. But when the Bill was dropped into parliament few of those amendments had been made. It was symptomatic of the incompetence of this administration and Labor will seek the insertion of those amendments in the New Year.

Shadow Attorney-General and Senator Penny Wong have produced some talking notes on the subject which are in this Update.

As for the nastiness and disrespectful behaviour that has enveloped the Parliament in recent months I will leave you to decide what you think about it and how best to send your message to the culprits.



Unfortunately it's not just in Parliament we are seeing such behaviour, my electorate office had offensive leaflets shoved under the door and glued to its frame. [See photo]

I would be only too happy to have a chat to the individuals responsible. Dialogue is much better than skulking around in the dark.



On a happier note today, Friday December 7, is the first anniversary of the successful passing through Parliament of the 'Marriage Equality Act'. Since then the total number of same-sex marriages celebrated nationwide had grown to 5,420 couples.

SENATOR CLAIRE MOORE, LABOR SENATOR FOR QUEENSLAND

Senator Claire Moore
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SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS



CLAIRE'S WEEKLY UPDATE NEWSLETTER

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WHAT'S BEING SAID ...



LAST PARLIAMENTARY SITTING -SHORTEN - CANBERRA

"We've seen perhaps the most irresponsible abandonment of national security lawmaking that I've seen in my time in Parliament. Today, because the Government and the Prime Minister didn't want to lose a vote about getting children off Nauru for medical treatment, they abandoned the national security laws of Australia, and as a result, abandoned their obligations to keeping Australians safer."

ENCRYPTION BILL-SHORTEN - CANBERRA

"Because the encryption laws required 170 amendments, they were rushed, they had plenty of holes in them, plenty of opportunities for the hackers and other people to undo the import of the laws, the Government was required to amend those laws as well."

LAST PARLIAMENTARY SITTING -SHORTEN - CANBERRA

"I think it is shameful they wouldn't deal with the laws which would prioritise the views of treating medical experts to get kids off Nauru when they're sick. I think it is a terrible shame that they wouldn't amend the laws to make the national encryption proposals even better and more efficient. But I couldn't go home and leave Australians over Christmas without some of the protections which we all agree are necessary."

LAST PARLIAMENTARY SITTING -SHORTEN - CANBERRA

"The Government agreed that their rushed encryption laws had to be improved. They agreed in a Committee dominated by Liberal MPs - more Liberal MPs than Labor on it - unanimously agreed the encryption laws need to be improved. But because the other laws - getting the kids off Nauru - had to be dealt with first, they deliberately sabotaged the Parliament and went home rather than sit past 5 o'clock, which they've done on many occasions."

SCHOOL DISCRIMINATION - SHORTEN-CANBERRA

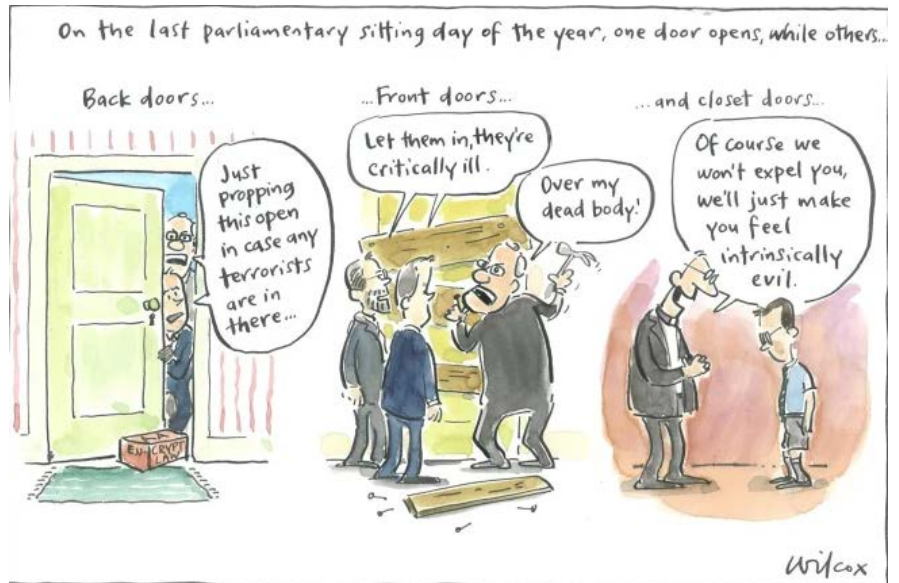
"I believe that the substantial majority of our parliament wants to see discrimination against children - the right to discriminate against children removed from the nation's laws. It is therefore very disappointing that the Government in the lower house has chosen to put forward a proposal which will replace one form of discrimination with another.

There is no set of circumstances where this Parliament should be voting to replace one set of laws permitting discrimination against children with another set of laws permitting discrimination against children. "

"They say the schools need a right within the law to uphold their values, and their ethos, and to teach their doctrine. Our legal advice is clear - that schools already have that right, nothing in the removal of the exemption would remove those rights for schools to set rules around student behaviour and actions."

SCHOOL DISCRIMINATION - KENEALLY - ABC RN DRIVE

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SCHOOL DAYS ARE THE BEST DAYS OF YOUR LIFE...WELL, DEPENDING ON YOUR... 'COUGH'...LIFESTYLE CHOICE



SCHOOL DISCRIMINATION - PLIBERSEK - CANBERRA

"We now in the final week of the parliamentary sittings are in a situation that is so reminiscent of the marriage equality debate where individual senators, the conservatives in the Liberal Party, the Nationals and others, are all trying to introduce complicating amendments to something that really is very simple. I'm worried that this will go down the same route at the marriage equality debate. Someone will be suggesting a plebiscite next. Labor doesn't need a conscience vote because every member of the Labor Party agrees that it's wrong to discriminate against children. It's not complicated. In fact, I don't understand how anyone who claims to have a conscience can think that it's ok to discriminate against children."

SCHOOL DISCRIMINATION - KENEALLY - ABC RN DRIVE

"What the Prime Minister is proposing is to allow his MPs to say 'In my conscience, I think it's a good thing to discriminate against a student - a child - because he or she is gay'."

SCHOOL DISCRIMINATION - PLIBERSEK - CANBERRA

"It's shameful. This failure of the Government to legislate to remove discrimination against GLBTI children is absolutely shameful."

SCHOOL DISCRIMINATION - PLIBERSEK - CANBERRA

"There is a Bill in the House of Representatives and a Bill in the Senate. If we vote on this today, we could get it done today. And instead what we've seen with this discrimination against children is all of the same tactics that were used in the marriage equality debate. Unnecessary amendments introduced, unnecessary concerns raised in the community by people who really just want to stop - either delay or stop entirely - the removal of this discrimination."

ENCRYPTION BILL-SHORTEN - CANBERRA

"Because the encryption laws required 170 amendments, they were rushed, they had plenty of holes in them, plenty of opportunities for the hackers and other people to undo the import of the laws, the Government was required to amend those laws as well."

ENCRYPTION BILL - DREYFUS-ABC RN BREAKFAST

"Labor puts the safety and security of Australians first. Our commitment to keeping Australians safe is unwavering and frankly those comments of the Prime Minister are simply ridiculous and it's absolutely apparent that this desperate, incompetent Prime Minister just wants to fight for political reasons."

ENCRYPTION BILL - MCALLISTER – SKY NEWS AM AGENDA

"I sit on the Joint Standing Committee on Intelligence and Security. We have dealt with this legislation seriously from the day it was brought to us in September. We are seeking to work through a very complex Bill. We've had submissions before us from industry, from defence export, from security export firms, from lawyers, from civil liberties organisations saying there are serious deficiencies with the Bill. We've had advice from the Inspector General of Intelligence and Security that there are deficiencies in the Bill. We've had advice from the President of the Senate that the Bill does not appropriately protect Parliamentary Privilege. These are serious matters that ought to have been worked through frankly before the Bill was even brought to the Parliament."

GOVT'S ENERGY POLICY - BOWEN – CANBERRA

"Meanwhile the Government's one poor excuse for an energy policy has collapsed under its own weight. The Government's fig leaf when it comes to electricity prices, its so-called big stick has overnight become a much littler stick."

This ridiculous policy, this Venezuelan style intervention, this intervention in the economy which would chill investment has collapsed under its own weight. It was poor policy and it has shown to be poor policy."

GOVT ENERGY COMPANY DIVESTMENT POLICY - CHALMERS- SKY NEWS AM AGENDA

"Our effort at the moment is to knock the policy over, because it's a disastrous policy. It will reduce investment and push power prices up, and will run the risk of power privatisations in Queensland. So we're putting all of our effort into making the case that this is a disastrous policy."

Even the Queensland LNP leader - the state LNP leader! - has said rightly that Scott Morrison is completely out of touch with Queensland on this issue."

PRIVATISING ELECTRICITY SUPPLIERS - WATT – CANBERRA

"The last two state elections in Queensland, in 2015 and 2017, were basically won by Labor on a platform of not privatising Queensland's electricity assets. We all



remember the chaos of Campbell Newman, which included trying to privatise electricity assets and it was followed up by Tim Nicholls in 2017 by wanting to do the same again. And despite those election defeats, yesterday we saw this Government in Canberra threatening the privatisation of Queensland's electricity assets to cover up for their failure to do anything about power prices over the last few years."

PRIVATISING ELECTRICITY SUPPLIERS -BUTLER – SKY NEWS

"The ACCC looked very closely at the question of the gaming of the market in electricity, very closely, and clearly came to the view that recommending a policy like this, or a tool for government like this would not be in the interest of consumers."

"Bad policy created this mess, and ill-conceived and rushed policy won't achieve what are desperately needed — lower electricity bills for families and businesses". – Jennifer Westacott - Chief Executive of the Business Council of Australia

GOVT ENERGY DIVESTMENT POLICY - BOWEN – CANBERRA

"Of course part of the problem with this chaos and dysfunction is with respect Phil, you haven't seen the legislation, we haven't seen the legislation, I don't believe the Liberal Party room has seen the legislation, the industry hasn't seen the legislation, the people haven't seen the legislation because when last we checked the legislation hasn't been written. I mean the government was threatening to introduce it today."

GOVT'S ENERGY POLICY - BUTLER – CANBERRA

"So this new Energy Minister has said his only KPI is to bring down power prices. This is a policy carefully designed not to do that, carefully designed to push power prices up not push them down. And already we are seeing the futures market at 40 per cent since June, at 40 per cent on wholesale power prices since June which is exactly what the Government's own modelling showed would happen if the National Energy Guarantee was not implemented."

PRIVATISING ELECTRICITY SUPPLIERS - WATT – CANBERRA

"The Prime Minister made a lot of noise recently about being up in Queensland, and we all remember his empty bus. Well, this shows, yet again, that rather than flying over Queensland in his jet he should actually spend a bit of time on the bus."

GDP FIGURES - BOWEN – CANBERRA

"This is a very bad set of numbers. A bad set of numbers on the watch of the Abbott-Turnbull-Morrison Government. We have growth at 0.3 per cent, 2.8 per cent for the year, in the light of a very positive international economic environment. In light of a growing global economy, for Australia to be performing so poorly is an indictment on the economic management of the Government."

GDP FIGURES - CHALMERS- SKY NEWS AM AGENDA

"We've got the triple whammy of weak wages, weak saving and weak spending all at the same time. So when Josh Frydenberg says that the economy's going gangbusters, I think a lot of people out in the community would be scratching their heads - because the economy's not delivering for middle Australia."

GDP FIGURES - BOWEN – CANBERRA

"Within the figures there are disappointing numbers: the slowest growth in household consumption in six years and the lowest household savings rate in more than a decade."

GDP FIGURES - PLIBERSEK – CANBERRA

"We saw yesterday the national accounts figures released, and in those national accounts we saw that company profits are up, wages are flat-lining and living standards are going backwards."

GDP FIGURES – BOWEN - CANBERRA

“So these are cause for concern. I think what we're seeing is, frankly, an impact of the instability and dysfunction here in Canberra on people's spending. People concerned about the lack of economic agenda of the Government. And it's, I think, a reminder that we need to return stability and certainty to Federal Government policy-making.”

MORRISON GOVERNMENT - PLIBERSEK – CANBERRA

“At the end of a parliamentary year you have a government ridden with chaos - midnight meetings, late night press conferences to shore up the Prime Minister's numbers, legislation introduced with little or no consultation. Yesterday's electricity legislation hadn't even been discussed in the Liberals' own party room. It has just been a very chaotic end to the parliamentary sitting period.

ABBOTT SUGGESTS HIGHER WAGES FOR REMOTE TEACHERS - PLIBERSEK – CANBERRA

“I think pretty much anything Tony Abbott says about Indigenous communities you can take with a grain of salt because he, as Prime Minister, having said that he would be the Prime Minister for Indigenous Australians, cut \$500 million from programs to support Indigenous Australia. The period under his prime ministership was chaotic when it came to remote service delivery in remote Aboriginal communities.”

ABBOTT SUGGESTS HIGHER WAGES FOR REMOTE TEACHERS - PLIBERSEK – CANBERRA

“Look at this Government's record - cuts to Indigenous programs, \$14 billion less over the next decade spent in our public schools - which are the schools that most Aboriginal kids attend - if this Government's school funding program stands. And one of the worst affected jurisdictions, the Northern Territory, this Government's funding formula leaves children in the Northern Territory worse off by tens of millions of dollars. So it's a bit rich to come up with these suggestions in the face of all of that.”

FRENCH SUBMARINES - MARLES-SKY NEWS AM AGENDA

“Back in 2016 the Government down selected to one tenderer for the submarine project way too early. I've said previously that it has been an epic mistake - an epic mistake. In the context of a 50 thousand million dollar spend, the idea that you don't compete the 200 million dollar design is absolutely and patently ridiculous and that's why the government doesn't have any bargaining power right now, or doesn't have the bargaining power it should have in the context of these negotiations.

LIBERAL PRE-SELECTIONS - CAMERON – CANBERRA

“If the Coalition doesn't want Molan, if the Coalition doesn't want Craig Kelly, then my view is that's a good thing.”

QUOTES OF THE WEEK

“They are keener to protect their political pride than protect Australians or get kids off Nauru.” - Bill Shorten

“They've gone on to have beers or fly home or whatever they do. But there's vital encryption laws stuck in the Senate.” - Bill Shorten

“We have a clear and present danger. He has swallowed one too many Tom Clancy novels.” - Chris Bowen (Describing the rhetoric of the Prime Minister)

“Ramming complicated, world leading legislation few people fully understand through both houses in a day – the last sitting day for the year – has not been a responsible way to tackle the problem.” - David Wroe (The Age)

“The Morrison government has clearly politicised the issue of encryption, all but daring Labor to oppose the new powers to police and security agencies and thereby risk looking weak on national security.” - David Wroe (The Age)

“It shows that the government is so afraid of a humiliating defeat it was prepared to sacrifice the passage of legislation it said was vital to our national security, while using it as an opportunity to frame the Opposition as helping terrorists and paedophiles.” - Jaqueline Maley (The Age)

Scott Morrison is the Campbell Newman of Canberra. - Jim Chalmers

This is a disastrous and dangerous policy, which has been plucked straight from the Liberals' dumpster fire of internal division and energy policy dysfunction. Queenslanders are being poked in the eye with the big stick. - Jim Chalmers

“The divisions are all on their side. We're just watching with popcorn. We got the popcorn out.” - Anthony Albanese

“Nothing screams “stable government” more than a 9 PM press conference. I mean, when you're scrambling together after dark to say what you've done, that speaks volumes.” - Ed Husic

“Do you know what the decent thing to do would be? Call an election instead of lying the way you have through the Wentworth by-election and through this week. Shame on you!” - Penny Wong

"The Liberal Party is totally consumed by itself. It is an unfortunate combination of selfishness, ignorance and pure arrogance to ignore what has happened to the standing of the party in the Longman and Wentworth by-elections, the Victorian state election and, even worse, to deny any lessons, simply offering spurious and fallacious excuses blaming everything and everybody else." - John Hewson

"The party is now characterised by disunity and disloyalty, by tribalism, not by principle or policy but by personal interests – not even party interests and certainly not the national interest. The government presents as a directionless rabble, a perception compounded daily by knee-jerk reactions." - John Hewson

"The NSW Liberals are a faction-ridden organisation in which factional interests always prevail over those of members, the constitution is a stitch-up, the whatever-it-takes philosophy dominates and candidate selection occurs through a deeply distorted process." - Jim Molan (Dumped NSW Liberal Senator)

"A passionate generation of young scholars consistently hear a wilful ignorance of scientific evidence and expert advice from many elected officials," - Rob Stokes NSW Liberal Education Minister (Talking about the Federal Coalition MP's who attacked school kids striking for the Climate)

"Right now, we are facing a man-made disaster of global scale. Our greatest threat in thousands of years. Climate Change. If we don't take action, the collapse of our civilisations and the extinction of much of the natural world is on the horizon," - David Attenborough

GLIMPSES

PRE-SELECTION JOKE

ALBANESE: "It is pretty amazing that you've had this intervention to save Craig Kelly who frankly has spent his entire time in Parliament really running down his own side and creating internal havoc for them. And someone like Jane Prentice who I think should be a Minister in the Coalition Government that was knocked off by a bloke who used to work for her. She is on the front bench as a Parliamentary Secretary, no one lifted a finger. Ann Sudmalis sits in a very marginal seat, in Gilmore, not too far from us here in Canberra. No one lifted a finger. They don't even have a candidate. She's been knocked off by nobody and sent to New York, to the United Nations General Assembly, where she can't cause any difficulty. But Craig Kelly gets saved. It's beyond belief, really."

PRISONERS RISE BUT NO BANKERS

The number of prisoners in adult corrective services custody increased by 4% from 41,202 at 30 June 2017 to 42,974 at 30 June 2018. Between 2017 and 2018 the national imprisonment rate increased by 3% from 216 to 221 prisoners per 100,000 adult population.

Unsentenced prisoners and sentenced prisoners

The number of unsentenced prisoners in adult corrective services custody increased by 7%, from 12,911 at 30 June 2017 to 13,856 at 30 June 2018. Victoria had the largest change in unsentenced prisoners, increasing 22% (or 485 prisoners) from 30 June 2017.

Sentenced prisoners increased by 3% from 28,199 to 29,030 prisoners.

OUR SLAVES

It is estimated there are up to 100,000 undocumented workers in Australia, many of them from south-east Asia.

Undocumented workers are regularly underpaid, exploited by middlemen and burdened with excessive debts.

When Rayyan* came to work in Australia from Malaysia he was promised by a middleman a good wage, safe accommodation and predictable hours. An undocumented worker interviewed by The Age described being exploited at work. Instead he was "tricked" and had to sleep on the floor of a cool-room while earning \$13 an hour picking stone-fruit in Swan Hill.

BANKS STILL BEING BANKS

The new financial watchdog says it received more than 300 complaints a day against banks and financial services in the first month of operating. The Australian Financial Complaints Authority (AFCA) heard 6522 grievances from consumers and small businesses since opening its doors on November 1, it reported. The authority has received 47 per cent more complaints than three predecessor schemes.

The most complaints were heard about banks (2367), while other provider types, including general insurers and credit providers, and were regular offenders. The watchdog is currently investigating 84 definite systemic issues and four potential serious contraventions and other breaches.

CONFLICTED (Courier-Mail)

Assistant Treasurer Stuart Robert was removed from an official statement announcing a review of "Made in Australia" labelling laws for health supplements after conflict of interest concerns were raised. But the Gold Coast-based minister and close ally of Scott Morrison will still play a role in the review because of his oversight of the Australian Taxation Office. Mr Robert has also come under fire for advertising an LNP fundraiser with small business ombudsman Kate Carnell, who holds an independent office. Ms Carnell, who is a former Liberal ACT chief minister, told The Courier-Mail she did not want to attend a political fundraiser and pulled out of the event, which was held on November 8 at Brisbane's Story Bridge Hotel. Mr Robert owns a one-third stake in a muscle-building supplements company that could benefit from the Complementary Medicine Taskforce review, which would investigate the rules around lucrative "Made in Australia" labels.



STANDARD HYPOCRISY – David Margan

That shock jock of the far right - Andrew Bolt - this week demonstrated an abiding characteristic of the breed – blatant hypocrisy. He wrote the following about Malcolm Turnbull;

“It’s now dawning on the Liberals that Malcolm Turnbull wants the Morrison Government dead. Annihilated. Murdered at the next election. I think Turnbull isn’t just angry at being dumped as prime minister. He deeply, achingly needs the Liberals to now go down in a screaming heap. That is what’s now behind his rampage to drive out Liberal MPs and force the Morrison Government to an early election he knows would destroy it.” What did he have to say about good mate Tony Abbott’s constant sniping and undermining? NOTHING!

OUTSIDERS DON’T MIND THE PERKS



An accidental Senator elected with just 19 votes claimed \$19,000 to fly his family around the country last quarter courtesy of taxpayers – more than any other federal politician. Senator Fraser Anning, who split from One Nation and was kicked out of Katter’s Australian Party, had a family travel bill last quarter that was double that of Opposition Leader Bill Shorten and higher than ministers like WA-based Finance Minister Mathias Cormann.

ENERGISED (SMH)

Renewable energy drives down wholesale power prices well in excess of subsidy costs and a further expansion of wind and solar would likely push them lower still, a study of Australian and European markets shows. The findings come as Neoen, owner of the world’s largest lithium battery, claimed the storage unit in South Australia had saved the wholesale market about \$40 million in its first year. The renewables research by the Victorian Energy Policy Centre, a hub set up by the Victorian government, examined the wholesale electricity market in South Australia from 2013-18 and compared it with the high-cost energy markets in Denmark, Germany, Italy and the UK. In 2018 average wholesale spot prices in SA were \$38 per megawatt-hour cheaper because of renewables, easily triple the \$11 MW-hour cost of subsidies, the report found. “We estimate that expanding wind generation will reduce wholesale prices at the rate of around 9¢ per MWh, per one MWh of additional wind generation,” it said. “For solar – almost all of which has so far been on household roofs – we estimate the wholesale price reduction at the rate of around 26¢/MWh, per one MWh of additional solar production.” Bruce Mountain, director of the centre and the lead author of the report, said there was no longer an industry trade-off between power prices, reliability and greenhouse gas emissions. “Maybe there was a trilemma at some point of time but it ain’t there any more,” Associate Professor Mountain said. “There is no dilemma between a cleaner power system and cheaper power.” The report’s release comes as the Morrison government scrambles to develop a new energy policy following the demise in August of the proposed National Energy Guarantee.

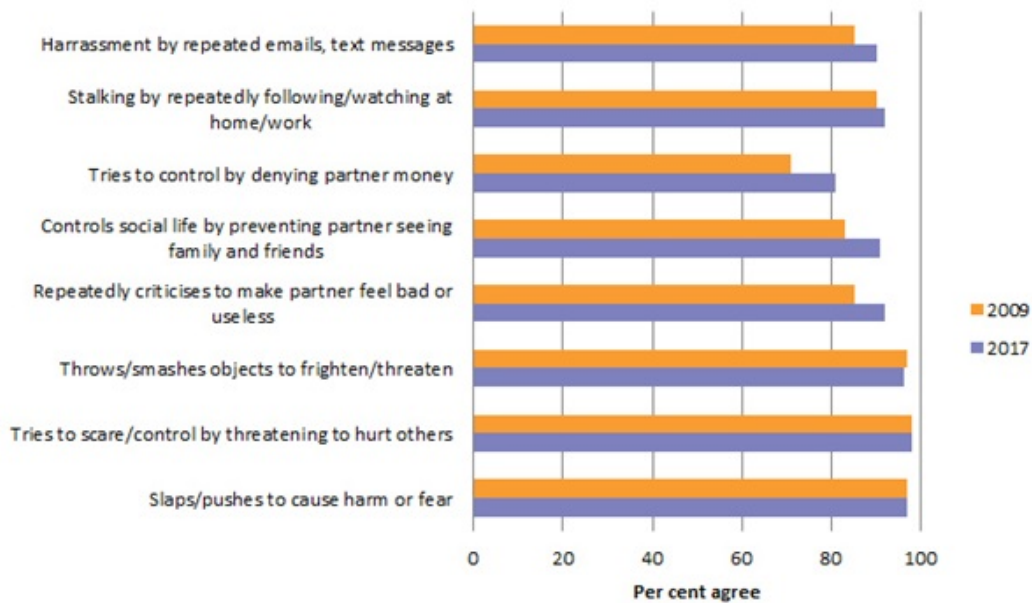
VIOLENT ATTITUDES

The National Community Attitudes toward Violence against Women Survey (NCAS) is the world’s longest-running survey of community attitudes towards violence against women. Results from the [latest survey](#) are mixed; levels of awareness have generally risen but there are still areas of concern.

NCAS is funded by Department of Social Services (DSS) as part of the National Plan to Reduce Violence against Women and their Children 2010-2022. It was initially developed on behalf of the Australian Government in 1995, drawing on an earlier 1987 survey. The last three national surveys took place in 2009 and 2013 (led by VicHealth), and in 2017 (for which Australia’s National Research Organisation for Women’s Safety—ANROWS—was responsible).

The survey collects information from males and females aged 16 years and over about their knowledge of, and attitudes to, violence against women, attitudes towards gender equality, and intentions should they witness (or be a bystander to) abuse or disrespect towards women.

- Most Australians (72 per cent) are aware violence against women is common (up from 68 per cent in 2013)
- While most Australians (81 per cent) recognise women are more likely than men to suffer physical harm from domestic violence, this has dropped from 86 per cent in 2013
- There has been an ongoing decline in awareness that men are more likely than women to commit acts of domestic violence. In 2017, 64 per cent recognise that mainly men, or men more often, commit acts of domestic violence; dropping steadily from 71 per cent in 2013, 74 per cent in 2009 and 86 per cent in 1995
- In 2017, 81 per cent of Australians recognised that women are more likely than men to suffer physical harm from domestic violence—down from 86 per cent in 2013
- One in five Australians believe domestic violence is a normal reaction to stress, and that sometimes a woman can make a man so angry he hits her without meaning to
- One in three Australians believe that if a woman does not leave her abusive partner then she is responsible for the violence continuing
- Fewer than half of Australians (49 per cent) recognise that levels of fear from domestic violence are worse for women than for men
- Just over one in six people (16 per cent) agree that many allegations of sexual assault made by women are false, 72 per cent disagreed with this statement
- Nearly one-quarter (24 per cent) of Australians agree that men making sexist jokes about women when in the company of their male friends does no harm.
- Two in five Australians believe many women exaggerate how unequally women are treated in Australia.
- Agreement that certain behaviours are a form of domestic violence/violence against women, 2009 and 2017



Percentage agree combines responses of 'always', 'usually' and 'sometimes'.

Source: [NCAS Summary Report](#), p. 43.

The report suggests the majority of Australians have a good understanding of violence against women, support gender equality, reject attitudes supportive of violence against women, and say they would act, or would like to act, when witnessing abuse or disrespect towards women.

Whilst there has been some improvement, there are many areas that remain of concern. For example, one in three people still do not have an understanding of violence against women and one in five do not consider controlling a partner's finances as a form of domestic violence; there is still some way to go in eliminating negative attitudes and violence against women.

The Coalition has stacked the Fair Work Commission with six new deputy presidents from employer backgrounds, despite advice from tribunal president Iain Ross the commission required only one additional appointment to replace a forthcoming retirement.

According to [The Australian \(\\$\)](#), Jobs and Industrial Relations Minister Kelly O'Dwyer has appointed deputies from workplace backgrounds at groups such as the Australian Mines and Metals Association, and the National Electrical and Contractors Association, meaning that the workplace umpire now contains a majority of Coalition-backed employer-linked appointees.

CHRISTMAS ON MANUS

There have been more than 27 suicide attempts in the last two weeks by refugees detained on Papua New Guinea's Manus Island, a refugee says. Abdul Aziz Muhamat has called for action to resolve the mental health crisis from the Australian parliament, which is considering a bill to ease the transfer of sick refugees from Manus and Nauru to Australia.

Mr Muhamat said the crisis among about 600 men in exile on Manus was spiralling out of control.

"As someone who has been on Manus Island for five years I have never seen people in that stage. Within two weeks we had more than 27 who have attempted to kill themselves. This is absolutely disgraceful and it's getting out of our control." he said.

"The reason why people are attempting to kill themselves is because people are hopeless, people are tired. Six years of incarceration, six years of languishing behind bars, six years of no process and six years of not knowing even where to go and what to do. Not knowing even what your future looks like.

"This disaster needs an intervention from the government before it's too late."

DUTTON'S DEPARTMENT

Australian Border Force is quietly slashing staff numbers at airports over the busy Christmas period and is believed to have suspended a fleet of boats supposed to protect the nation's northern waters, in cost cutting moves that insiders say threaten national security. The cuts to critical front-line operations, which critics have blamed on "catastrophic" budget blowouts, raise further questions about the performance of the quasi-military organisation following reports that it is plagued by a toxic culture of bullying and harassment.

Community and Public Sector Union deputy national president Lisa Newman said it had received reports of major cuts to front-line operations across the country, potentially affecting thousands of casual staff at airports and elsewhere. "The blame for this catastrophic budget blowout lies squarely with senior management in Home Affairs," she said, saying halfway through the financial year the agency was on track for a budget deficit of at least \$300 million. "This is a dangerous time of year to be cutting front-line capacity. There's always a big jump in passenger numbers and freight over Christmas, so the department can only plug the gaps in one area by opening up holes in another." The Age also understands a fleet of fast-response Border Force boats deployed in the Torres Strait have been pulled from service. The boats NATAGE A011 respond to suspect activity such as unauthorised boat arrivals, smuggling of goods and illegal fishing.

Paul Smith, Yolanda Redrup and Andrew Tillett (AFR)

General partner at tech venture capital fund M8 Ventures, Alan Jones, lashed out at the government for rushing through the bill, comparing his shock at its apparent passage to the feeling of young US Democrats at the election of US President Donald Trump. "I don't think anyone in



the industry thought it would get this far. We thought someone would come to their senses before this," he said. "It won't have a practical effect on monitoring the people they want to monitor, but it will cripple Aussie tech."

High-profile Australian cyber security commentator and managing director of CISO Lens, James Turner, said he had found very few people over a wide range of business and public sector security executives who believed the legislation was a good idea. "Civil liberties, privacy, security, and encryption specialists don't like the bill; global vendors don't like it and local vendors don't like it, in fact I haven't seen any governance specialists giving it the thumbs up either," Mr Turner said. "The party line seems to be 'trust us', and that's not good enough in the face of opposition from experts across so many domains."

PARAROOS TRIUMPH

Australia's Pararoos have qualified for the 2019 International Federation of Cerebral Palsy Football (IFCPF) World Cup in Spain and they did it without any financial support from Sport Australia.

The seven-a-side team had its funding from Australia's peak sports body withdrawn in 2015, in accordance with the Winning Edge strategy that SA (then known as The Australian Sports Commission) uses to direct funding to teams it views have medal-winning potential at Olympic and Paralympic competition.

SA cut the \$175,000 budget from the team, which put the program in jeopardy. The Pararoos were devastated but undeterred, and following a campaign of relentless advocacy and lobbying, they have survived and thrived.



Last week the team won a silver medal at the IFCPF Asia-Oceania Championship, losing the final to host nation Iran 7-0. The achievement booked them a place at next year's World Cup.

FOREIGN INFLUENCE - Kelsey Munro - The Lowy Institute

The government has been at pains to point out that political influence activity such as lobbying, disbursing funds, or making a political communication on behalf of a foreign government or related entity or individual will not be a crime, as long as it is registered and conducted openly.

But for those caught without registering, that's punishable by up to five years in prison.

Will the scheme really catch any bad actors or just create more compliance obligations for the good guys? As it happens, a repeat of the scandal that kicked off the foreign interference debate here might not be caught by the new scheme. That was the resignation of Senator Sam Dastyari after he accepted donations from Chinese-born billionaire Huang Xiangmo, and went on to spout Chinese Communist Party talking points on the South China Sea. Permanent Australian residents like Mr Huang are not treated as foreign principals under the scheme.

The scheme relies on self-disclosure: legitimate foreign interests are expected to comply as part of the ordinary course of business. But there are some big sticks for reluctant signatories. The Attorney-General's Department has the power to issue Transparency Notices to those it deems to be a foreign principal and to compel the production of information from those it suspects of acting on their behalf. A dedicated team in the Department will have the support of the intelligence agencies and a national coordinator at deputy secretary level in Home Affairs in identifying cases for investigation.

So, who would have to sign up? Some of the most controversial voices in Australia's China-focused foreign-interference debate of the past two years are in the frame: former cabinet ministers or ambassadors advocating for foreign governments, Confucius Institutes at our universities, Chinese companies with links to state-owned enterprises (SOEs), and foreign state media organisations.

Local media that transparently republish content from foreign state media and people who independently advocate for the policies of a foreign government are off the hook. Humanitarian workers, charities, and legal representatives are exempt, as are business chambers promoting trade with a foreign country.

PETROL (From the Australian Consumer & Competition Commission)

[Many of you like me notice that the international price of oil went down over the last month and also noticed petrol prices tumble from \$1.69 per litre to as low as \$1.16 per litre BUT that only lasted roughly around a week then off they go back up dramatically despite the world price only edging higher – drive you mad – darn right! David Margan, Editor]

"Petrol price cycles infuriate drivers but a new report out today explains how they work and ways that drivers in Australia's five largest cities (Sydney, Melbourne, Brisbane, Adelaide and Perth) can save money by buying petrol at the bottom of the price cycle.

The ACCC's Report on petrol price cycles in Australia, provides an in-depth look at how price cycles work and how motorists can use them to their advantage.

Price cycles have been a longstanding feature of retail petrol prices in Australia's five largest cities. They involve sudden, sharp increase in petrol prices, usually led by one or more retail sites, with other retail sites subsequently raising their prices. This is followed by a much slower decline back to lower price levels.

"While they are not illegal, the retailers' use of price cycles to maximise profits really infuriates drivers as they can see no reason for them to exist," ACCC Commissioner Mick Keogh said.

"It's not uncommon for drivers to notice prices jumping 20 cents or more in a very short period of time, and the price you see being charged on the way to work can be very different to the one on the way home."

The estimated yearly savings made by buying at the low point of the cycle are around \$175 in Sydney, \$150 in Melbourne and Brisbane, and \$200 in Adelaide. The ACCC also found motorists can save even more money by choosing where they buy.

"Many people don't realise there is also a significant difference between the cheapest and most expensive service stations throughout the price cycle, so purchasing petrol from those retailers that are consistently among the lowest-priced will save you money," Mr Keogh said.

The ACCC estimates that if all motorists took advantage of the 'where' and 'when' to buy petrol, total potential yearly savings would be around \$260 million in Sydney, \$220 million in Melbourne, \$105 million in Brisbane and \$75 million in Adelaide."

DSP DISCRIMINATION

Since the early 2000s, the Australian Government has initiated a number of reforms across the disability sector which have largely involved procedural changes to the assessment of medical evidence and the eligibility criteria for the Disability Support Pension (DSP). While there are increasing anecdotal reports of these reforms influencing the overall number of claimants being granted the DSP, there is limited

understanding of how service providers that support clients applying for the DSP have been affected by these reforms. This research pays particular attention to services working predominantly with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander clients in a regional North Queensland city, Townsville. The participants were professionals from employment agencies, health, disability and mental health services, community legal services and non-government agencies. Medical and other professionals found the new format and processes for completing medical reports time consuming and requested greater communication from the government regarding changes to DSP legislation. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander clients experienced several barriers to fulfilling the assessment criteria, including financial costs to access all reasonable medical care and reports. This article illustrates the gap in support for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander clients on Newstart Allowance (general unemployment benefit) awaiting the outcome of their DSP application, even though it is clear from their medical evidence that they are living with high levels of impairment, chronic conditions and disability. This research work has been performed by a team at the University of Western Sydney and the full research paper can be found via the following link:

<https://www.hca.westernsydney.edu.au/qmjau/?p=3475>

ADANI

The federal government faces a legal challenge after sanctioning a plan by Indian mining giant Adani to pump billions of litres of water from a river in drought-stricken central Queensland to feed an open-cut coal mine.

The Federal Court action by the Australian Conservation Foundation threatens to further delay the controversial Carmichael mine, which Adani last week announced it, would self-finance and soon begin constructing.

The legal action challenges Environment Minister Melissa Price's decision to waive a full environmental assessment for a pipeline that will extract up to 12.5 billion litres of water a year from the Suttor River in central Queensland. The Australian Conservation will; argue that the water to be extracted by Adani is essential to the coal mine.

Large coal mines require federal approval if they are likely to have a significant impact on a water resource. This is known as the water trigger, and it means projects undergo a higher level of scrutiny than that applied by local and state assessments, including input from an independent expert scientific committee.

Adani had claimed the water trigger applies only to water used in the extraction of coal, and should therefore not be applied to its plan, which it calls the North Galilee Water Scheme.

Coal mines can use water to wash coal, suppress dust, cool down equipment and reduce the risk of fires.

The Department of the Environment and Energy has previously defended the decision, saying "stand-alone proposals which involve only associated infrastructure, such as pipelines, are not captured by the water trigger because they do not directly involve the extraction of coal".

The Australian Conservation Foundation, represented by Environmental Defenders Office Queensland, will argue Ms Price made an error of law in not applying the water trigger. It says the pipeline would not be built if not for the mine, and is essential to its operation.

The foundation's chief executive Kelly O'Shanassy said the water volumes Adani sought to extract every year were "nearly as much as all local farmers combined. Our climate is breaking down and Queensland is in the grip of drought. This is not the time to be reckless with our water," she said. The foundation says local wetlands also rely on water from the Suttor River.

GOODBYE

Labor is claiming a historic election victory in the once blue-ribbon Liberal seat of Hawthorn, sinking a star opposition MP's hopes of leading his party from the ashes. Former shadow attorney-general John Pesutto was considered a frontrunner for the state Liberal leadership, but losing his seat would force him out of contention



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LANDLORDS DO A BANK

Renters have taken to social media to share horror stories following the release of a report revealing that Australians who rent are living in substandard conditions and plagued by fear of eviction and rent rises.

The report, '[Disrupted: The consumer experience of renting in Australia](#)', found that 51 per cent of renters in Australia live in a house that needs repairs. Many are afraid that making a repair request could get them evicted.

The research by leading consumer and tenancy groups CHOICE, National Shelter and the National Association of Tenant Organisations – found that more than two-thirds (68 per cent) of Australian renters worry that making a request for repairs could lead to a rent increase. Some 44 per cent fear such a request might get them evicted.

Nearly one in 10 renters had previously been evicted "without grounds" while a similar number feared they would be forced to leave their homes in the next 12 months.

SCAM WARNING

Scammers pretending to represent the Australian Taxation Office have stolen more than \$800,000 in the past month after frightening people into handing over their money.

The thieves use software that resembles a legitimate phone number to disguise their identities before threatening people with jail or deportation. The ATO received more than 37,000 reports of scam attempts in November, with one elderly person losing more than \$236,000 over five months.

The ATO regularly contacts people by phone, email and SMS. But Assistant Commissioner Kath Anderson said there were some tell-tale signs it isn't the tax office. "You can be confident that if there is a number displayed in your caller ID it isn't the ATO," Ms Anderson said on Wednesday. "Taxpayers should be wary of any phone call, text message, email or letter about a tax refund or debt, especially if you weren't expecting it."

The ATO never requests payment of debts via iTunes, pre-paid visa cards or cryptocurrency, and will not request a fee to release a refund.

The tax office only takes direct credits to bank accounts with the BSB numbers 092-009 and 093-003.

It does not send people emails or text messages asking them to click on a link to provide personal details or to download a file or open an attachment.

"If you suspect that you have been contacted by a scammer, you should contact our call centre. It's OK to hang up and phone us on 1800 008 540 to check if the call was legitimate or to report a scam," Ms Anderson said.



ENCRYPTION BILL - Dreyfus

Last night the Parliamentary Joint Committee on Intelligence and Security handed down a bipartisan report with 17 important recommendations for amendment to the Telecommunications and Other Legislation Amendment (Assistance and Access) Bill.

The government provided Labor with more than 167 amendments, totalling 49 pages, at 6:30am this morning, and yet more amendments at 9:22am.

In the limited time we have had to scrutinise these amendments, it is clear that they do not fully reflect the recommendations put forward by the committee.

Therefore Labor will move some minor but important amendments in the Senate to make the amended bill conform with the recommendations of the committee. The government already tried to cut off the committee's work before – it shouldn't ignore it completely.

Labor is working constructively with the crossbench to secure support for our amendments.

ENCRYPTION BILL- Dreyfus

Labor has spent five years responsibly improving national security legislation to make Australians safer, and we have done the same thing this week.

The government have made important concessions on its earlier positions on the Telecommunications and Other Legislation Amendment (Assistance and Access) Bill.

It appears the government will agree to proposals by Labor that will ensure there is better oversight and limitation of the powers in this bill, and better safeguards against potential unintended consequences. These are still subject to agreement by the Parliamentary Joint Committee on Intelligence and Security, and further details will be contained in its report on the bill.

The changes include limiting the application of the powers in this bill to only serious offences, properly defining key terms in the bill, and requiring a "double-lock" authorisation process for Technical Capability Notices.

Importantly, the PJCS will continue its scrutiny of the bill into 2019, allowing for outstanding concerns to be worked on and further amendments considered in the new year if necessary.

Following the extraordinary interference with this committee by the Minister for Home Affairs and Prime Minister, Labor welcomes the constructive negotiations conducted with the Attorney-General over the past two days.

Let me be clear – this bill is far from perfect and there are likely to be significant outstanding issues. But this compromise will deliver security and enforcement agencies the powers they say they need over the Christmas period, and ensure adequate oversight and safeguards to prevent unintended consequences while ongoing work continues – just as Labor proposed.

I want to issue a call to the government – the trashing of bipartisan process and politicisation of national security that has occurred over the past month must never happen again. There is nothing more important than keeping Australians safe – the government must remember that.

TALKING POINTS

Last night, the Telecommunications and Other Legislation (Assistance and Access Bill) passed through the Senate.

- **The government had to make 173 amendments to the bill as a result of detailed recommendations of the bipartisan Intelligence Committee. Labor worked hard to get these changes to make the bill stronger and with better safeguards.**
- **We proposed further amendments, which were needed to make the bill conform to the Parliamentary Joint Committee on Intelligence and Security's report.**
- **But because Scott Morrison adjourned the House of Representatives and went home at 5pm yesterday - if Labor had passed these amendments through the Senate last night the bill could not have become law before Christmas.**
- **Law enforcement and intelligence agencies told us they needed these powers over Christmas to keep Australians safe.**
- **We couldn't ignore them, even if the government was willing to take that risk.**
- **So we secured an agreement from the government that they would allow time for our further amendments to be debated and voted on when Parliament next sits in February.**

- *We also secured an immediate referral to the PJCIS so that parliamentary scrutiny of this legislation can continue.*
- *This will provide a further opportunity for Australians to have their say. The committee will report before next year's election. We made this decision in the best interests of Australians.*

HOME AFFAIRS

DUTTON'S CHRISTMAS CUTS TO BORDER FORCE MEAN LONG DELAYS - Neumann Reports today that the Australian Border Force is facing severe staff cuts at Australian airports in the lead up to Christmas and the busy holiday period are of serious concern and must be explained by the Morrison Government.

Peter Dutton's Christmas cuts at airports mean long delays for those travelling to and from Australia to see their family and friends.

Peter Dutton's reputation as a tick-and-flick Minister means the Department of Home Affairs is facing a \$300 million budget blowout which the Minister for Home Affairs seems to be attempting to fix by cutting critical frontline operations across the country.

The reports also suggest a fleet of Fast Response Boats used to target illegal fishing, people smuggling, and other transnational crime in the Torres Strait have been pulled from service.



This is concerning given the fact these vessels were due to be delivered by September 2016 but were delayed time-and-time again and not fully operational until May this year – some 20 months late.

This news follows recent revelations of serious [cultural problems](#) within the Australian Border Force including [staff surveys](#) indicating one in five ABF staff have recently been bullied or harassed at work.

Australian Border Force staff have a critically important job including protecting Australia's borders in airports, at sea, and at our ports every day – as well as upholding the integrity of our visa system.

Scott Morrison must demand an explanation from his Home Affairs Minister and the Australian public must be assured Australia's border security is not being undermined by Peter Dutton's ongoing incompetence.

Most importantly, the cuts and chaos the Abbott-Turnbull-Morrison Government are inflicting this Christmas cannot be allowed to undermine Australia's national security or the integrity of Australia's borders.

ECONOMY

CAPITAL GAINS TAX ON AUSSIE EXPATS SAGA SET TO GET WORSE - Bowen

The chaos and dysfunction enveloping the Abbott-Turnbull-Morrison Government has now claimed another victim, with changes to the capital gains tax arrangements for foreign residents not being debated until next year.

The Treasurer delaying the bungled capital gains tax changes that apply to Australian expats is actually set to make badly designed legislation even worse.

Labor has always supported the policy intent of the measure in principle, but has had concerns about the unintended consequences for expatriates.

I had written to the former Treasurer, now Prime Minister, about these issues.

Given the timing of next year's election and the Government instituting a part-time Parliament, there is not a lot of time for the Senate to consider this bill prior to its intended start date on 1 July 2019.

This measure has caused incredible uncertainty in our expatriate community. While the Government has flagged its intention to make targeted changes to their legislation, it does not go far enough.

We call on the Government to fix the issues with its flawed legislation with the greatest urgency.

PARLIAMENT VOTES TO SUPPORT HIGH SPEED RAIL AUTHORITY - Albanese

Federal Parliament voted in favour of creating a High Speed Rail Authority to advance plans for a High Speed Rail line from Brisbane to Melbourne via Sydney and Canberra.

I asked Parliament to facilitate debate of my Private Member's Bill, which would establish a High Speed Rail Authority to advance this visionary project. My motion was seconded by the Independent MP for Indi, Cathy McGowan.

The House of Representatives supported the motion by 73 votes to 72. However, because an absolute majority was required, the Government avoided a debate on my Bill.

It is disappointing that the Government fails to understand the potential of High Speed Rail to both revolutionise interstate travel and super

charge the regional centres along the proposed route.

At a time of intense population pressure in our nation's capital cities, we need a genuine decentralisation program that will empower regional centres to absorb some of the pressure of growth.

High Speed Rail would unlock waves of development in communities like the Gold Coast, Casino, Grafton, Coffs Harbour, Port Macquarie, Taree, Newcastle, the Central Coast, the Southern Highlands, Canberra, Wagga Wagga, Albury-Wodonga and Shepparton.

While the former Labor Government completed a positive feasibility study and commenced initial planning for High Speed Rail, the Coalition has run dead on the project for five wasted years.

Based on the support for action expressed in Parliament today, Prime Minister Scott Morrison should think again and act in the national interest.

The proposed High Speed Rail Authority would be tasked with working on detailed planning with the Queensland, NSW, ACT and Victorian governments. Critically, it would also begin to preserve the corridor for the project to prevent it being built out by urban sprawl.

Creation of the proposed authority was the key recommendation of an independent panel established by the former Labor Government. The panel included former Deputy Prime Minister Tim Fischer, the Business Council of Australia's Jennifer Westacott and the late Bryan Nye, who was head of the Australasian Railway Association.

ENVIRONMENT

GOVERNMENT IGNORES DECLARATION FOR JUST TRANSITION – Mark Butler

Overnight at COP 24 Heads of State and Governments from 45 developed and developing countries signed the Solidarity and Just Transition Silesia Declaration, emphasising the importance of support for workers and communities as the world transitions to a clean energy economy.

The declaration emphasized that *"climate change is one of the greatest challenges of our time."*

Stressing the *"just transition of the workforce and the creation of decent work and quality jobs are crucial to ensure an effective and inclusive transition to low greenhouse gas emission and climate resilient development."*

Signatories included the United Kingdom, New Zealand, Germany, France, Japan and Canada.

But the Morrison Government refused to sign the Declaration.

The Turnbull Government fought against the inclusion of a Just Transition clause in the Paris Agreement in 2015.

The fact the Morrison Government can't support the Silesia Declaration is just the latest evidence the Liberal's anti-worker agenda extends from penalty rates and attacks on workers' rights, all the way to denying workers support as the economy inevitably transitions to clean energy.

Australia must have a plan to help workers and communities respond to inevitable future closures of ageing coal power stations.

That's why Labor has announced a detailed Just Transition plan, including the establishment of a new Just Transition Authority and support for pooled redundancy and redeployment schemes, as well as local economic diversification.

ENERGY POLICY

MORRISON GOVERNMENT'S PRIVATISATION BY STEALTH – Bowen/Mark Butler

It's clear the Morrison Government's "big stick" Bill will be able to force the privatisation of state and Commonwealth owned energy assets, like Snowy Hydro.

This isn't a "big stick" policy, it's the latest version of the Liberals' 'big sell-off' – going after the publicly owned electricity assets that Labor Governments have refused to privatise.

Privatisation means higher power prices for families. Privatising energy assets hasn't led to lower prices or better outcomes for consumers; it has led to massive private profits and electricity prices that keep going up and up. Yet electricity privatisation remains in the Liberals' DNA.

When asked whether his "big stick" Bill could lead to electricity privatisation, the Treasurer said *"absolutely not"*. This is a blatant lie.

The [Explanatory Memorandum](#) to the Bill makes it clear that divestment involves the sale of assets of one corporation to any other (unrelated) corporation (section 5.28).

In addition, it states that if the corporation subject to a divestment order is publicly owned, under strict conditions (section 5.30), the sale of divested assets can (but is not required to) be to other government owned corporations.

There is nothing in the "big stick" Bill that requires the sale of government assets to go to other government bodies and there is nothing in the Bill that stops the Morrison Liberal government from forcing the privatisation of government owned electricity assets, including Snowy Hydro, and government electricity companies in Queensland, Western Australia, Northern Territory and Tasmania.

There's only one guarantee with Morrison – more power privatisation and higher power prices.

FRYDENBERG FUMBLES 'BIG STICK' – Bowen/Butler

Amongst Liberal Party chaos and an inability to manage the parliament yesterday, it has emerged that Josh Frydenberg had no idea Liberal party senators had waved through a Labor referral of his 'big stick' legislation to a Senate inquiry meaning there will be no Senate vote until at least April.

As *The Australian* newspaper reported online last night: *"The Australian understands Treasurer Josh Frydenberg had no idea the bill had been referred to a committee and the bill would be delayed until just before a May election."*

The Liberal Party yesterday tried to subvert normal parliamentary process to rush through its dangerous and ill-thought out divestment powers legislation through the House of Representatives, while at the same, waving through in the Senate a referral to a Senate Economics legislation committee by Labor without a division.



You just couldn't make this stuff up.

The appalling mismanagement of the legislative and parliamentary processes compounds the appalling policy that has been hobbled together following a revolt of Liberal Party MPs.

The Prime Minister and Treasurer has been attempting to argue that it was urgent and necessary to pass the investment stifling 'big stick' legislation to pressure energy companies to drop prices from 1 January 2019.

The new Treasurer was asleep at the wheel as Liberal Party senators refused to call a division on Labor's referral of the legislation to a Senate inquiry to report on 18 March 2018.

There is a risk for the government now that the legislation will not pass before the election, which would actually be a good economic outcome.



GOVERNMENT FOLLOWS LABOR'S LEAD ON STILLBIRTH FUNDING -King/McCarthy/Keneally

We welcome the Government's announcement that it will follow our lead by funding research and prevention programs to drive down Australia's stillbirth rate.

Australia loses as many as six babies to stillbirth every day. That's 2200 babies a year, making stillbirth the leading cause of infant death. While Australia has made progress in reducing sudden infant death, the stillbirth rate has remained stubbornly high for two decades. Stillbirth rates among Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are even higher.

The time to act is now.

That's why Labor committed in October to a package of measures designed to save lives and spare families the unimaginable heartache of losing their babies.

Labor's commitment includes:

- The development a National Stillbirth Strategy – the top recommendation of the Stillbirth Foundation of Australia – to set out priorities, targets and funding needs.
- An education campaign to encourage pregnant women to fall asleep on their sides. Side sleeping reduces the risk of stillbirth by 9 per cent, and could save up to 200 lives a year.
- Funding for the Centre for Research Excellence in Stillbirth at the University of Queensland to focus on the high number of stillbirths with no known cause.
- Funding to create a platform and free app for real-time pregnancy monitoring via wearable technologies.

Labor's commitment stands and we will deliver any of these measures that the Government does not. Given Labor's leadership and bipartisanship on this issue we look forward to an invitation to participate in the Government's national roundtable.

Labor initiated and chaired the Senate Select Committee on Stillbirth Research and Education, which tabled its report this week after receiving 268 submissions and holding six public hearings across the country.

This was the first national investigation and report on the impact of stillbirth on Australian families and the Australian economy.

AUSTRALIANS WAITING LONGER FOR HEALTH CARE UNDER LIBERALS - King

Australians are languishing for longer in emergency departments and on elective surgery waiting lists because of the savage cuts the Liberals have inflicted on the nation's hospitals.

As Treasurer, Morrison inflicted savage cuts on health and hospitals in every budget he authored. Now we are seeing the damage those cuts have done.

Two new reports by the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare show how Australians are paying the price for Morrison's crusade of health cuts.

[The first report](#) shows median wait times for elective surgery have blown out across the country.

Ninety per cent of patients now wait an average 268 days for their surgery – a 10-day increase on last year. The proportion of patients waiting longer than a year for a procedure has also increased since last year.

[The second report](#) shows a rise in waiting times for emergency care since the Liberals came to power.

Just 72 per cent of people presenting to the nation's emergency departments are being seen on time.

That means 2.2 million Australians who needed emergency care were not seen on time last year.

Our emergency departments are under more demand than ever before, as more people present with more complex and acute health issues. The Government should be boosting funding to deal with this.

Instead, they have cut \$715 million from public hospitals from 2017 to 2020. And now they're trying to lock in billions more in cuts for a further five years.

They also scrapped Labor's National Partnership Agreement on Improving Hospitals Services – which included specific investments to reduce emergency department and elective surgery waiting times and helped hold states accountable for their performance.

It doesn't matter if it's Tony Abbott or Malcolm Turnbull or Scott Morrison or Peter Dutton in charge this week – health and hospital cuts are in the Liberal DNA.

By contrast, Labor has promised to fully reverse the Liberals' cuts to public hospitals from after the next election to 2025 through our \$2.8 billion Better Hospitals Fund. Only Labor will get emergency department and elective surgery wait times down.

SELECT COMMITTEE REPORT INTO AUSTRALIA'S OBESITY EPIDEMIC - King/Singh

Labor welcomes today's release of the Senate Select Committee's report into the obesity epidemic in Australia.

The Chair's report has highlighted the already significant health and economic impacts of rising obesity levels upon Australia's community.

While Labor agrees with the majority of the recommendations in the Chair's report, Labor Senators have provided a dissenting report on the implementation of a sugar-sweetened beverage tax and immediate restrictions on food and drink advertising.

A wide-range of stakeholders made submissions to the Committee's inquiry or appeared at its public hearings to urge for targeted health interventions, broad education campaigns and the need for a National Obesity Taskforce.

The Committee heard Australia's obesity rate of 28 per cent of the population aged 15 and over is the fifth highest among OECD countries, while Australia's rate of childhood obesity is increasing rapidly.

There are currently over one million children in Australia who are overweight or obese, while 20 per cent of children aged 2–4 and 27 per cent of children and adolescents aged 5–17 were overweight or obese in 2014-15.

The Committee also heard that Indigenous children and adults were more likely than their non-Indigenous counterparts to be overweight or obese.

Labor Senators are encouraged by the strong level of support for action on obesity, and are pleased to support the majority of the Chair's recommendations, like the establishment of a National Obesity Taskforce and the development of a National Obesity Strategy.

Labor Senators have proposed that a newly-created National Obesity Taskforce conduct a comprehensive review of the regulatory framework for food and drink advertising and marketing to children, in conjunction with relevant health, media and advertising bodies, to ensure the framework is fit for purpose in the contemporary media environment and also recommend that a food-identification standard be agreed to inform any review and facilitate its uniform implementation across all platforms.

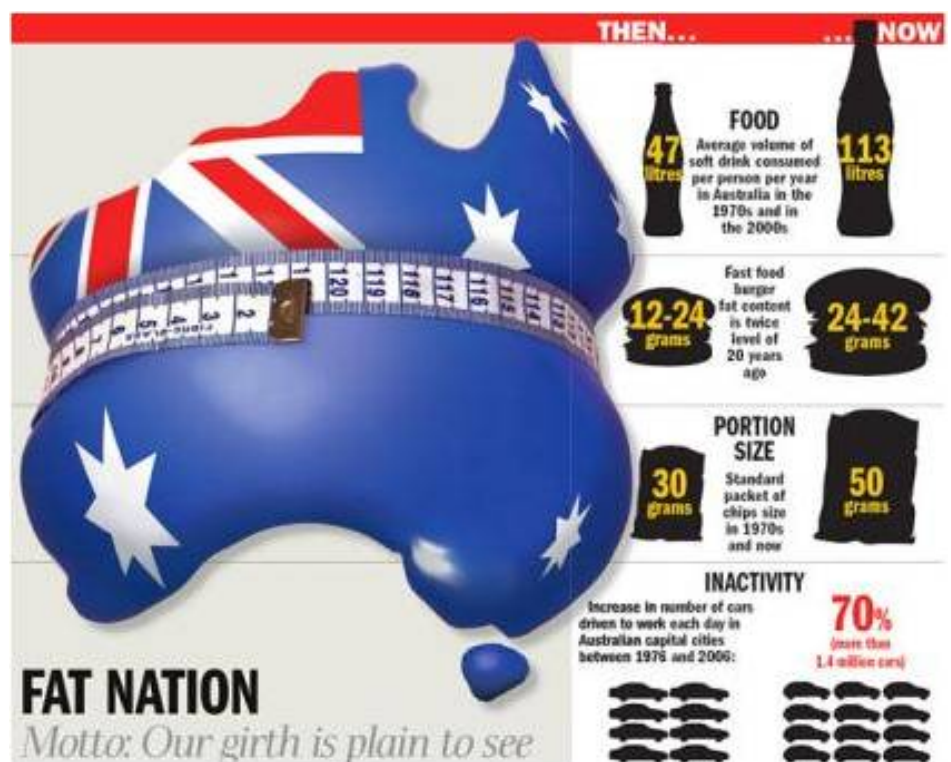
Labor takes seriously the complex challenges facing Australia in its efforts to beat the obesity epidemic. Labor was committed to tackling obesity when in government, including our substantial investment in the National Partnership Agreement on Preventive Health and establishing the Australian National Preventive Health Agency.

Both of these measures were abolished by the Liberals, who also cut \$368 million in funding from this space.

We've been calling on the Abbott/Turnbull/Morrison Government to act on the issue of obesity ever since but they have done absolutely nothing.

In stark contrast, Labor went to the last election promising a major investment in tackling obesity and chronic disease.

The difference couldn't be clearer: Labor will prioritise and invest in tackling obesity and chronic disease, but the Liberals will cut and neglect this critical health issue.



VETERANS

SENATE REPORT INTO USE OF ANTI-MALARIAL DRUGS IN THE ADF - Rishworth

Labor welcomes the report from the Senate Inquiry into the use of the Quinoline anti-malarial drugs Mefloquine and Tafenoquine in the Australian Defence Force and will consider its recommendations.



Labor recognised that there were a number of complex issues in relation to anti-malarial drugs which is why we sought to address some of these through the process of a Senate Inquiry.

As members of the serving and ex-service community continued to raise their concerns around the side effects from some anti-malarial drugs a Senate Inquiry provided an open, transparent and thorough review into these issues.

The Inquiry saw 137 submissions made and held six public hearings around the country to ensure all voices were heard on this issue.

This Inquiry was established to look at policies and practices within the ADF, adverse effects, support available to serving and ex-serving personnel and their families and international evidence and responses in dealing with these anti-malarials.

This Inquiry was established by Labor and supported by the government, Greens and the crossbench to ensure this was approached with bipartisanship.

Labor would like to thank all of those who were involved throughout the Senate Inquiry process.

This process provided a transparent and thorough review into the use of anti-malarial drugs during service.

Labor will take this time to work through the recommendations and looks forward to hearing the government's response.

DISABILITY

GOVERNMENT SHOULD DROP COUNTERPRODUCTIVE DSP RULE CHANGE - Burney/Brown

The Government should not proceed with its counterproductive plan to change the Disability Support Pension (DSP) rules for people leaving prison.

This will put people with disability – who are particularly vulnerable upon leaving prison – at risk of recidivism, homelessness or social isolation.

DSP recipients, who serve a prison sentence, can currently have their payments suspended for up to two years, without having to reapply for the DSP upon their release.

From 1 January 2019, the Government will force people to reapply after a 13 week suspension. This proposed change is counterproductive. It is bad for individuals and bad for the community, particularly given the high risk that people will fall through the cracks as a consequence of the chronic delays in DSP application processing.

People with disability make up 18 per cent of the general population, but 30 per cent of people entering prison.

This week, the Senate supported a motion moved by Shadow Minister for Disability and Carers Senator Carol Brown, calling on the Government to reverse this decision.

REGIONAL

CUTS FORCE RURAL AND REGIONAL EARLY EDUCATION SERVICES TO SHUT - Rishworth

Families from across the Albury-Wodonga Region are searching for vital early education services as it was revealed Albury Wodonga Community College have been forced to shut up shop, leaving families in Mitta, Walwa, Bellbridge, Baranduda, Kergunyah (Victoria), Henty and Walla (NSW) in limbo.

Albury Wodonga Community College relied on Budget Based Funded (BBF) funding to provide early education services to rural and regional families in outlying towns of Albury-Wodonga.

Under the Liberal Government's child care changes, the BBF program has been dismantled, and regional services have been told to become commercially self-sufficient. This has left Albury Wodonga Community College unviable.

Labor has long been saying that these cuts will see more and more rural and regional services forced to the wall.

Families in these communities face a range of social, emotional, cultural and geographic isolation and barriers to accessing services.

Families in remote and regional Australia need better access to services, and yet this government wants to take them away. These families will have no other services to turn to.

Services like that of Albury Wodonga Community College provide a vital social and education service – and yet this government have ripped away critical funding resulting in children without access to early education.

The government needs to recognise that rural and remote and Indigenous mobile services around Australia are vital community services.

It is particularly galling that the Nationals have been silent whilst services in regional Australia have been forced to close their doors.

In addition to the forced closures across Albury-Wodonga, the Department of Education [confirmed 19 services](#) have already been forced to close down due to the Liberal Government's child care changes.

This list will continue to grow. Rural and remote families deserve better.



WORKERS NOT SEEING BENEFITS OF ECONOMIC GROWTH – O'Connor

This week's national accounts from the Australian Bureau of Statistics show that workers continue to receive less of the benefits of economic growth.

Over the year to September, corporate profits grew by over 7 per cent, six times faster than average compensation per employee, which only grew by 1.2 per cent,

Labour share of GDP is 0.3 percentage points lower than it was 12 months ago, to be 52.2 per cent in the September quarter, and the profits share of GDP climbed to 28.1 per cent.

The household saving rate dipped to 2.4 per cent, the lowest since 2007, due to subdued growth in disposable income.

As Treasurer and now Prime Minister Scott Morrison has presided over the lowest wages growth since records began, and yet he wants to further cut the wages of hard working Australians by cutting their penalty rates.

Under Scott Morrison and his Liberals many working Australians haven't had a pay-rise for years, and are confronted with insecure work and are struggling to keep up with living costs.

This Government doesn't have a single policy to grow wages and reduce inequality.

They are bereft of a plan to deal with the problems in today's labour market – the flat wage growth, the proliferation of insecure work, and the relative impoverishment of low skilled workers.

Australians deserve a pay rise – and they aren't getting one under Scott Morrison and his Liberals. While this government is busy fighting itself, everything is going up except for people's wages.

Labor will never stop fighting for people's pay and conditions – that's why one of the first things we'll do as a government is reverse the cuts to penalty rates.

MORE PARTISAN FWC APPOINTMENTS – O'Connor

Scott Morrison has adopted Tony Abbott and Malcolm Turnbull's hard line and outright biased ideology on appointments to the Fair Work Commission (FWC).



Since the 2013 election, the Coalition Government have made 20 consecutive "employer" appointments to the Fair Work Commission.

This is an abuse of power by a desperate Government happy to take instructions from big business and trash the independence of a century old institution.

There is no balance, no fairness and no effort to maintain the integrity of the commission.

This conservative anti-worker Liberal Government has removed any pretence of impartiality from its Commission appointments.

The last time such blatant disregard was shown to impartiality in appointing Commissioners was by the Howard Government when none other than Tony Abbott was the Minister for Workplace Relations.

This behaviour is utterly reprehensible conduct that shows only hostility to workers in the labour market.

COALITION SPLIT AS SOME BACK LABOR'S LEAD TO STEM INSECURE WORK –O'Connor

In another example of a divided government, a parliamentary committee dominated by members of the Coalition has followed Labor's lead on the serious need to deal with issues around casual work, labour hire and insecure work.

The House Standing Committee on Innovation, Industry, Science and Resources identifies the challenges associated with insecure work, particularly the misuse and overuse of casuals and labour hire.

As Labor leads on policies for decent jobs, higher wages and secure work, Scott Morrison is stuck dealing with his divided and dysfunctional government as the government members break away from his stance on industrial relations.

The Coalition committee members must now do more than simply pay lip service to these issues and urge Scott Morrison to put workers first for once. For five years now, this government has done nothing for workers.

Labor won't be surprised if the Coalition members of the committee use this report to say one thing in their electorates pretending they care, and yet do absolutely nothing in Canberra. We've seen this again and again with the member for Dawson, George Christensen.

Labor doesn't want to wait until Scott Morrison calls an election to ensure workers are treated fairly, we want action now.

In July, Labor announced that a Shorten Labor Government will crack down on dodgy labour hire companies that rip off and exploit workers.

Federal Labor will also change the definition of "casual" and set an objective test for deciding when a worker is "casual".

A Shorten Labor government will address the problems in our labour market that mean that precarious work is increasing.

Under the Abbott-Turnbull-Morrison Government, we are headed towards a low paid, easy to hire, easy to fire society, which is undermining job security and putting downward pressure on wages.

Australian workers are sick of waiting for the Liberals to act.

APPRENTICESHIPS CONTINUE TO FALL UNDER THE COALITION - Cameron

The number of people undertaking an apprenticeship in Australia continues to freefall under the Coalition.

In the last financial year, there was a further 1 per cent decline in people undertaking an Australian apprenticeship, or 2755 fewer apprentices and trainees.

The latest fall continues an alarming downward trend – there being a decline of more than 140,000 Australian apprenticeships since the Coalition came to power.

The [latest National Centre for Vocational Education Research figures](#) also show a 5.1 per cent drop in women commencing an Australian apprenticeship.

The trade training rate also remains unacceptably low at 9.5 per cent.

Shadow Minister for Skills, TAFE and Apprenticeships, Doug Cameron, said the NCVER figures show the Government has given up on helping young Australians attain an apprenticeship.

Meanwhile, the Australian Industry Group's [2018 Workforce Development Needs Survey Report](#) shows 75 per cent of employers are reporting skill shortages, up from 49 per cent in 2016.

"These figures just highlight the ongoing demise of apprenticeships and trade training in Australia under the Coalition," Senator Cameron said. "Young people can't get apprenticeships while employers are screaming out for skilled workers. Rather than addressing the crisis caused by its \$3 billion in cuts to the training sector, the Liberals instead install a failed minister in Senator Michaelia Cash."

In Senator Cash's home state of Western Australia, there are 9,615 fewer apprenticeships, including more than 7000 in trade occupations, since the Liberals were elected.

The NCVER figures show 1,610 fewer Australian apprenticeships commenced in WA in the past year down from the previous year, including 13.2 per cent fewer women.

Meanwhile, the Government's so-called 'bush wage' subsidy is about to be rolled out across the country, raising further concerns about this Government's capacity to manage the apprenticeship system.

The bush wage is modelled on a One Nation thought bubble and is a political fix stop National Party voters deserting them at the next election.

In the wake of the recent death of 20-year-old Victorian apprentice Dillon Wu; Senator Cash must explain what measures are in place to protect the safety and welfare of apprentices employed under the bush wage subsidy.

It is essential that the Minister ensures there are safeguards in place to prevent the exploitation of young workers across the system.

Senator Cash must also provide an update on where the replacement apprenticeship IT system is at after the Government wasted \$24 million on the now abandoned Australian Apprenticeship Management System.

WHISTLEBLOWER PROTECTIONS MUST BE STRENGTHENED

Clare O'Neil/Deborah O'Neill/Ketter/Keogh/Kearney

Labor is pleased to see the Enhancing Whistle-blower Protections Bill pass the Senate after almost a year of pressure from Labor, Centre Alliance and from experts like AJ Brown.

In September 2017, over one year ago, the Parliamentary Joint Committee on Corporations and Financial Services released its unanimous report into whistle-blower protections in the corporate, public and not-for-profit sectors. This report provided a roadmap for reform to better protect whistle-blowers.

The Liberal Government has only addressed a fraction of the Committee's recommendations in this bill – and hasn't even bothered to respond to the PJC Report. This bill is not a response to the PJC Report, a point which has been acknowledged by Treasury officials.

It is disappointing – but not surprising – that the Morrison Government had to be dragged kicking and screaming to strengthen this bill.

Time and time again, we have seen the Liberals running a protection racket for big business. They resisted the Royal Commission for 600 days – voting against it 26 times – and just last week the Liberals voted against tougher penalties for corporate misconduct.

The Liberals are divided, out of touch, and only for the top end of town. Their protection racket for big business must stop.

Labor members of the PJC wrote to the Assistant Treasurer in September this year, urging him to respond to the PJC Report as soon as practically possible. The Assistant Treasurer has not even responded to this letter.

Labor will continue to fight for better protections for whistle-blowers.

COMMUNICATIONS

LABOR WELCOMES RTIRC REPORT- Jones

Labor welcomes the report of the Regional Telecommunications Independent Review Committee (RTIRC) that has been tabled this week.

The RTIRC confirms that the decision to invest in a National Broadband Network was the right decision by the Australian Government.

The NBN project is delivering significant improvements in regional communications.

However, it is clear that the implementation of the NBN project under the Abbott-Turnbull-Morrison Government has fallen short of community expectations.

As a result, the report signals that beyond the initial rollout of the NBN, more work will need to be done to ensure that regional telecommunications is fit for purpose and keeps up with the demands of technological advances and consumer expectations.

There is a strong overlap with the issues raised in the recent Joint Standing Committee on the National Broadband Network around congestion in the fixed wireless network and limitations on the Sky Muster satellite NBN service.

Labor also welcomes recommendations about taking a stronger “place-based” approach to regional upgrades – something that we have been advocating for some time.

Labor welcomes the recommendations on Indigenous Digital Inclusion.

At the moment, the poorest people in Australia are paying the most for their data and phone services.

This is an issue of social equity and economic participation that should be addressed as a priority.

It is also clear that addressing the digital divide and improving digital literacy require a greater focus.

Labor will work through the recommendations and consult with stakeholders on the RTIRC report.

USO REFORM: FIFIELD CEMENTS LEGACY AS DO-NOTHING MINISTER – Rowland/Jones
Following a *Productivity Commission review* which commenced in June 2016, a USO taskforce, and two and a half years having elapsed, Mitch Fifield has today *re-announced an acronym* to describe existing safeguards for the delivery of phone and broadband services.

NBNCo already has a universal service delivery obligation for broadband via its *Statement of Expectations*, and Telstra has a USO obligation for delivery of voice services.

Coming up with a new acronym – the Universal Service Guarantee (USG) — to describe what is already there does not constitute progress.

The Government has also failed to offer any views on the future relationship between the USO levy and its proposed regional broadband levy.

This latest development is simply an in-tray clearing exercise by a Minister who has given up on governing.

MITCH FIFIELD: MINISTER FOR COMMUNICATIONS IN NAME ONLY - Rowland/Jones
This week, the Senate supported a successful Labor amendment to the [Telecommunications Legislation Amendment Bill 2018](#) to correct a legislative issue that was preventing eligible financial assistance from being paid to a regional broadcaster.

This amendment [was actually first introduced by the Government](#) in the House of Representatives to a separate omnibus Deregulation Bill that has, in various iterations, [been hanging around for years](#).

However, [that Bill has since stalled](#) under this Minister, as has so much else in the Communications portfolio.

Labor was tired of waiting for this incompetent Minister to get his act together and that is why we introduced this amendment to get on with the job.

In seeking to explain himself, the embarrassed Minister bizarrely claimed his Deregulation Bill — [which he hasn't even brought on for debate in the Senate](#) — has stalled because of Labor.

This is about as logical as claiming Labor forced the Minister to hand \$30 million over to Foxtel and accept a pair of cufflinks in return.

The communications sector is tired of having a distracted Minister who has more interest in backroom numbers than his portfolio.

Australia can't afford another three years of the Morrison Government's dysfunction and Mitch Fifield's legislative paralysis.

BOOSTING SCIENCE AND RESEARCH IS A NO-BRAINER

The Liberal government is out of touch with modern Australia — and nothing shows it more than the government's relentless war on science. The Abbott-Turnbull-Morrison government has slashed funding for research in universities and public agencies such as CSIRO, shedding more than 1300 science jobs since 2013.

As the official budget tables confirm, in their five years in office the Liberals have reduced spending on science, research and innovation by \$1.1 billion in real terms — a cut of 10 per cent.

The Coalition government has ignored or denigrated the expert advice scientists provide on the great global issues of our time, such as climate change and energy policy. It has failed to understand that, if we do not invest in basic, curiosity-driven research about the world and our place in it, we will also degrade our ability to conduct applied research.

The government's hostility to science derives from the hard-right ideologues in its ranks.



That hostility is not shared by the wider community.

Australians know that if you care about the food that you eat, the water that you drink and the air that you breathe, you must care about science. They know that if you care for someone who is sick, you must care about science. They know that if you care about how rapidly changing technologies are transforming the way we live and work, you must care about science.

Without the enhanced understanding that is provided by science and by scholarly research in all disciplines, including the humanities, we will not be able to resolve any of the challenges the nation faces.

Yet the Liberals' cuts to science have created Australia's largest brain drain, depriving Australia of the talent it needs.

Bill Shorten has declared that if Labor wins the federal election, which must be held within the next six months, we will end the Coalition's war on science. Labor understands that science and research are fundamental to Australia's future.

They are fundamental to our capacity for innovation, for increasing economic diversity, for creating new jobs and for sharing the benefits of growth as widely as possible.

It is no accident that Australia has become a less equal society during the years the Liberals have been draining resources from Australian science.

In a speech last week to the Australian Academy of Science, the Opposition Leader renewed Labor's commitment to reversing the decline in Australia's research and development activity.

Labor has set a goal of increasing the share of gross domestic product devoted to research and development 3 per cent by 2030 — up from 1.8 per cent now, which is well below the OECD average of 2.3 per cent.

We will return science to the centre of government by resetting the relationship between government and Australia's scientists and researchers.

A Shorten Labor government will establish a charter with Australia's science and research community, setting out the reciprocal roles of government and researchers. Under Labor, government will restore respect to scientists and researchers.

We will uphold academic freedom and protect them from political interference while providing the best facilities and equipment the nation can afford.

In return, we expect that researchers will strive towards helping us to meet Australia's national challenges.

Labor will establish a new Prime Minister's Council for Science and Innovation, to advise the prime minister and other ministers on the implications of science, research, engineering and technology issues.

The present Commonwealth Science Council, recently renamed the National Science and Technology Council, has not met for 15 months.

Labor's council will be chaired by the prime minister, and include the science, education and health ministers, five eminent scientists and researchers, at least one of whom will have a social science or humanities background, and four representatives from business and industry.

Finally, a Shorten Labor government will instigate the first comprehensive review of Australia's research framework in more than 20 years.

In that time, ad hoc changes have been made to policy, funding has been cut and political interference has hampered a system that is in need of a root-and-branch examination.

The review, assessing research needs and priorities up to 2030, is an ambitious project in the Australian context.

But, globally, it is neither novel nor unique. Britain and Canada have both recently undertaken reviews to ensure that maximum benefit is obtained from public investment in research.

Australia's review will be led by former chief scientist Ian Chubb, who will be supported by an advisory group comprised of eminent academic and business leaders.

A Labor government will support the work of this review because we aim to shape the future of Australia, and we know that is impossible without a central role for science and research. *This opinion piece was published in The Australian, on Wednesday 5 December 2018.*

CONSUMER AFFAIRS

NON-CONFORMING BUILDING PRODUCTS NEED TO GO - Ketter

Labor Senator Chris Ketter tabled the Senate Economics References Committee Report into Non-conforming Building Products: *The need for a coherent and robust regulatory regime*, this week.

The final report hands down thirteen recommendations around national consistency and regulation, better consultative and reporting mechanisms and border protection.

This inquiry has run over two Parliaments, during which time the committee has received 164 formal submissions and a number of supplementary submissions. There have been ten public hearings, in Canberra, Melbourne, Brisbane, Perth, Sydney and Adelaide.

The final report follows interim reports in May 2016, September 2017 and November 2017 – the latter two drilling down on deadly flammable cladding and asbestos products respectively.

This report examines product issues found in electrical, lighting, windows and glazing, plumbing, engineered wood products, steel and Vinyl/PVC categories, as well as compliance issues raised in the Shergold-Weir report *Building Confidence*, commissioned by the Building Minister's Forum.

This final report recommends that the Building Ministers' Forum take urgent action to:

- Develop improved consultative mechanisms with industry stakeholders and introduce annual reporting requirements to address non-conforming building products (**Recommendation 1**);
- Expedite consideration of a mandatory third-party certification scheme for high-risk building products and a national register for these products (**Recommendation 3**); and
- Examine international approaches for testing of high-risk products prior to import (**Recommendation 5**).
- In addition, the report recommends the Australian Government:
 - Develop a confidential reporting mechanism on non-conforming building products for industry (**Recommendation 2**);
 - Require sampling and testing by a NATA (or equivalent) accredited authority prior to importation of high-risk products to Australia (**Recommendation 4**);
 - Work with state and territory governments on a national licensing scheme (**Recommendation 7**);
 - Consider imposing a penalties regime for non-compliance with the National Construction Code (**Recommendation 11**); and
 - Consider making all Australian Standards freely available (**Recommendation 8**).

The final recommendation (**Recommendation 13**) urges the government to review the Customs Act 1901 (and other relevant legislation) to close loopholes and tighten enforcement action to address the continued importation of life-threatening asbestos to Australia.

Labor takes building safety seriously. That's why a Shorten Labor Government has already committed to ban the importation, future sale and use of highly flammable polyethylene (PE) cladding; establish a national licencing scheme; and introduce a new penalties regime for all building practitioners who breach the National Construction Code.

Public safety is a fundamental responsibility of government and Australians have the right to feel safe in their built environment. The findings of this Labor-led inquiry have forced the government to act. But there is much more to be done.

It is time the Liberal National government stepped up to restore public accountability for public safety in the building industry.

INFRASTRUCTURE

SENATE TO EXAMINE AIRPORT FIRE SAFETY - Albanese/Sterle

Labor has successfully moved to establish a Senate inquiry into the adequacy of specialist Aviation Rescue and Fire Fighting Services (ARFFS) at the nation's airports.

ARFFS, run by Airservices Australia, provide trained specialists who rescue people and property from aircraft crashes and other emergency incidents at airports. In 2017-18 they responded to about 6900 incidents.

The Rural, Regional Affairs and Transport committee inquiry will focus on whether current safety standards at airports, including provision of ARFFS, are adequate to maintain the safety of both the travelling public and emergency personnel.

The committee will also consider whether regulators including the Civil Aviation Safety Authority and Airservices Australia are enforcing internationally agreed safety standards at Australian airports.

The inquiry follows the current Government's failed 2016 attempt to remove ARFFS from a number of regional airports including Ballina, Gladstone, Hamilton Island, Ayers Rock, Karratha and Port Hedland.

Australia has an enviable record of aviation safety. It is important that the Parliament plays its role in maintaining that record.

The inquiry will examine:

The provision of rescue, firefighting and emergency response at Australian airports with particular reference to:

- a. Current standards applicable to the provision of aerodrome rescue and firefighting services relating to community safety and the emergency personnel safety;
- b. The standards for the provision of emergency response at Australian airports including emergency medical response and response to structure fires and other incidents;
- c. Comparison of safe systems of emergency response standards and systems of work for firefighting and rescue operations for structure fires, aircraft rescue, emergency medical response and other emergency incidents;
- d. Consideration of best practice including relevant international standards;
- e. The mechanisms and criteria for the review of the provisions of safety standards for the provision of rescue and firefighting services, if any;
- f. A review of Airservices Australia policy and administration of aviation rescue and firefighting services;
- g. The effectiveness and independence of the regulator the Civil Aviation Safety Authority (CASA) to uphold Aviation rescue and firefighting safety standards;
- h. The impact on Australia's national and international reputation and aviation safety record as a result of any lowering of aviation rescue and firefighting services;
- i. Any other related matters.

LABOR PUSHES FOR BIPARTISANSHIP ON SHIPPING POLICY - Albanese/Sterle

Labor has successfully moved to establish a Senate inquiry into Australian shipping to build bipartisan support to reverse the ongoing decline of our nation's maritime industry.

Over the past 30 years, the number of Australian-flagged vessels operating domestically and internationally has fallen from about 100 to 14, with resulting job losses and a decline in our national skills base.

In July 2012, following extensive consultation with industry and unions, the former Labor Government attempted to revive shipping with a reform package including tax concessions and training assistance.

But in 2013 the incoming Coalition Government took a new approach, proposing changes that would have destroyed the domestic shipping industry by allowing foreign vessels paying crews third world wages to compete with Australian vessels paying their crews Australian-level wages.

Since the Senate rejected that legislation in 2015, the Government has allowed the industry to drift.

As an island nation which relies on shipping to move 99 percent of its imports and exports, it is in Australia's economic, environmental and national security interests to maintain a vibrant maritime industry.

It is time for all political parties to work with industry and employee representatives to end the policy inertia and collaborate to find an approach that will secure the future of Australian shipping.

The inquiry by the Senate's Rural Regional Affairs and Transport References Committee offers a genuine opportunity for the Parliament to put the national interest ahead of political considerations and find a way forward.

The inquiry will examine:

The policy, regulatory, taxation, administrative and funding priorities for Australian shipping, with particular reference to:

- a. *New investment in Australian ships and building a maritime cluster in Australia;*
- b. *Establishment of an efficient and commercially oriented coastal ship licensing system and foreign crew visa system;*
- c. *Interaction with other modes of freight transport, non-freight shipping and government shipping;*
- d. *Maritime security, including fuel security and foreign ship and crew standards;*
- e. *Environmental sustainability;*
- f. *Workforce development and the seafarer training system;*
- g. *Port infrastructure, port services and port fees and charges; and*
- h. *Any related matters.*



OUT OF TOUCH GOVERNMENT LAST MOVER ON LIVE SHEEP TRADE - Fitzgibbon

Labor welcomes Australian Livestock Exporters Council (ALEC) decision to place a moratorium on the northern summer live sheep export trade.

It shows how out of touch the Morrison Government is when the peak industry body is moving ahead of it in response to overwhelming community concern about animal welfare breaches.

The Morrison Government must start listening to the people: the live sheep trade is acting where the Government won't.

I congratulate ALEC on this step in the right direction however the Morrison Government must now allow the House of Representatives to express its will on the the future of the live sheep trade. A vote to phase out long haul live sheep exports must held this last sitting week.

Labor will continue to be guided by the science which says the northern Middle Eastern summer trade and animal welfare standards are incompatible.

A Shorten Labor Government will put an end to the northern summer trade at the first opportunity and phase out the balance of trade while helping sheep meat producers make the transition to more domestic processing.



SENATE DOWRY INQUIRY HEARS FROM FAMILY ADVOCACY GROUPS – Pratt/Hill

The Senate Inquiry into the practice and incidence of dowry abuse in Australia held its latest public hearing in Sydney on Friday, where advocacy organisations detailed instances and trends of dowry related abuse.

Dowry extortion has been recognised as a direct cause of family violence including horrific murders and suicides.



To date the inquiry has received more than 80 submissions from across Australia that show the extent of concern and point the way to changes that may be needed in family law, criminal law, migration systems and policing responses.

This Senate Inquiry has received many submissions highlighting the need for stronger national laws that replicate Victoria's approach and include dowry related abuse as a specified form of abuse in the Family Law Act.

Victoria has led the way, with new laws that define dowry abuse as a form of family violence, implementing the recommendation of the Victorian Royal Commission into Family Violence. Organisations and individuals that appeared include Harmony Alliance, White Ribbon Foundation,

Indian community organisations and Jatinder Kaur, Director of JK Diversity Consultants and who also runs a refuge for women fleeing dowry violence in Brisbane.

"(T)he recent spike in financial, physical, sexual and emotional abuse of women in the name of dowry has led to several deaths, suicide attempts, and other forms of domestic violence."

Jatinder Kaur, JK Diversity Consultants (17/08/2018)

"Including dowry abuse as an example of family violence in Section 4 (1) of the Family Law Act would help to set norms and expectations."

Harmony Alliance (17/08/2018)

Dowry or 'bride price' perpetuates a culture of ownership of women, which runs against the cause of equality, a fundamental value in modern Australia.

The terrible impact dowry abuse and family violence have on women and family's needs to be stopped. It is crucial the government does everything it can to help vulnerable women and families suffering because of dowry abuse.

Labor looks forward to the outcomes of this important inquiry.

If you or someone you know is impacted by sexual assault or family violence call 1800RESPECT on 1800 737 732 or visit 1800RESPECT.org.au. In an emergency, call 000.



JAY WEATHERILL – Wong

Jay Weatherill was a great Premier and a fine Labor leader.

In the six and a half years he led the Government, Jay was one of the most transformative Premiers in the history of South Australia, guiding our state through a period of significant economic transition.

As Premier he successfully managed the exit of automotive manufacturers, goaded to leave Australia by the Federal Liberal Government, by investing in infrastructure, driving growth in advanced manufacturing and revitalising our capital city – with Adelaide Oval, the riverbank precinct and the health and medical research precinct transforming Adelaide.

Jay also championed social reform by:

Delivering once in a generation reforms for LGBTIQ South Australians – taking South Australia from a laggard to once again leading Australia in respect to LGBTIQ rights;

Championing gender equality – achieving 50% female representation on Government boards, helping women become more financially and economically secure, and supporting women's sport; and

Advancing reconciliation with Aboriginal South Australians - commencing treaty discussions with Aboriginal nations.

Jay's Government led the nation by transitioning our electricity supply network to deliver greater self-sufficiency, more generating capacity and more competition, increasing reliability and bringing down prices.

He took action when others dithered, building the battery, intervening in the market and investing in gas fired power. All South Australians are benefiting from his far-sighted leadership.

Jay always stood up for South Australia and always fought for our interests.

Whether it was fighting for the River Murray, fighting to save automotive jobs, fighting to ensure a local submarine build, fighting against the Federal Liberals' cuts to health and education funding, or fighting Josh Frydenberg to protect our GST share – Jay always put the interests of South Australians first.

Jay's vision and leadership saw him, against the odds; lead Labor to a 4th term of government in 2014.

In 2018 Jay secured a swing to his Government and only narrowly lost the election after a redistribution which left him starting the campaign seven seats seven behind the Liberals, itself a historic achievement.

I wish Jay and Mel and their children all the best for this next stage in their lives.

Jay's legacy is a more confident, progressive and secure South Australia, and I thank him for his service to our state, his leadership, and his wise counsel and friendship.

Ryan ALP

Film Afternoon
hosted by our candidate
PETER COSSAR

VICE

Sunday 30 December

Eldorado United Cinema, Indooroopilly.

Join us in the afternoon in the foyer function room
for drinks and nibbles. Time to be announced

Cost: \$20 includes movie, drink and nibbles. All funds
raised go to the Ryan federal election campaign

No need to RSVP, but if you do reply to this email, it will help us
with numbers for catering.

Enquiries to mariaheenan@yahoo.com 0417 608 920

If you wish to make a donation to the Ryan
campaign at any time, banking details are

Account name: ALP FEC Ryan

BSB: 064 129 Account: 00904682 please provide your
name so a receipt can be issued.



Universal Declaration of Human Rights

Monday 10 December 2018

Morning Event 9:30 for 10:00 to 11:15 am

State Library of Queensland, Auditorium 2

(Cultural Precinct, Stanley Pl, South Brisbane)

Join us to honour and be inspired by five champions of the
Sustainable Development Goals in the areas of
PEOPLE, PEACE, PARTNERSHIPS, PROSPERITY & PLANET

Free Entry

RSVP: by 9 December (online only)

<https://www.eventbrite.com.au/e/hr-70-at-sfq-tickets-52736996777>

CONTACT: qld@unaa.org.au or Dr Donnell Davis 0432978230

Current Senate Inquiries

Community Affairs References Committee

New ParentsNext, including its trial and subsequent broader rollout

- [Support for Australia's thalidomide survivors](#)
- [Effectiveness of the Aged Care Quality Assessment and accreditation framework for protecting residents from abuse and poor practices, and ensuring proper clinical and medical care standards are maintained and practiced](#)

Economics Legislation Committee

- **New** [Parliamentary Joint Committee on the Australia Fund Bill 2018](#)
- **New** [Lower Tax Bill 2018](#)
- **New** [Social Services and Other Legislation Amendment \(Supporting Retirement Incomes\) Bill 2018 \[Provisions\]](#)
- **New** [Treasury Laws Amendment \(Prohibiting Energy Market Misconduct\) Bill 2018 \[Provisions\]](#)
- **New** [Timor Sea Maritime Boundaries Treaty Consequential Amendments Bill 2018 \[Provisions\]](#) and the [Passenger Movement Charge Amendment \(Timor Sea Maritime Boundaries Treaty\) Bill 2018 \[Provisions\]](#)
- [Treasury Laws Amendment \(Making Sure Multinationals Pay Their Fair Share of Tax in Australia and Other Measures\) Bill 2018 \[Provisions\]](#)

Economics References Committee

- [Credit and financial services targeted at Australians at risk of financial hardship](#)
- [Regional Inequality in Australia](#)
- [Non-conforming building products](#)

Education and Employment References Committee

- [The appropriateness and effectiveness of the objectives, design, implementation and evaluation of jobactive](#)
- [The high rates of mental health conditions experienced by first responders, emergency service workers and volunteers](#)

Environment and Communications Legislation Committee

New Galilee Basin (Coal Prohibition) Bill 2018

- [Treasury Laws Amendment \(Improving the Energy Efficiency of Rental Properties\) Bill 2018](#)

Environment and Communications References Committee

- [The allegations of political interference in the Australian Broadcasting Corporation \(ABC\)](#)
- [Impact of feral deer, pigs and goats in Australia](#)
- [Gaming micro-transactions for chance-based items](#)
- [Australia's faunal extinction crisis](#)
- [Great Barrier Reef 2050 Partnership Program](#)
- [Australian content on broadcast, radio and streaming services](#)
- [Rehabilitation of mining and resources projects as it relates to Commonwealth responsibilities](#)

Finance and Public Administration Legislation Committee

- **New** [Future Drought Fund Bill 2018 and Future Drought Fund \(Consequential Amendments\) Bill 2018](#)
- **New** [Corporations \(Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander\) Amendment \(Strengthening Governance and Transparency\) Bill 2018](#)

Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade Legislation Committee

- [Defence Amendment \(Sovereign Naval Shipbuilding\) Bill 2018](#)
Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade References Committee
- [Use of the Quinoline anti-malarial drugs Mefloquine and Tafenoquine in the Australian Defence Force](#)
- [United Nations Sustainable Development Goals \(SDG\)](#)
Legal and Constitutional Affairs Legislation Committee
- **New** [Sex Discrimination Amendment \(Removing Discrimination Against Students\) Bill 2018](#)
- **New** [National Integrity \(Parliamentary Standards\) Bill 2018 \[Provisions\]](#)
- **New** [Migration Amendment \(Streamlining Visa Processing\) Bill 2018 \[Provisions\]](#)
- **New** [National Integrity Commission Bill 2018 \(No. 2\)](#)
- **New** [National Integrity Commission Bill 2018 \[Provisions\]](#)
- [Migration Amendment \(Strengthening the Character Test\) Bill 2018](#)
- [Federal Circuit and Family Court of Australia Bill 2018, Federal Circuit and Family Court of Australia \(Consequential Amendments and Transitional Provisions\) Bill 2018](#)
- [Freedom of Speech Legislation Amendment \(Censorship\) Bill 2018, Freedom of Speech Legislation Amendment \(Insult and Offend\) Bill 2018, Freedom of Speech Legislation Amendment \(Security\) Bill 2018](#)
- [Australian Citizenship Legislation Amendment \(Strengthening the Commitments for Australian Citizenship and Other Measures\) Bill 2018](#)
- [Judiciary Amendment \(Commonwealth Model Litigant Obligations\) Bill 2017](#)
Legal and Constitutional Affairs References Committee
- [The effectiveness of the current temporary skilled visa system in targeting genuine skills shortages](#)
- [The practice of dowry and the incidence of dowry abuse in Australia](#)
Red Tape Committee
- [Policy and process to limit and reduce red tape](#)
Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport Legislation Committee
- **New** [Agricultural and Veterinary Chemicals Legislation Amendment \(Streamlining Regulation\) Bill 2018](#)
- [Performance of Airservices Australia](#)
Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport References Committee
- **New** [The provision of rescue, firefighting and emergency response at Australian airports](#)
- **New** [The policy, regulatory, taxation, administrative and funding priorities for Australian shipping](#)
- [The independence of regulatory decisions made by the Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority \(APVMA\)](#)
- [The operation, regulation and funding of air route service delivery to rural, regional and remote communities](#)
Select Committee into the obesity epidemic in Australia
- [Obesity Epidemic in Australia](#)
Select Committee on Charity Fundraising in the 21st Century
- [Charity Fundraising in the 21st Century](#)
Select Committee on Electric Vehicles
- [Electric Vehicles](#)
Select Committee on Stillbirth Research and Education
- [Stillbirth Research and Education](#)
Standing Committee of Privileges
- [Development of a foreign influence transparency scheme to apply to parliamentarians](#)
- [Possible improper interference with a Senator in the free performance of his duties](#)
- [Disposition of material obtained in the execution of a search warrant](#)
Standing Committee on Regulations and Ordinances
- **New** [Parliamentary Scrutiny of Delegated Legislation](#)