



## Senator Claire Moore

**WEEKLY UPDATE: 1<sup>st</sup> March, 2019**

Phone: (07) 3252 7101; email: [senator.moore@aph.gov.au](mailto:senator.moore@aph.gov.au);

Web: [www.clairemoore.net](http://www.clairemoore.net); Twitter: [www.twitter.com/SenClaireMoore](https://twitter.com/SenClaireMoore);

[www.facebook.com/SenatorClaireMoore](https://www.facebook.com/SenatorClaireMoore);



### THIS WEEK:

*The public revelation of the conviction of Cardinal George Pell on sexual abuse charges dominated the media. Every day, information on the closed trial, the appeal process, conditions in the various prisons around the state of Victoria and a range of commentary on all things Pell, Catholic Church and child abuse have competed for attention.*

*It is a very difficult time for all involved and for every person who has been the victim of sexual abuse.*

*It is critical that we are aware of the impact of this media coverage and speculation, and also the availability of support services if required.*

*Next week, on the 8<sup>th</sup> of March, is International Women's Day!*

*There are many events across the state to celebrate and remember the importance of equality.*

*Check out the state website, and enjoy!*

<https://www.eventbrite.com.au/d/australia--brisbane-city/international-womens-day/>

SENATOR CLAIRE MOORE, LABOR SENATOR FOR QUEENSLAND

Senator Claire Moore  
[www.clairemoore.net](http://www.clairemoore.net)



### CLAIRE'S WEEKLY UPDATE NEWSLETTER

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## WHAT'S BEING SAID ...

### PELL JUDGEMENT - PLIBERSEK – PERTH

*"We can't disregard our legal system when it throws up results that we find shocking or distressing, and secondly, one of the reasons that child sexual abuse has been so widespread and so pervasive, so hard to prosecute and so hard to stop, is we believe the powerful adult not the vulnerable child. We need a system in Australia that believes the vulnerable child not the powerful adult. I'm very proud of the fact that our court system has shown that no one in Australia is above the law. Everyone's entitled to fair process under the law but no one is above the law."*



### PELL JUDGEMENT - DREYFUS- ABC RADIO - MELBOURNE

"This is a finding by 12 members of the jury who heard evidence over about a four week period, who deliberated over three-and-a-half days. The commentators who are keenly picking over what they believe to be small pieces of exculpatory evidence and use that to attack this verdict reached by 12 Australian citizens - I think it's quite wrong."

### PELL JUDGEMENT- WONG – OSBOURNE – SOUTH AUSTRALIA

"John Howard has made a grave error of judgement, a grave error of judgement, an untenable error of judgement in my personal view."

"It is incomprehensible that you would say, of somebody who has been convicted of these crimes, that that would not change your view about his character. It is incomprehensible."

### PELL JUDGEMENT - KENEALLY- SKY NEWS

"This means that child sexual abuse now goes straight to the heart of the Vatican, and what I mean by that, Tom, is that Pope Francis and the hierarchy at the Vatican can no longer ignore this problem. They have been dancing around this for years, trying to pretend that these are isolated incidences. Not having a systemic response. Not having a strong and forthright response. Not honestly looking at the structures, the clericalism, the structure of the church that has allowed the abuse to foster, to continue to be hidden, and to be perpetrated."

**"The principal of the school that I went to is in jail." - Anthony Albanese**

### INSTITUTIONAL SEXUAL ABUSE - ALBANESE – RADIO 2GB - SYDNEY

"The institutions need to wake up to themselves and recognise that they have let down their communities and they have caused literally many suicides and trauma for the individuals who were abused. They've caused lasting damage to them, to their families and to society."

### INSTITUTIONAL SEXUAL ABUSE - WONG – OSBOURNE – SOUTH AUSTRALIA

"Child abuse is an abuse of power. It is an abuse of power that must be condemned, not only in respect of the perpetrator through the criminal justice system, but it must be condemned by all of us in leadership. All of those who lead institutions, all of those in positions of political authority, or community leaders, we must make it clear that those actions can never be condoned, can never be covered up as so many were, as we discovered to our great shame in the Royal Commission, and the perpetrators must be brought to justice."



### INSITUTIONAL SEXUAL ABUSE - ALBANESE – RADIO 2GB - SYDNEY

"All those people who do fantastic work in the Catholic Church, have been let down by some of the hierarchy and it requires a response from the top down. It requires contrition and it requires structural training and it requires a real response that recognises that the victims of abuse have had to suffer long-term and are entitled to proper compensation because they can't ever really, of course, be compensated."

### ROYAL COMMISSION INTO INSTITUTIONAL SEXUAL ABUSE - DREYFUS- ABC RADIO - MELBOURNE

"I'd want to pay tribute to Nicola Roxon, my predecessor as Attorney-General and Jenny Macklin, who is soon to retire because both of them had a very, very big hand in setting it up."

### GREEN MORRISON - PLIBERSEK – PERTH

"Well he is a pretty late convert to renewables isn't he, Scott Morrison, after dragging that lump of coal into the Parliament with him, his pet rock. This is a Prime Minister who has gone out of his way to talk down renewables and suddenly when he thinks that there might be a vote in it he is a late convert. I guess the thing that is most disappointing about Scott Morrison's policies in this area is that he has just reheated Tony Abbott's failed Direct Action policy. So Tony Abbott spent two and a quarter billion dollars on taxpayers money and pollution has gone up. So he spent two and a quarter billion dollars of taxpayers money and pollution has gone up. Now Scott Morrison says now I am going to spend \$2 billion on the same policy and we are expected to believe that pollution is going to go down? Honestly, give me a break."

### THE PORTER BUS -PLIBERSEK – PERTH

"You've got now an Attorney General that apparently forgot that someone had lent them a bus. It just makes no sense to have a government that is so focused on its mates and cronies and so little focused on the future of our young people."

### THE PORTER BUS - ALBANESE –PERTH

**ALBANESE:** "Well I've seen the bus and I've seen Christian Porter standing in front of it with a super-duper Christian Porter big sign."

**PETERSON:** Would you catch it?

**ALBANESE:** No, I think that that bus is stalled and it's like the Government, it's rusted and it's just dealing with itself. It doesn't go anywhere. That's the problem; it doesn't move forward."

### MATES RATES - O'NEIL- ABC RADIO –MELBOURNE

"And it's not just Christian Porter appointing his mates to the AAT and taking a bus for free from a former staffer and then giving him a political job, it is things like the HelloWorld scandal where we've got the Federal Treasurer of the Liberal Party who's been given a special opportunity to get a government contract, we've got the Paladin issue where Home Affairs is giving a contract worth hundreds of millions of dollars to this two-bit company that hardly existed before."

### FINANCIAL CONSUMER HELP - O'NEIL - MELBOURNE

*"This is a \$640 million fund that will pay for better services for people who are in conflict with a financial institution. Yesterday we announced that about half of that money is going to go to financial counselling.*

*This is a crucial service. It is often the last line between bankruptcy, between someone losing their house, between a woman who leaving her home who is in enormous financial distress. So we are going to double the number of financial counsellors in Australia, assisting an additional 120,000 Australians every year."*

#### **ELECTION ADVERTISING - PLIBERSEK – PERTH**

*"Now if you stopped the average parent in the street and said "Would you rather have your kid's school properly funded or do you want to see more government advertising on TV?" I'm pretty sure you know what the answer would be. So this is a government that prioritises using tax payer funds to spruik what a terrific job it says it's doing, to tax payers who are sick to the back teeth of the money being spent on advertising, the special deals for mates, the cronies getting access to high paid jobs. They're sick of this government acting only for itself, not acting for the people of Australia."*

#### **ELECTION ADVERTISING - PLIBERSEK – PERTH**

*"This is just outrage piled on top of outrage. They won't properly fund our public schools, they're going slow on the disability Royal Commission, they're saying they need the states and territories to fund it even though the states and territories haven't funded the Banking Royal Commission or the Child Abuse Royal Commission and now on top of the \$600,000 of taxpayer's money they're wasting every day on advertising, they want to do even more political advertising using taxpayer funds"*

#### **ELECTION ADVERTISING - PLIBERSEK – PERTH**

*"We will seek to disallow the regulations, we'll try and stop it through the Parliament but if we can't stop it through the Parliament we'll make people pay back the money. People should, Members of Parliament should not be using tax payer funds to run political ads. Full stop. We'll stop it, if we can't stop it we'll make them repay what they've spent."*

#### **EDUCATIONAL DISPARITY - PLIBERSEK – SPEECH - TO THE UNIVERSITIES AUSTRALIA CONFERENCE**

*"I think it is a serious failing of our system that someone on the North Shore of Sydney is four times more likely to have a degree than someone in Outback Northern Territory. And the fact remains that regional and remote Australia consistently has a much lower education attainment rate than urban Australia."*

#### **SUBBIES - SHORTEN – TOWNSVILLE**

*"And where would we be without our tradies? And this is really what our announcement is about today. Australia is built on the back of our subbies. Yet when there is bad behaviour by big companies, it is the subbies who pay the*

*David Rowe*

*price. This has to stop. So I'm really pleased to announce that a Federal Labor government is going to protect our subbies from the poor performance and bad behaviour of some of the bigger builders."*

#### **SUBBIES - LEIGH – TOWNSVILLE**

*"Our medium term agenda is to make sure that for all large projects - public or private, we've got cascading trusts set up in place. This is an idea proposed by John Murray, he's no barracker of the Labor Party - a former head of Master Builders Australia. It's something that comes out of a review headed by Doug Cameron in the Senate. It's an important idea whose time has come."*

#### **PHOENIX COMPANIES -LEIGH – TOWNSVILLE**

*"One estimate says that the cost of phoenix activity to the economy every year is \$5 billion. \$1 billion on taxpayers, \$1 billion on workers and \$3 billion on subcontractors. Brendan O'Connor and I announced in 2017, that a Shorten Labor government will put in place director identification number, dealing with the problem that right now, it is easier to become a director than to open a bank account. As one expert said, the rules are so lax, you can almost register your dog as a company director."*

#### **FRANKING CREDITS - LEIGH RADIO 5AA ADELAIDE**

*"It's not the way franking credits worked when Paul Keating introduced it in 1987. It was changed in 2001. So there's a group of taxpayers - 8 per cent of taxpayers - who don't pay the Tax Office, they get paid by the Tax Office."*

#### **FRANKING CREDITS- ALBANESE – RADIO 2GB - SYDNEY**

*"When it was introduced by the Howard Government at a time when we had the huge boom and we had money going out the door, you had one-off payments and various measures that cost just \$550 million a year. It's now \$6 billion. There is nowhere in the world that gives people – essentially a tax rebate is what it is designed for imputation – it is not a tax rebate if you haven't paid any tax."*

#### **TAX JUSTICE - LEIGH RADIO 5AA ADELAIDE**

*"I don't want Australia to be a country with the biggest tax loopholes in the world. I want us to be the country with the best services in the world, the best quality of life."*

#### **FRANKING CREDITS- ALBANESE – RADIO 2GB - SYDNEY**

*"Eighty per cent of the benefit, 80 percent of that \$6 billion, accrues to the wealthiest 20 per cent of retirees. And the top 1 percent of self-managed super funds receive a cash refund on average of \$83,000. Now this is an amount at a time when the median income in Australia is \$57,000. This huge, huge cash payment."*

#### **FRANKING CREDITS - KENEALLY- SKY NEWS**

*"Remember that a franking credit for excess credits is a tax refund to people who pay no tax. So we have a system that is totally skewed – a subset of investors – retirees – to invest in Australian shares, simply so that they can get that free cash from the government."*

#### **FRANKING CREDITS- ALBANESE – RADIO 2GB - SYDNEY**

*"When Bob Hawke and Paul Keating introduced it, the imputation system, they certainly didn't allow for a payment to be made if tax hadn't been paid."*

## **NEGATIVE GEARING POLICY ATTACKS - PLIBERSEK – PERTH**

*"This is a continuation of a scare campaign from a government that has got nothing left in the tank. This is a government that can't run on its record; cuts to schools, cuts to hospitals, historic low wages growth, historic high under employment, flat lining standards of living, in fact standards of living are even going backwards. It can't run on its record. It can't run on unity (inaudible) and it can't run on its vision for the future, because it has no vision for the future,"*

## **HOUSING CRISIS - CAMERON – BRIDGEWATER – TASMANIA**

*"This is a crisis across the country, the issue of housing and homelessness. We have a Federal government who has abandoned any pretence to doing anything about housing and homelessness and they see this simply as a matter for the State government.*

*Labor takes a completely different view on this. We take the view that this is a huge social issue, it's a massive economic issue and it's an issue that we need to deal with so that we can build a decent society in this country."*

## **ADANI - PLIBERSEK – PERTH**

*"We have said all along that no taxpayer funding should go to this project, and that it would have to stack up environmentally and economically, and I have got to say there has been precious little example of that in recent times."*

## **ABC CHAIRPERSON - WONG – OSBOURNE – SOUTH AUSTRALIA**

*The Government's continued cuts, but also political attacks, both by senior people and by backbenchers on the ABC has been to the detriment of Australian democracy. I hope Ms Buttrose will stand up to the Liberals on these issues.*

## **ABC CHAIRPERSON - PLIBERSEK – ABC RADIO DRIVE**

*"What I'm disappointed about is the process that the Government has used in making this appointment. They've spent \$168,000 of taxpayer's money on a headhunting process and then they've ignored all of the results. They've completely abandoned the convention of consulting with the Opposition on an appointment like this, when we were last in government we tried to take the politics out of ABC appointments, Scott Morrison of course has completely ignored that convention."*

## **DISABILITY ROYAL COMMISSION - PLIBERSEK – PERTH**

*"What are we waiting for? I mean Labor has supported the Royal Commission into the Abuse, Neglect and Discrimination Against People with a Disability for two years. This has come out of a Senate report that was even earlier than that. We've dragged the Government kicking and screaming to agreeing to a Royal Commission. Now Scott Morrison is adding delay and uncertainty because he's saying the states should pay for it. Well the states didn't pay for the Banking Royal Commission; the states didn't pay for the Royal Commission into the Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse. Why is this Royal Commission different?"*

## **LIBERALS & WOMEN- KENEALLY- SKY NEWS**

*"Of the 58 Lower House members the Liberal Party has, 11 are women and four are leaving at the next election, and no surprise, Tom, because the Liberal Party – well, quite frankly, the men in the Liberal Party are Neanderthals. They belong in a cave man era. They treat women as second-class citizens."*

## **REFUGEES - PLIBERSEK – PERTH**

*"If this Government had actually found permanent homes, resettled the people who are on Manus Island and Nauru, we wouldn't even be having this discussion. There's an abject failure of this government to find permanent resettlement options for people on Manus Island and Nauru, why they won't accept New Zealand's offer to resettle people from Nauru is absolutely beyond me."*

## **QUOTES OF THE WEEK**

*"At some point, we realise that we trusted someone we should have feared and we fear those genuine relationships that we should trust." - A victim of Pell*

*"Cardinal Pell is a person of both high intelligence and exemplary character. Strength and sincerity have always been features of his personality," he said. "I have always found him to be lacking hypocrisy and cant. "In his chosen vocation he has frequently displayed much courage and held to his values and beliefs." - John Howard*

*"None of these matters alter my opinion" - John Howard*

*"He [Pell] has waged religious and cultural war in Australia and the world to prevent any deviation from the Catholic church's arcane and convoluted position on homosexuality, contraception and much more." - Guy Rundle (Crikey)*

*"Pell has been convicted of child sexual assault. That may be overturned on appeal. Neither result will change my opinion that he's the sort of Catholic focused on worldly power, Church authority, unreasoned reactionary values and lacking, publicly at least, in the values of love and humility presented in the Gospels." - Guy Rundle (Crikey)*

*"It is the policy you have when the cupboard is empty and the Liberals are ready to shoot anybody in the family keen to try anything different. Because the Liberals cannot agree on the future they have returned to the past." - Paul Kelly (the Australian commenting on Prime Minister Morrison's 'new' environment policy.*

*"He is a racist. He is a conman. He is a cheat." - Liar Michael Cohen on Donald Trump*



*"I do dress as a clown occasionally; I've been known to do karaoke." - Nick Champion*

### IDIOTIC QUOTE OF THE WEEK

*"I don't want to see Australians who are in waiting lines at public hospitals kicked off those waiting lines because people from Nauru and Manus are now going to access those health services." — Peter Dutton*

*[They may be able to teach ethics to killer robots but doing the same to Dutton would be a bridge too far Ed.]*

## GLIMPSES OF THE WEEK

### WHISTLE BLOWN - Eriyk Bagshaw (SMH)

An Australian Tax Office whistleblower facing 161 years in prison for exposing misconduct by the ATO will not be protected by new laws passed by Parliament designed to shield those who lift the lid on abuses by Australia's most powerful bodies.

The new whistleblower protections only apply to corporations, not government employees, leaving whistleblowers exposed.

Former Tax Office official Richard Boyle has been charged with 66 offences, including telephone tapping and recording of conversations without the consent of all parties and making a record of protected information, and in some cases passing that information to a third party. He faces the prospect of six life sentences, more than three times that of Bourke Street mass murderer James Gargasoulas.

Boyle, concerned about the ATO's excessive debt collection tactics, tried and failed to have his concerns investigated internally, before blowing the lid last year.

His revelations, including directives to automatically seize funds from small business and individual accounts, blew the lid on alleged abuses by the ATO.

It prompted a joint investigation by [The Age](#), [The Sydney Morning Herald](#) and [ABC](#) that triggered legal action from Tax Office Commissioner Chris Jordan.

Ken Phillips, the executive director of Independent Contractors of Australia, said the ATO's pursuit of Mr Boyle was another attempt to "cook him slowly".

"Certainly in our view, the behaviour of the ATO towards Richard is very much an attempt to send a signal: 'We are doing to Richard what we can do to you if you are whistleblower'."

Labor has pledged to bring existing private and public whistleblowing laws under a single Whistleblowing Act and establish a Whistleblower Protection Authority with a rewards scheme.

### PALADIN

Local Paladin employees have walked off the job providing security to Manus Island refugees and asylum seekers, citing low pay and poor working conditions following weeks of scrutiny over the company's contracting history.

According to [The Guardian](#), Papua New Guinean employees at Pomwan Paladin Security have petitioned management and held sit-ins citing overtime, risk allowances, and cuts as key concerns. The protests, which follow the [AFR's \(\\$\) investigation](#) into Paladin's \$423 million contract with the Australian government, have reportedly led to hospital, cleaning and transport staff walking off the job over safety fears which, understandably, have [also been expressed by detainees](#)

### MORE LIES

Seems Treasurer Josh Frydenberg has joined the Liberal team of Liars with an outstanding display at full back, this from the New Daily ;

The Treasurer issued a "housing tax warning" following a '[housing industry round table](#)' at Parliament House last Monday, attended by property industry and investor interest groups, with renters, first-home buyers, and affordable housing advocates notably not invited.

"Bill Shorten must listen to the experts, admit Labor got this one wrong and ditch their big new housing taxes," Mr Frydenberg said following the meeting.

However, when questioned by The New Daily, Mr Frydenberg's office was unable to provide the names of any economists or housing academics from Australian universities whose research supports the Treasurer's claims that Labor's proposed policy of limiting negative gearing to new homes and reducing the capital gains tax discount from 50 to 25 per cent will "have a significant detrimental impact on Australia's housing market and the broader economy".

Mr Frydenberg's claims that the reforms would drive up rents and tank the economy have been dismissed by academics, tenants groups, and affordable housing organisations as a "[scare campaign](#)".

Despite failing to provide any non-industry-sponsored evidence in support of his claims – ignoring repeated requests from The New Daily – the Treasurer doubled down, claiming the government had the backing of a "growing list of independent economists".

But he can't name one.

Grattan Institute budget policy director Danielle Wood said that it was "confusing, bordering on misleading" for the government to talk about "the distributional effects of the policy in this way".

"Around 60 percent of negative gearers have taxable incomes less than \$80,000 but so do 80 percent of Australians. And this also ignores the fact that negative gearers have lower taxable incomes because they are negatively gearing," Ms Wood said.



While it is true that some lower-income Australians negatively gear, negative gearing is "more common and the tax benefits are much larger for those on higher incomes," Ms Wood pointed out.

"For example, the share of anaesthetists negatively gearing is almost triple that for nurses, and the average tax benefits they receive are around 11 times higher," she said.

"Overall, the top 10 per cent of income earners receive almost 70 per cent of the capital gains and 50 per cent of the tax benefit from negative gearing after you adjust their incomes for rental losses."

**ANOTHER BIG FAT LIE - Nicole Hasham (SMH)**

The Australian Border Force has admitted it curtailed ocean patrols to save money on fuel, contradicting Home Affairs Minister Peter Dutton's claims that the agency did not reduce its marine presence.

The admission casts doubt over the Morrison government's border protection strategy as it engages in a political fight with Labor over the medical transfers of refugees at Manus Island and Nauru.

### STACKING

Attorney-General Christian Porter has appointed one of his own ex-advisers, William Frost, to the Administrative Appeals Tribunals just two months after the staffer left Porter's office.

The Sydney Morning Herald reports that Porter appointed Frost to the tribunal on a seven-year, full-time contract that pays up to \$244,520 a year. While Porter has defended Frost's legal credentials, the news coincides with calls from the Law Council for an overhaul of AAT's selection process and follows revelations from The Western Australian that a company headed by another new appointee, former Liberal minister Joseph Francis, lent Porter a campaign bus.

### FREE QUEENSLAND

It has taken 60 years, but human rights will finally be enshrined in law in Queensland.

Queenslanders will have protections for 23 human rights, such as freedom of expression, religion and privacy, and a right to education and health, after the Human Rights Bill passed on Wednesday afternoon.

Australia does not have a national bill of rights like the US, but Victoria and the Australian Capital Territory have introduced human rights laws.

The Queensland Attorney-General said; "The intention of this bill is to put human rights at the centre of public sector decision-making and to establish a mechanism whereby individuals aggrieved by decisions of public entities may have their issues resolved in a way that is accessible and focused on practical outcomes," People will not be able to launch a standalone legal action to sue for compensation if they believe their human rights have been breached.

But they will be able to "piggyback" a human rights claim on to another claim.

The Anti-Discrimination Commission will be rebranded as the Queensland Human Rights Commission to hear complaints.

### WILDERNESS WIN

A Tasmanian council has blocked a contentious private tourism development with helicopter access in the state's world heritage wilderness.

The luxury camp proposal for remote Halls Island on Lake Malbena, in the Walls of Jerusalem national park, had been waved through by the Morrison government in August against the recommendation of expert advisory bodies.

The Liberal state government, which has strongly backed the development, immediately flagged the likelihood of an appeal.

Environmentalists said the decision was a win against the state's push for more commercial tourism in national parks and the vast Tasmanian Wilderness World Heritage Area, which covers about one-fifth of the island.

The proposal by eco-tourism business Wild Drake would involve tourists being flown in and out of a permanent campsite constructed on the island. It would cater for up to six visitors at a time interested in bushwalking, kayaking and learning about the area's cultural history.

At a public meeting on Tuesday, the Central Highlands council rejected the proposal six votes to three. Some councillors were critical of state and federal authorities for leaving the decision on a development in the world heritage area to local officials. Some said they believed it did not fit with Parks and Wildlife Service policies.

### HURRAH!

The Australian Federation of Disability Organisations was awarded the Public Advocates Award for 2019

<https://www.publicadvocate.vic.gov.au/media-releases/321-afdo-presented-with-2019-public-advocate-award>

### STINKING HOT

Australia has recorded both its hottest ever summer and highest ever greenhouse gas emissions. The Guardian reports that the 2018-19 summer saw mean temperatures at least 2 degrees above the 27.5 degree benchmark of "normal" 1961-1990 figures. This is a considerable spike compared to the previous record holder, 2012-13, which saw a mean increase of 1.28 degrees.

The figures come as the Department of Energy reports an emissions increase of 0.9% in the year to September 2018, another record when you drop the "negative" land use sector, just days after the Coalition confirmed plans to effectively halve its Paris obligations using Kyoto "carry-over credits".

### SINGLE FEMALE PARENTS TARGETED - Charlie Lewis (Crikey)

[The Senate inquiry into the ParentsNext pre-employment program for single parents has produced some telling and sad facts including a petition from 34,000 participants calling for the program to be voluntary and here's why. Ed]

Nominally a pre-employment program designed to engage single parents with their community, ParentsNext requires people to attend compulsory activities every week — say, story time or playgroup. If they fail to do this (or just report it within a strict time-frame) their parenting payment is suspended.

I say single parents, but this is a program aimed at women. Particularly poor women. Particularly poor Indigenous women. Ninety-five per cent of participants are single women, and more than 16,000 (roughly one in five) parents on the program had their payments suspended within the first six months. The suspension rate for Indigenous participants is more than one in four.



The program has been severely criticised as pointless, demeaning and intrusive, and it's not hard to see why. Providers are essentially able to design an activity plan as they see fit and suspend payments at will. If there is a dispute, the arbiter is the provider. This leads to mothers forced into signing privacy waivers, having their medical records accessed without permission, and having to message their provider pictures of their day, proving they are attending whatever compulsory activity they've been set. Often ParentsNext is the only source of income the parent has and poverty is, if not already a reality, a trapdoor beneath everything they do. The power imbalance is staggering.

The Coalition representative, Senator Lucy Gichuhi, is present via teleconference; she doesn't ask a single question of the affected witnesses until the job providers turn up after lunch. The "no" that crackles from the speakers every time she's asked if she has anything to add is so clipped and uninflected it might as well be a staffer with a tape recorder.



**[And in another sad reflection on our society's priorities. Ed]**

People at the franking credits inquiry shout from the back and **declare they might as well be euthanised** because they might stop receiving a rebate on tax they don't pay. One gets serious airtime, a national debate, while no one turns up — the ABC, Age and all the commercial networks all pass — to the other.

Australian Council of Social Service CEO Cassandra Goldie; "There is an assumption that single mothers don't know themselves, and what they need. That's not true — it's just minister after minister in this area hasn't asked them."

There is a "yes!" that emanates from the crowd and reverberates around the small conference room. It's the loudest interjection we get on a day more often characterised by a sigh and a quiet, disbelieving shake of the head.

## HOME SWEET HOME

Some of Australia's most vulnerable citizens are being left to languish without homes and hope on years-long waiting lists as the nation's funding-starved social housing system groans under the weight of demand, research shows.

Government-funded social housing is the key to a better life for many of Australia's most vulnerable citizens — from victims of family violence to people with disabilities and those experiencing homelessness — a new report by the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare states.

However, while "having a roof over one's head is generally regarded as essential to a person's health and wellbeing", not all Australians have "the same access to safe and affordable housing", the AIHW found.

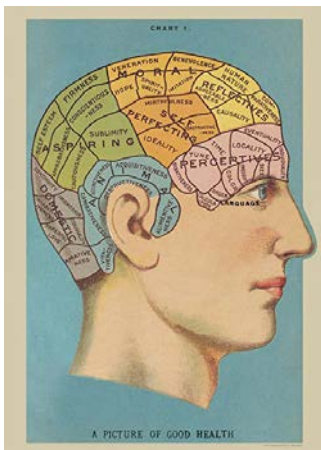
With **195,000 Australian** households currently on the waiting list, however, many face the prospect of years without a home.

## ISRAEL WAR CRIMES

United Nations investigators have found that Israeli security forces may have committed war crimes in killing 189 Palestinians and wounding more than 6,100 during last year's Gaza protests.

**The ABC reports** that the UN Human Rights Council has released a report that, based on hundreds of interviews, medical records and direct footage, found Israeli forces killed and injured civilians who weren't "participating in hostilities". The independent investigation, which Australia **notably opposed alongside the US**, further revealed it has information on snipers and commanders responsible for the civilian killings. The Israeli government has rejected the report as a "theatre of the absurd".

## GOOD HEALTH



Australia has just been dubbed the seventh-healthiest country in the world, making it one of the only English-speaking nations to edge into the top 10.

The 2019 Bloomberg Index ranked 169 nations, with Spain taking out top spot, while fellow Mediterranean frontrunner, Italy, dropped down to second place.

Japan was the best-performing Asian country in fourth place. Rounding out the top 10 were: Iceland (third), Switzerland (fifth), Sweden (sixth), Singapore (eighth), Norway (ninth) and Israel (10th).

Other countries to make the top 20 included Canada (16th), New Zealand (18th), the United Kingdom (19th) and Ireland (20th).

Meanwhile, the United States came in at 35, behind Chile and Costa Rica, which tied at 33.

## ANNING'S NAME CHALLENGED — Courier-Mail

Fraser Anning's attempts to register a self-titled political party before the election have hit another snag, with the National party and others challenging the application. The proposed name of Fraser Anning's National Conservative Party, and its abbreviation National Conservatives, was slammed as being too close to the National Party. Seven objectors accused the name of being "misleading", "hucksterism" and a

"transparent and frankly ridiculous attempt to hitch his wagon to an established state and federal political party". The Opposition could see its registration delayed, as the deadline to be registered in time for the election looms.

## DEFLATING ENERGY- AFR

Business and consumer groups have accused Prime Minister Scott Morrison of "nakedly political pork barrelling" and "an egregious lack of process" over \$3.5 billion in energy announcements.

Mr Morrison virtually anointed his fourth big-ticket energy project for the week in Tasmania on Wednesday, backing feasibility studies into three pumped hydro projects in Tasmania and saying that if they pass muster and the government is re-elected it will underwrite them in two years' time.

On Monday and Tuesday Mr Morrison committed \$1.4 billion to Snowy Hydro's \$4.5 billion Snowy 2.0 expansion, \$2 billion to reboot its Emissions Reduction Fund for another 10 years, and \$56 million towards building the Marinus Link — a second high-voltage interconnector that aims to connect Tasmania's abundance of hydro resources with the mainland Victoria.



The Federal Government owns Snowy Hydro but hasn't released a business case and industry believes Snowy 2.0 will be uneconomic and discourage cheaper options that could be built more quickly. T

he Emissions Reduction Fund has failed to arrest growing carbon emissions, the government's new generation underwriting program hasn't been finalised let alone resulted in a request for proposals going out to the market, and new interconnectors have to go through the Australian Energy Regulator's stringent investment test to earn a regulated return.

*"There are deep-seated concerns across the industry about what appears to be nakedly political pork barrelling and an egregious lack of process or transparency," one power industry executive – speaking on condition of anonymity because of the pre-election atmosphere – an executive from another power company said, "It's extremely disappointing but not unexpected. This is the behaviour we've come to expect from this government, who are happy to put politics ahead of economic outcomes for the community."*

This executive said the Prime Minister's announcement of the conditional underwriting of the Tasmanian hydro projects came as private bidders for the generation underwriting program would struggle to finalise their bids in the five weeks remaining before the government is likely to go into "caretaker mode" for the election due to be held by May 18. *"Clearly this is about the politics of securing an outcome to announce,"* he said.

The government has found its lack of climate and energy policies a liability in inner-city seats in the Wentworth by-election in Sydney and the Victorian state election, and is seeking to claw back ground from Labor. An executive with a third company said the money for pumped hydro feasibility in Tasmania was small beer for "a few headlines" but the cost of a second interconnector from Tasmania to Victoria – about \$2.5 million per megawatt of capacity on top of the cost of generating the power – was "not competitive compared to other mainland gas or pumped hydro projects", making the economics "unworkable".

As for Snowy 2.0 the Federal Government has already spent \$6 billion buying out the stake held by the NSW and Victoria governments, but the new \$1.4 billion cash injection into Snowy Hydro from Federal taxpayers funds bodes ill. It suggests that Snowy Hydro is struggling to make the numbers for Snowy 2.0 add up.

Paul Hyslop, from ACIL Allen, [wrote a detailed analysis last year questioning the financial metrics of the Snowy scheme](#), which will deliver 2,000MW of pumped hydro capacity and 175 hours of storage. Hyslop said Snowy 2.0 would deliver a "fraction" of the assumed market benefits to its owner, and such a huge scheme could struggle against competing technologies.

Hyslop is not the only one to question the economic feasibility of Snowy 2.0, or its impact on emissions. Last year, Marsden Mascons observed that the result of Snowy 2.0 would likely be to "improve the economics of coal-fired generation" without a significant increase in renewables.

*[The whole thing could end up costing upwards of \$8 Billion or is it \$14 Billion and yet it's being taken to an election as a centrepiece in the Morrison government's futile attempts to re-badge itself as ...green and it does so with no detail, no business plan and no transparency. Ed]*

**TRUMPISM – Michael Cohen**



*"Mr. Trump directed me to find a straw bidder to purchase a portrait of him that was being auctioned at an Art Hamptons Event. The objective was to ensure that his portrait, which was going to be auctioned last, would go for the highest price of any portrait that afternoon. The portrait was purchased by the fake bidder for \$60,000. Mr. Trump directed the Trump Foundation, which is supposed to be a charitable organization, to repay the fake bidder, despite keeping the art for himself."*

*WELL I'LL BE*

The federal government did not require a woman to be shortlisted for the role of ABC chairman and the all-male recommendations were, in practice, made by an all-female nominations panel. Prime Minister Scott Morrison expressed surprise and disappointment that the nominations panel did not shortlist a woman. Sources said there was no such requirement and the independent panel's only male member sat out for large parts of the process because of illness. The

government did not mandate a female candidate be shortlisted, which is common practice in management and board appointments in corporate Australia.

### **IT'S NOT JUST THE BANKS BEHAVING BADLY**

The Telecommunications Industry Ombudsman has slammed Telcos for selling long-term post-paid mobile phone plans without adequately checking whether their customers are in a position to pay. The Ombudsman said commissions were encouraging salespeople to sell as many plans and add-ons as possible, leading to "high-pressure sale environments or a lack of care in assessing the circumstances of vulnerable and financially disadvantaged customers"

Between January and June 2018, the TIO received 7411 complaints from customers struggling with debt through their telco plans. That was 10.2 per cent of all complaints.

**NOT GREEN BUT BLACK** (*Renew Economy – Claims to be Australia's best informed and most read web-site focusing on clean energy news and analysis, as well as climate policy.*)

Prime Minister Morrison's attempts to now wrap his government in the green flag of environmental carers is, especially given their horrendous track record of denial and in action on climate change and energy policy, nothing more than spin

His just announced Tasmanian Hydro Scheme may not be quite as green as its promoters want to make out. The modelling prepared by Tas Networks – which wants to build the new link to the mainland – warns of vast impacts on generation and storage investments in Tasmania and elsewhere. And the biggest winner, according to the modelling, is likely to be black coal in NSW.



That may seem at odds with another conclusion of the modelling for the so-called Marinus Link – that its economic value depends on a rapid transition to renewables, and a rapid exit of coal power.

But it's not: Government-owned entities are less concerned about making money, and Morrison has made clear that this investment is not about emissions and not about making money either.

Just to demonstrate that, he has thrown \$1.4 billion at Snowy Hydro that the company says it didn't ask for, and is offering the "battery of the nation" project an underwriting contract for a pumped hydro project it has not even identified.

No, this is about politics and particularly the "politics of keeping the lights on", and making government look like it is Doing Something. The result is a spending spree and a fishing expedition of extraordinary proportions.

Indeed, the modelling for the projects – those conducted for and on behalf of the developers of the federal government-owned Snowy Hydro and the Tasmania government utilities – shows the very opposite, as does the modelling conducted by the Australian Energy Market Operator in its Integrated System Plan.

The overwhelming conclusion of all three? In the absence of a mighty quick transition to renewables, they are both great for coal generation of some sort, the very same that have underpinned the extraordinary price jump in the wholesale market in the last two years, and which are still belching out emissions.

It doesn't accelerate the exit of black coal at all. It does the reverse.

It delivers a huge boost for black coal (over the base case) in the late 2020s, when it displaces a mix of brown coal and gas, and some solar, and another boost for black coal again in the early 2040s. Solar doesn't get any benefit until the mid-2030s, and even then it is small. Wind energy has to wait until the mid-2040s until the negative impacts on those developments are reversed.

It looks, feels and smells like pork barrelling at its worst. Even the AFR is calling out this "naked pork barrelling" and egregious lack of process.

Indeed, if these ideas are so good, let's have some modelling, and some vision about the future, so it can be shown that these projects beat others on economics and environmental grounds, and are more than just PR and BS.

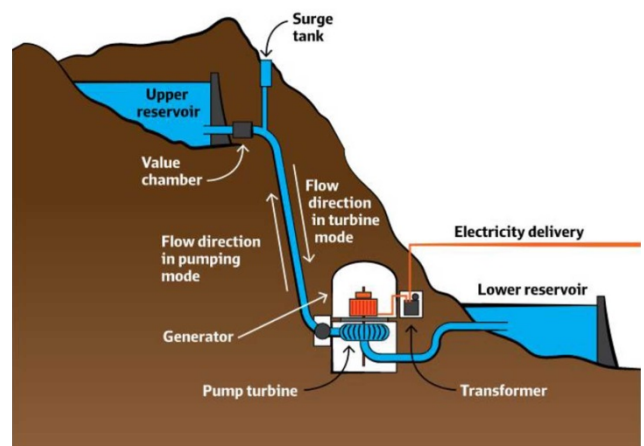
Snowy Hydro has declared it did not require a \$1.4 billion equity delivered by the Morrison government to get the Snowy 2.0 project off the ground, as energy experts said they were "highly sceptical" the 2000MW pumped-hydro plant would deliver a promised 8-9 per cent return to taxpayers.

"What we are talking about here is reliable, renewable energy," the Prime Minister said. "It's absolutely fair-dinkum power. It doesn't get more fair dinkum than this." The total cost of the project is now estimated at about \$12bn,

The Snowy Hydro CEO, who is yet to release the full business case for the project, said Snowy 2.0 would deliver an 8-9 per cent return for taxpayers from 2025. But the Grattan Institute's Tony Wood said: "The numbers don't give you enough revenue to deliver that sort of return. I don't know anyone outside the company who thinks this is a good idea." Frontier Economics director Danny Price warned Snowy 2.0 was "guaranteed to be a commercial disaster". "If you include the full costs of Snowy, including the build cost, the \$6bn cost of buying the company, and the transmission costs, you need a spread between peak and off-peak generation of about \$250/MWh," he said. "That can never happen with Snowy because it drives up the off-peak price, and drives down the peak price."

Even conservative economics commentator for the Australian, Judith Sloan, said this:

Were the electricity market not so distorted, there would not be any economic case for Snowy 2.0. The project has been around for many years and it never stacked up. The cost and the execution risk made it a complete non-starter. The fact the Coalition government refuses to unpick the distortions in the market, rather than adding to them by promoting Snowy 2.0, is a sad indictment of where energy policy has landed



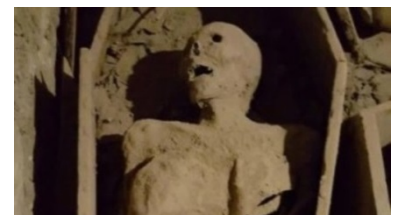
## CRUSADER BE-HEADED

The head of a mummified Crusader has been decapitated from its body and stolen from a crypt beneath a Dublin church. The crypts at St Michan's Church contain the mummified remains of Dublin families dating back to the 17th century. Its most famous occupant is known as the Crusader, a six-foot-six (198-centimetre) soldier lain to rest 800 years ago. But on Monday, a guide preparing to open the church to visitors discovered the crypts had been disturbed. Police said thieves had severed the head of the Crusader and taken it with them

## YOU PAY – THEY DON'T

The New Daily and Michael West count down the 10 biggest corporate tax dodgers in Australia. Return on Monday when we reveal the nation's eighth-biggest tax avoider.

How, after booking \$11.5 billion in total income over four years during the biggest building boom in history, does a construction materials manufacturer pay a touch under \$6 million in tax?



New Zealand's building products juggernaut, Fletcher Building (Australia), managed to do it.

Fletcher is the third Kiwi multinational in our Top 40. Along with New Zealand Milk (better known as Fonterra) at #26 and Burns Philp & Co at #39, the three trans-Tasman transnationals have recorded \$25 billion in total income over four years and paid, well, pocket fluff in income tax.

In Australia, Fletcher has admittedly taken some big hits to the likes of its Tradelink plumbing supplies business and Rocla Pipeline Products, while poor management decisions have battered profits – meaning a good deal of its tax avoidance might be deemed “accidental tax dodging” – but at the same time the business's parent company has been paying not just tax, but dividends as well. It (Fletcher's NZ parent) paid \$290 million income tax during the same four years of recorded tax office data that its Australian subsidiary – with more than one-third of the cash flows – paid \$5.7 million.

Over the following two years, the Kiwi parent paid \$177 million in tax, but its Aussie subsidiary, according to filings with the corporate regulator, paid just \$25 million.

There is a pattern here used by foreign multinationals operating in Australia; they pay little tax while they send off tens of millions of dollars in interest payments to their associated companies overseas.

This is achieved through a process called ‘debt loading’, where a foreign company makes a loan to its Australian subsidiary, which then sends money back as interest repayments rather than hanging on to it as taxable income.

**SICKENED – David Margan**

No other word for it as Morrison and Dutton claimed credit for removing the last children from Manus Island their gall and hypocrisy knows no bounds. It was they who used refugees to show how tough they were, who held them for five years in tropical limbo, who destroyed lives and minds and who steadfastly resisted legitimate medical transfers by challenging them through the courts only to invariably lose. Word really do fail me when it comes to these two supposed Christians.

Now Dutton is claiming Australians will miss out on health care because of que jumping refugees from Manus.

About 1000 refugees and asylum seekers remain there and on Nauru and independent Dr Phelps said only about 70 required treatment and it was “just cruel” of Mr Dutton to target “vulnerable Australians” with a false scare campaign.

According to the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, there were 701 public hospitals in Australia in 2015-16 with 61,000 hospital beds. A further 630 private hospitals provided another 33,100 beds. “We're talking about 70 people who are likely to need [an] urgent transfer. We know that the system has capacity to look after those people,” Dr Phelps said..

It was unclear how Mr Dutton's assertion was consistent with the government's previous insistence that refugees and asylum seekers would be taken to Christmas Island for their medical treatment.

But you don't have to be consistent when sowing fear.

**AGENDA**

A senior Registered Organisations Commission official believed Michaelia Cash “had an agenda” when she asked the agency to consider investigating donations made by the Australian Workers' Union when Bill Shorten was in charge. Commission executive director Chris Enright is giving evidence in Federal Court proceedings brought by the AWU which alleges Senator Cash wanted to discredit, embarrass or politically disadvantage Mr Shorten by referring the donations to the commission. The AWU referral was the only one made by the government to the commission but Senator Cash has denied her conduct was politically motivated.

**THIS IS PROGRESS!??**

The frontrunner to inherit Julie Bishop's prized Liberal seat of Curtin, former Notre Dame University chief Celia Hammond, once refused to describe herself as a feminist because she claimed the movement had become “pro-abortion, anti-men, anti-tradition and anti-family”. In a 2013 speech, Ms Hammond revealed her socially conservative views as she railed against sex before marriage, and contraception, while arguing against “militant feminism”. The staunch Catholic and mother of three made the comments in a speech to the Dawson Society for Philosophy and Culture in Perth.

The move is likely to halt a push from Ms Bishop's camp to install foreign affairs specialist Erin Watson-Lynn, 33, as her successor. While Ms Bishop and Ms Hammond know each other, they are not close. Relations between Ms Bishop and many of her Liberal colleagues have been strained since she lost last year's federal leadership spill. None of her WA colleagues voted for her in the ballot.

**WIDENING THE GAP**

Indigenous housing was always regarded as a major issue in the Closing the Gap agenda in that it contributed to poor health, violence, poor school attendance and child sex abuse. Unfortunately it appears little has changed.

The NT Civil and Administrative Tribunal yesterday ordered the government to pay almost \$15,000 in compensation to four people from the Red Centre community of Santa Teresa, in a test case for about 70 similar applications. The Northern Territory government had taken legal action against members of the community for unpaid rent but found the housing being charged for was ‘uninhabitable’.

A indigenous man in Northern Territory region of Santa Teresa man was being charged being \$27 a week for accommodation that involved a rusty outdoor bed next to a chook house!



*Despite the billions spent on closing the door on poor housing this case has highlighted the failure of housing construction, maintenance and tenancy management programs — jointly agreed and funded by the Federal and NT governments — to resolve remote housing issues despite years of trying.*

## **THE STARS NEVER LIE BUT THE POLLS OFTEN DO**

**Andrew Catsaras.**



*Last week an opinion poll from Ipsos was published in the Fairfax press.*

*It seemed to 'show' a collapse in the ALP's vote and a surge in the Coalition's vote. The media ran wild with 'explanations' that 'the boats issue' had sunk the ALP again - just like in 2001 with Tampa - and that the Coalition was 'back in the game'.*

*Apart from the fact that Tampa is one of the biggest myths in our political polling history (the issue of September 11 2001 is totally airbrushed from media discussion about the causes for the result of the 2001 election) the Ipsos poll, heralded as a turning point, was just a statistical illusion as a result of sampling variation. That's all it was.*

*Prior to the release of the Ipsos poll last week, there was a poll released over the weekend by Galaxy in Queensland (conducted in the same week) which showed that there was an improvement in the ALP's position, not deterioration.*

*That's Queensland, the state where boats is supposed to hit the hardest. As soon as Ipsos was released, the Galaxy result was ignored by the press, because, I suspect, the Ipsos poll showed what the press expected to see.*

*There was no corroboration by any other pollster to support Ipsos; indeed, there was a total contradictory result from a more reliable pollster. Yet this didn't matter as Ipsos showed boats had hit hard - as the press 'knew' it would.*

*So the press had not only an unconfirmed report, it had a report that was disputed by a more reliable witness, and yet the press ran with the 'evidence' it wanted to run with.*

*Newspoll today - showing there is no collapse in the ALP vote and corroborating the Galaxy poll in Queensland - illustrates how unreliable that witness was, and how foolish the press had been.*

*None of this is new.*

*There is a Latin phrase, "astra non mentiuntur sed astrologi bene mentiuntur de astris", that translates as "the stars never lie but the astrologers lie about the stars".*

*Just as the astrological world is confident there is meaning in the movement of the stars, the political world is equally confident that there is meaning in the movement of the polls. As for those in the real world, they believe there is meaning only when it says what they want to hear.*

<http://andrewcatsaras.blogspot.com/>, <http://twitter.com/andrewcatsaras>

## **QLD INFRASTRUCTURE**

### **WHAT'S NORTHERN AUSTRALIA INFRASTRUCTURE DONE FOR QLD?**

**Clare/ Beers Candidate for Flynn/ Robertson Candidate for Capricornia**

**The answer is zero.**

Last week in Senate Estimates it was revealed that the Northern Australia Infrastructure Facility still hasn't delivered one cent to Queensland.

The NAIF was announced by the LNP four years ago. Four years later only \$15 million has gone out the door – none of it to Queensland.

The NAIF has only provided funding for two projects – one in Western Australia and the other in the Northern Territory.

This is ridiculous. No wonder the people of Central and North Queensland are angry with this out of touch LNP Government.

It's time the Abbott Turnbull Morrison Government pulled their finger out and started delivering on their \$5 billion promise.





***"I'm here today to make sure that graziers and locals from Richmond to Julia Creek to Cloncurry, right through to the Gulf country know that they haven't been forgotten. This flood which has gone through this part of North-West Queensland is massive. The scale and the dimension beyond anything the people have seen in their lifetimes. The scale of damage is truly heart-breaking. Cattle, cattle by the tens and tens of thousands. The local animal life, kangaroos. It's terrible what's happened. And of course, we've seen massive damage to the very important mining of the north-west, with the railway line between Hughenden and Julia Creek being smashed. And of course, the roads. So massive damage to graziers, massive damage to mining industry and of course, the ripple effects get felt through the broader community, the small businesses in the towns. The community is under pressure and the rest of Australia needs to remember this has happened to a very important part of Australia."***

### **LABOR COMMITS TO CAPRICORN HIGHWAY – Albanese/Clare/Robertson/Beers**

**A Shorten Labor Government would invest \$15 million to build up to six new overtaking lanes on the Capricorn Highway between Gracemere and Emerald to boost productivity and improve road safety.**

The Capricorn Highway is Central Queensland's principal east-west freight corridor and also a critical route for tourists moving between the Capricorn Coast and the Queensland Outback.



The highway is a single carriageway with limited overtaking lanes and carries up to 2800 vehicles a day. A quarter of those vehicles are trucks, many towing over-sized loads of mining equipment.

The project would deliver up to three new overtaking lanes in each direction to increase opportunities for motorists to pass slower-moving vehicles such as trucks, buses and cars towing caravans.

Shadow Infrastructure and Transport Minister Anthony Albanese said the work would allow motorists to get to their destination sooner.

"Labor is not only focused on the infrastructure needs of big cities, but also on the needs of rural and regional Australia. Importantly, funding for this project would be in Labor's very first budget in office," Mr Albanese said.

"This is particularly important when it comes to road safety because a disproportionate level of deaths and injuries on our roads happen in the regions."

Shadow Minister for Northern Australia, Jason Clare said local workers and contractors will also be a big winner from this project, as this \$15 million project will require a plan for Local Jobs under Labor's local procurement policy.

"The successful bidder will be required to nominate an on-the-ground contact to engage with local small and medium businesses to raise awareness of upcoming tender and subcontracting opportunities," said Mr Clare.

"There will also be local labour-market testing for any new employees required for the project, to ensure out of town firms are not undercutting local wages, as well as increased protections for sub-contractors to ensure they get paid."

Labor candidate for Capricornia Russell Robertson said the Capricorn Highway is a major economic and social artery for Central Queensland.

"These new overtaking lanes will not only improve safety but also help get people and produce more quickly from A to B," said Mr Robertson.

"After years of neglect at the hands of Michelle Landry and the LNP, I'm proud to be a part of team that have a plan for roads in Central Queensland."

Labor candidate for Flynn Zac Beers said the project would be good for local business and families as well as for job seekers.

"Thousands of vehicles use this road every day, including locals getting to and from work, trucks carrying mining equipment and families travelling with kids," Mr Beers said.

"Crucially, whoever is awarded the tender will be required to not only work with Central Queensland businesses, but will also need to ensure that locals are given first crack at any jobs created by this project."

This week's announcement builds on Labor's plan for Queensland, which includes:

- \$25 million towards the Rockhampton flood Levee;
- \$176 million towards the Rookwood Weir, supporting 2000 jobs;
- \$47.5 million towards the dual-laning of the Rockhampton-Yeppoon Road, supporting 150 jobs;
- \$800 million towards the Rockhampton Ring Road;

\$7.2 million to build a new Cardiac Theatre at Rockhampton



## **GOVERNMENT MUST DO MORE TO GET REDRESS WORKING - Dreyfus/Burney**

**The Government must do more to make sure the National Redress Scheme is working for survivors.**

A third of the 2,728 survivors who have applied for redress are in limbo because the Government has not secured the participation of all relevant institutions.

In total, only 51 survivors have actually received redress, out of an estimated 60,000 survivors who are expected to ultimately apply.

More than seven months after the scheme started, this is unacceptable.

Institutions have a clear moral obligation to join the scheme – and the Government must take a more active role in making sure organisations are able to quickly and simply join the Scheme.

The public deserves to know who hasn't signed up and what the Government is doing to expedite the process.

Survivors have waited long enough.

Should Labor be afforded the privilege of forming government, we will seek to work with the states and territories to address outstanding concerns with the National Redress Scheme, including:

- the maximum payment – the Royal Commission recommended \$200,000 but the current maximum is \$150,000;
- the indexation of past payments;
- fair access for people in prison or with criminal records;
- the adequacy of counselling support services; and
- the time people have to consider an offer of redress.



## **MORRISON HAGGLING OVER ROYAL COMMISSION COSTS—Plibersek/Dreyfus/Burney/Brown**

**While people with disability continue to wait, Scott Morrison is haggling with states and territories over who would fund a royal commission. This is a cheapskate move.**

On Wednesday, we were reminded once again that Scott Morrison had to be shamed into action, after the Government said no to a royal commission three times - including voting against it twice in the Parliament.

Scott Morrison continues to defer and delay, by trying to offload the cost of this royal commission onto the states and territories.

This didn't happen with the *Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse*, nor the *Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety* – why is this any different?

This royal commission should be fully federally funded and Scott Morrison could easily set aside the money for this in the budget.

Just last week, Bill Shorten wrote to the premiers and chief ministers to make it clear that if Labor is fortunate enough to form government he would seek their support for this royal commission.

Labor committed to a separate, dedicated and fully federally funded royal commission in May 2017.

For years, the Abbott-Turnbull-Morrison Government opposed the royal commission. 15 months after the Senate delivered its report into violence, abuse and neglect against people with disability, the Government rejected its recommendations for a royal commission.

It has since voted against a royal commission in the Senate twice, as well as attempting to shamefully obstruct it in the House.

Scott Morrison can always seem to find the money for the top end of town - why can't he find it for a proper inquiry into the abuse of people with disability?

People with disability, their families, advocates and representative organisations have fought hard and long enough for this royal commission, they deserve a government who takes it seriously.

People with disability deserve a proper, broad-based inquiry to get to the truth. It should cover a wide range of contexts, including into health, mental health, justice and educational settings, as well as historic abuse.

The test for the Government is to fully fund this in the budget and ensure that people with disability and their families are properly consulted in developing the terms of reference.

## THE LAW

### LABOR LAUNCHES FINANCIAL RIGHTS ACCESS TO JUSTICE PACKAGE – Dreyfus/Claire O’Neil

Labor will give Australians the legal firepower they need to take the fight to the banks with a \$120 million contribution over four years from the Banking Fairness Fund to expand the financial rights legal assistance sector from 40 lawyers to 240 lawyers across Australia.

The funding of \$30 million per year will be ongoing, and will provide stable funding for the sector as recommended by Commissioner Hayne.

The 200 extra financial rights lawyers will assist victims of bank and financial service provider misconduct by providing legal advice and running complex cases in court and through the Australian Financial Complaints Authority (AFCA).

When Australians face a fight with their banks, Labor will make sure they are not fighting alone.

This follows on from Labor’s announcement yesterday of a \$640 million Banking Fairness Fund supported by a \$160 million per year contribution from Australia’s largest banks.

The Banking Royal Commission is a once in a generation opportunity to give Australians the ability to stand up for their rights against the big banks and their well-funded legal teams.

Labor will make sure that Australians don’t miss out on that opportunity.

Labor is proud to support the hardworking financial rights legal assistance sector. Commissioner Hayne described the work that these lawyers do as a ‘necessity to the community’. Labor’s plan will allow them to assist more Australians than ever before.

The 200 new lawyers will assist Australians to bring claims through AFCA seeking up to \$2 million in compensation for financial and non-financial loss under new, improved compensation caps announced by Labor last week.

Labor will quadruple the previous \$500,000 compensation cap for consumers and remove the \$5,000 sub-cap for non-financial loss.

This is another part of Labor’s plan to restore fairness to financial services.

Around 240,000 Australians are in need of financial rights legal advice every year, but the sector is currently only able to service about 30,000 people.

The 200 extra lawyers will be able to service an additional 150,000 Australians per year, dramatically increasing the total number of people assisted by the sector.

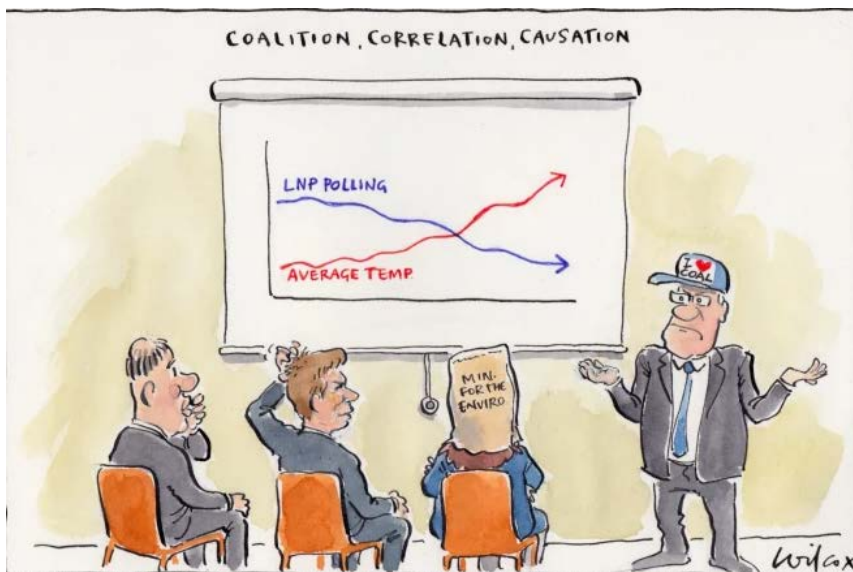
Only Labor can be trusted to clean up the banks and stand up to the top end of town. Scott Morrison and the Liberals voted against the Banking Royal Commission 26 times, and they want to give the big banks a \$17 billion tax handout.

Labor called for a Banking Royal Commission, Labor fought for a Banking Royal Commission, and Labor will ensure that victims of bank misconduct have the support they need to fight for their rights.

## ENVIRONMENT

### GOVERNMENT DATA SHOWS EMISSIONS UP UNDER LIBERALS – Mark Butler

Under Scott Morrison’s chaotic government carbon pollution is continuing to go up, and up, and up.



The [Quarterly Update of Australia’s National Greenhouse Gas Inventory: September 2018](#) shows that emissions are up 0.9 per cent year to September 2018.

The Government’s own data shows carbon pollution levels have been rising since the election of Tony Abbott as Prime Minister, and emissions will continue to rise all the way to 2030.

This week we saw Scott Morrison fully embrace Tony Abbott’s failed climate policy – a policy that sees taxpayers footing the bill for big polluters.

After five years and \$2.25 billion spent, Tony Abbott’s ineffective Emissions Reduction Fund only saw pollution rise. Malcolm Turnbull was right when he famously described Tony Abbott’s climate change plan as a “fig leaf to cover a determination to do nothing.”

Only Labor has a plan to invest in renewables and tackle climate change with our 50 per cent renewables target by 2030 and an emissions reduction target of 45 per cent by 2030.

### LIBERALS DOUBLE DOWN ON TONY ABBOTT’S FAILED CLIMATE POLICY – Mark Butler

Scott Morrison and the Liberals will go to any length to avoid taking serious action on climate change.

If the Liberals were serious about climate change, Malcolm Turnbull would still be Prime Minister. Instead, Scott Morrison, the Prime Minister who brought a lump of coal into Parliament, has now fully embraced Tony Abbott’s climate policy - a policy that sees taxpayers footing the bill for big polluters.



After five years and \$2.25 billion spent, the ineffective Emissions Reduction Fund only saw pollution go up, and up, and up. Malcolm Turnbull was right when he famously described Tony Abbott's climate change plan as a **"figleaf to cover a determination to do nothing."** The Government's own data shows carbon pollution levels have been rising since the election of Tony Abbott as Prime Minister, with Australia on track to miss the Government's already inadequate 2030 climate target of a 26 per cent cut in carbon pollution by a full 19 per cent. Throwing a further \$2 billion of taxpayers money at Tony Abbott's signature policy shows the Liberals will never take climate change seriously. If Scott Morrison was really serious about tackling climate change, he would dump his plans to spend even more taxpayers money on building new coal-fired power stations. Only Labor has a plan to invest in renewables and tackle climate change with our 50 per cent renewables target by 2030 and emissions reduction target of 45 per cent by 2030.

## DELAYING THE BASIN PLAN PUTS OUR RIVERS AT RISK - Burke

The Government's failure to use available funding to implement the Basin Plan puts our rivers at risk. You can't fix the rivers without water and the day Barnaby Joyce arrived, the water stopped.

Yearly payments		
Item	Financial year	Amount for financial year
1	2014-2015	\$15,000,000.00
2	2015-2016	\$40,000,000.00
3	2016-2017	\$110,000,000.00
4	2017-2018	\$430,000,000.00
5	2018-2019	\$320,000,000.00
6	2019-2020	\$350,000,000.00
7	2020-2021	\$315,000,000.00
8	2021-2022	\$105,000,000.00
9	2022-2023	\$60,000,000.00
10	2023-2024	\$30,000,000.00

Of the \$580 million set aside to deliver water for the environment from the Special Account, only \$12.5 million has been spent. When Labor put the Basin Plan in place we secured an additional \$1.775 billion for constraints removal and the additional 450GL of water for the environment. Labor's legislation made sure the funding was steadily transferred in to the Special Account (Water for the Environment) according to the legislated schedule:

Senate Estimates on Friday revealed that the Government has walked away from the 450GL of water for the environment, they haven't run programs and have left the funding available almost untouched.

**1st OFFICIAL:** The Water for the Environment Special Account, Senator?

**2nd OFFICIAL:** Over the period to, or from 2012 through to 30 June 2024 – that was \$1.775 billion.

**SENATOR O'NEIL:** How much has been spent?

**2nd OFFICIAL:** A vast minority of it. Probably less than 10... or in the order of \$10 million.

We can't let the ecological catastrophe in the north spread throughout the entire Basin.

Claims by the government that the funds couldn't previously be used are untrue. There is a test in the Basin Plan already to run on-farm projects to deliver the 450GL of water for the environment – the test is participation. The government hasn't tested participation because it hasn't made any funding available.

For the last six years the Government has taken any opportunity to delay or obstruct the implementation of the Basin Plan.

After six years in office the government says it is now taking steps to acquire more water for the environment. The rivers are paying for this inaction right now.

Delays are hurting our rivers – urgent action is required. <<https://www.legislation.gov.au/Details/C2013A00003/Html/Text>>

**MEDIA**

## STATEMENT ON ABC CHAIRPERSON - Rowland

Labor congratulates Ita Buttrose AO OBE on the announcement that she will be recommended for appointment as ABC Chairperson. The ABC is one of Australia's most trusted institutions, and the role of Chair in maintaining the independence and integrity of the Corporation is critical.



After years of cuts to the ABC under the Liberal Party, now more than ever, Australia needs a successful ABC, and Labor wishes Ms Buttrose well in the role.

Australians value transparency and there's no doubt that the recruitment process has been tainted by political interference from the outset:

- This vacancy arose in the first place through the political interference scandal which shocked the nation and is still being examined.
- In the face of a Senate Inquiry into allegations of political interference in the ABC, the Liberals ran a closed tender process to award Korn Ferry, whose Head of Board services is a major Liberal Party donor, the \$163,000 contract to provide recruitment services.
- This company received taxpayers' money for nothing, given the successful candidate did not even apply for the position and was not asked to do so.

- In spite of the legal requirement to consult the Leader of the Opposition on the selection of the Chair, Scott Morrison refused Bill Shorten's appeal for a bipartisan approach, failed to commit to genuine consultation and denied Labor's request for a briefing on the Nomination Panel process.
- Scott Morrison ignored the merit-based recommendations of the Nomination Panel and reduced the selection process to a week-long media circus of leaks. Labor introduced the merit-based appointment process "to end political interference in the ABC by introducing a transparent and democratic board appointment process" and "improve governance in our national broadcasters" ([Minister's Second Reading Speech, National Broadcasting Legislation Amendment Bill 2010](#)).

Scott Morrison's contempt for this simple process exemplifies the chaos and ineptitude of the Liberals.

The Liberals came to government on the promise of no cuts to the ABC. That was a lie.

They've ripped hundreds of millions of dollars out of the ABC, meddled in its affairs and launched relentless ideological attacks on public broadcasting, including pointless inquiries and complaints from a Minister for Communications who is also a member of the IPA that wants the ABC privatised.

The evidence is clear: you can have a strong and independent ABC, or a Liberal Government. You can't have both.



**PROTECTING FUEL SECURITY WITH A NATIONAL FUEL RESERVE – Mark Butler/Shorten**  
**A Shorten Labor Government will safeguard Australia's fuel security with a boost to Australia's fuel stocks – an important national security measure that will also protect our economy from global disruptions.**

Australia used to be a net exporter of oil, but as we've become more reliant on the global fuel market we've also become more vulnerable to international risks and uncertainty.

It's simple – to increase our national fuel security, we need to increase our national fuel stocks.

Labor will commence a detailed consultation process around the design of a government-owned National Fuel Reserve to boost Australia's fuel stocks of emergency reserves.

Not only will this improve our national fuel security, it will also help us reach our stockpile target as a member of the International Energy Agency.

Australia, as a member of the International Energy Agency, is a party to the International Energy Program and treaty that requires all member net fuel importing states maintain oil stocks equivalent to at least 90 days net fuel imports. The purpose of this requirement is to ensure that oil-importing countries can withstand disruptions to supply by releasing stockpiled oil and other fuels.

Today, Australia's stocks are well below international treaty requirements of 90 days. According to the Department of Environment and Energy, Australia has just 19 days of automotive gasoline supply, 23 days of jet fuel supply, and 22 days of diesel supply.

Australia's fuel stocks dropped below 90 days in 2012 – and we haven't been able to get them back up to comply with the IEA. While Australia's fuel reserves are below this amount, we remain vulnerable to risks in the international fuel supply chain.

We will consult with industry, oil and gas importers, refineries and with national security experts on the implementation of the government National Fuel Reserve.

Almost one year ago, a bipartisan report of the Parliamentary Joint Committee on Intelligence and Security told the current government that ensuring a continuous supply of fuel was a matter of "national importance".

Labor and Liberal members of that Committee called on the Department of Home Affairs to undertake a national security review of the fuel industry to ensure that Australia has a continuous supply of fuel to meet its national security priorities – particularly in times of heightened geopolitical tensions.

The Committee told the government that the review should be completed within six months, but it didn't happen.

Today's announcement builds on Labor's commitment to build a National Strategic Fleet to secure our access to fuel supplies, even in times of global instability. The Fleet is likely to include up to a dozen vessels including oil tankers, container ships and gas carriers.

Other first-world nations have established shipping fleets – Australia should too. Over the past 30 years, the number of Australian-flagged vessels has shrunk from 100 to now just 14. Compare that to Norway with 519 vessels carrying the Norwegian flag, the United Kingdom with 1157 flagged vessels and China with 4608 flagged vessels.

Labor is making strategic decisions to serve the nation's economic, environmental and national security interests and building a stronger country for our future.

## **PUMPED HYDRO INVESTMENT NEEDS LABOR'S RENEWABLE POLICY - Mark Butler**

**Modelling confirms Tasmania's Marinus Link and related investments, and Snowy Hydro 2.0 projects only make sense under Labor's renewable energy policies.**

The [Feasibility Study](#) for the Tasmanian Marinus Link project, which will see a new Tasmanian interconnector support pumped hydro and wind generation investment, confirms that under a 'business as usual' neutral scenario, the project doesn't stack up.

The feasibility study states: **"in the neutral scenario the costs of Marinus Link would exceed the benefits it would provide, even after including other benefits not captured by EY's model."**

In the '**neutral scenario**', the cost-benefit of a 600MW interconnector investment is a net cost of \$270 million, meaning the project fails to deliver a net benefit to Australia.

However, under a 'High Emission Reduction Scenario' which is broadly consistent with Labor's 50 percent 2030 renewable energy commitment, the project delivers a net positive benefit of \$490 million for a 600 MW interconnector.

More damning for the Government, the net cost of a 600 MW interconnector increases to \$377 million if Snowy 2.0 is also built, as the Government today confirmed is their intention.

The only scenario in which the Marinus project delivers a positive net benefit in the presence of Snowy 2.0 is also in the High Emission Reduction Scenario, with a positive net benefit of \$114 million for a 600 MW link. These results are qualitatively the same for the larger 1200 MW link option.

These results confirm what we have known for years, pumped hydro investments only make sense to support ambitious renewable energy investment, and in particular, the only case in which both Snowy 2.0 and Project Marinus (and greater investment in Tasmanian pumped hydro) make sense is with Labor's commitment to 50 per cent renewable energy by 2030.

The Prime Minister has spent two days and almost \$1.5 billion dollars supporting projects that only make sense in the renewable energy future his government and his party vehemently oppose, and after 5 years of government are still fighting against.

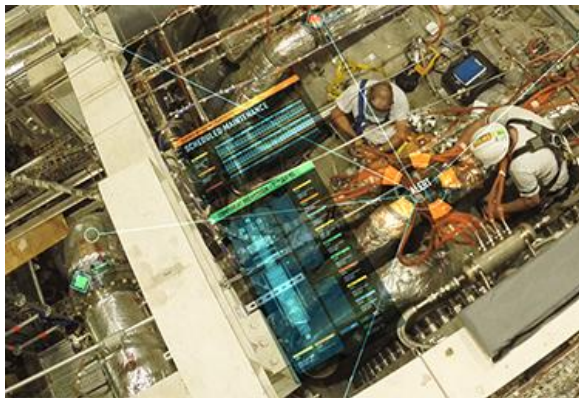
They refuse to provide any support for new renewable investment once Labor's Large Scale Renewable Energy Target expires in 2020, preferring to provide taxpayer support for unnecessary, expensive and polluting new coal power plants.

Only Labor has a clear, consistent and modernising vision for Australia's energy future; with cleaner renewable energy, more storage, and a modern transmission network.

The Liberals have an incoherent, ad-hoc, chaotic approach that has more in common with a marketing strategy than a strategy for affordable, reliable and clean power for Australia.

## **LABOR WELCOMES RELEASE OF PROJECT MARINUS FEASIBILITY REPORT**

**Mark Butler/Julie Collins/Keay/Hart/Mitchell**



**Labor welcomes the release of the Project Marinus initial feasibility report highlighting the significant opportunities of a second Bass Strait interconnector.**

Labor has been a strong supporter not only of a second Bass Strait interconnector, but the pumped hydro and renewable energy investment that it would bring.

Last election we announced we'd support the development of a second interconnector, and if anything, the past three years have made the case for this investment even stronger.

As we transition to more renewable energy, we'll need significant amounts of energy storage, and Tasmania with its great hydro resources, has a central role to play in providing that storage.

That's why a Labor government will commit to \$56 million to progress the second Tasmanian interconnector, and we'll also consult with stakeholders and experts in the region and around the country about what will be needed to get the new interconnector built, not just studied.

The potential for well-paid advanced manufacturing jobs, particularly in Northern Tasmania, cannot be understated.

The Liberals must come clean on how they expect renewable energy projects across Tasmania to go ahead without a policy framework that supports renewable investment.

Monday's announcement comes on the same day Scott Morrison has fully embraced Tony Abbott's failed climate policy - a policy that sees taxpayers footing the bill for big polluters.

Scott Morrison's chaos on energy policy and determination to bankroll expensive and unnecessary new coal plants threatens billions of dollars of investment and thousands of potential jobs in renewable energy in Tasmania, and undermines the national renewable energy vision of *Battery of the Nation*.

Monday's feasibility report clearly noted that the second interconnector only stacks up because of Australia's transition towards renewable energy.

We all know Scott Morrison was the man who walked into Parliament with a lump of coal to mock renewable energy and the need to tackle climate change.

In contrast a Labor Government will drive new investment in renewable energy generation and storage and transform Australia's energy supply systems - delivering more renewables and cheaper power for all Australians.

The North West and West Coast of Tasmania is set to be a major beneficiary under Labor's plan to invest in renewable energy, as a designated Renewable Energy Zone.

Labor's energy policies will mean projects like the *Battery of the Nation* have the investment certainty they need.

Our plan for more renewable energy will deliver 50 per cent of electricity from renewable energy by 2030, keep power prices lower, and create tens of thousands of jobs in the renewables industry including Tasmania.

## **4.7 MILLION TO ESTABLISH AUSTRALIAN ENERGY FOUNDATION - Mark Butler/Khalil/Kearney**

**A Shorten Labor Government will support the establishment of the Australian Energy Foundation through the Moreland Energy Foundation with a \$4.7 million establishment grant.**

This national organisation will provide the community energy sector with the essential support, tools, services and investment it needs to grow. Working with Labor's Community Renewable Network, the Foundation will guide community energy groups to commission and install community energy projects, and it will administer the investment throughout the lifetime of the projects.

The Australian Energy Foundation will:



- set up national offices in capital cities
- develop a resource toolkit including the legal, financial and engagement tools and templates to support the community energy groups nationally
- develop a national training program to support the community energy sector
- establish an initial funding pool to provide start-up funding for community energy projects
- establish an innovation stream to investigate and incubate new models
- support the development and installation of community energy projects

Australians love renewable energy because they know it saves them money and it's good for the environment. Household solar installation has sky-rocketed from 7,000 homes in 2007 to around 2 million homes today.

Labor wants to make sure that all Australians have the opportunity to embrace this future, and maximise the jobs, industry and environmental benefits of renewable energy

The Liberals have had eleven energy policies since the 2016 election and after waging a five year war on renewable energy, they want to spend billions of taxpayers' dollars on new, polluting coal-fired power stations.

Only a Shorten Labor Government will back community renewables, take action on climate change and deliver cheaper power.

### **LIBERALS PLAYING CATCH UP ON DEFAULT PRICE – Mark Butler**

**The Morrison Government is once again playing catch up with Labor on energy policy.**

Labor announced we would implement default prices as recommended by the ACCC on 19<sup>th</sup> August last year. Prime Minister Turnbull backed Labor's announcement the next day, announcing his government would also implement default pricing.

It then took till 23 October 2018 for the Morrison Government to announce that it too would implement a default electricity price.

It's now taken 4 months since that announcement for Australians to once again see the government claiming credit for a policy adopted by Labor 6 months ago.

The vast majority of Australians, who are on 'market' not 'standing' offers, won't see any benefit from this announcement.

Under the Liberals, everything is going up except wages – electricity prices have gone up 15 per cent.

In order to see electricity prices fall for all Australian families and businesses, we need to end the Morrison Government's policy chaos the Liberals - with 11 failed energy policies since the 2016 election.

Electricity futures markets still point to rising wholesale electricity prices this year. And Scott Morrison's plan is to underwrite expensive and unnecessary new coal plants with billions of taxpayer dollars instead of supporting dispatchable, cheap and clean renewable investment.

The Liberals' division and chaos has meant that they don't have a serious energy policy, and this has caused power prices to go up and up.

Labor has a plan for cheaper power and more renewables for all Australians. We will deliver 50 per cent of power from renewables by 2030, end the privatisation mess and better regulate power prices.

## **GOVERNANCE**

### **MORRISON'S SPENDING TAXPAYER MONEY TO MAKE HIMSELF LOOK GOOD - Farrell**

**Labor will seek to disallow new regulations sneakily made by Scott Morrison that would allow the Liberals to spend more than \$22 million of taxpayers' money on political advertisements on television and radio.**



Analysis of AusTender contracts shows that Government is already spending \$600,000 a day on taxpayer-funded advertising – and now they are raiding electorate office budgets for even more ads.

The Government has secretly changed the rules that govern how MPs and Senators can spend their office budgets, removing the long-standing ban on this public funding being used to pay for the production or placement of political content on television or radio.

This taxpayer-funded budget is for Members and Senators to communicate with their constituents – not run ads of Scott Morrison on TV.

By amending regulations, the Government has tried to sneak these changes through out of sight of the Parliament.

It is a disgraceful move that Australians will see straight through.

And it is yet another example of how disgustingly out-of-touch the Liberals and

Nationals are with the Australian people.

Under these dodgy new rules, every time voters are bombarded with a Liberal or National political ad on TV or radio, it is Scott Morrison wasting \$22 million of taxpayers' money trying to save his own job.

This is a chaotic and desperate poor excuse for a government, lurching from scandal to scandal and doing everything it can to splurge taxpayers' money on advertising and line up jobs for its mates.

Whether it's Georgina Downer's face on a novelty cheque, Christian Porter's bus that isn't free but he just hasn't paid for it yet, or Liberals lining up to help Helloworld, this government has a smell about it.

Now they've stooped to changing the rules so they can waste taxpayers' money on political TV and radio ads.

## WHEELS FALL OFF PORTER'S ELECTION BUS WITH JOBS FOR MATES SCANDAL - Dreyfus



As the wheels fall off the Morrison Government, scandal after scandal is showing hard-working Australians that this desperate government is only in it for themselves – and their mates.

Last week Australians were appalled to see another string of Morrison Government scandals, including the Helloworld 'chumgate' scandal, Peter Dutton's department awarding a \$423 million taxpayer contract to a company called Paladin to look after Australia's offshore detention centres – despite Paladin being registered to a beach shack on Kangaroo Island, and two Morrison Government ministers undermining a criminal investigation involving their own staff by refusing to provide witness statements to the Australian Federal Police.

And yet on Thursday, shortly after Parliament had risen, the Attorney-General Christian Porter quietly announced a staggering 86 appointments and reappointments to the Administrative Appeals Tribunal (AAT) a list full of Liberal mates, including a number of

the Attorney-General's own former State Liberal colleagues and staffers.

Full-time Senior AAT members are paid over \$380,000 a year and even junior members are paid at least \$190,000.

The new appointments included failed Liberal Senate candidate, Michael Sutherland, who called [fracking activists "cockroaches"](#) and long-time staffer, William Frost, whose most recent job was working in Christian Porter's office.

Now it has been [reported in The West Australian](#) that another of the new AAT appointees, former Western Australian MP, Joseph Francis, was given the plum six-figure-salary posting after overseeing a "loan" to Christian Porter of a "complimentary campaign bus" in 2018.

The response to these latest revelations by the Attorney-General and the Liberal Party does not stack up. They claim that the bus company, the Australian Transit Group, has a "commercial arrangement" with the WA Liberal Party to *eventually* sell it the buses. It's probably like Senator Cormann 'eventually' paying the travel company headed by the Liberal Party's treasurer for the trip he and his family took to Singapore – when he was caught by a journalist.

But neither the Liberal Party nor Christian Porter has been able to say how much the Liberals will pay for the buses – or whether this "commercial arrangement" was in place before the buses were "loaned" to the Liberal Party last year.

Was this "arrangement" agreed between the Liberal Party and Australian Transit Group before or after The West Australian started asking questions? Is there a written agreement or was this supposed "arrangement" based on a wink, a nudge and a handshake? Will the Liberal Party be buying these buses at market rates or mates rates? Australians deserve answers.

This latest scandal is yet another demonstration of how this government is only in it for themselves and those they owe favours to. Australians have had enough of it.

Labor is committed to establishing a National Integrity Commission with all the powers of a standing Royal Commission, charged with stamping out corruption in government and the public sector.

And Labor is committed to re-establishing a transparent, merits based system for appointment of both judges and AAT members.

Labor stands for transparency, integrity, and accountability. We have our priorities right.

## MORE COSY RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN LIBERALS AND THEIR MATES – McAllister/Dodson

Senate Estimates has revealed more cosy relationships between the Liberal party and their mates.

In Estimates this afternoon, Labor questioned Minister Scullion about the Sky News program *Mundine Means Business* – a television show starring Liberal Candidate for Gilmore Warren Mundine.

**McAllister:** *Who came up with the idea of Mundine Means Business? I assume it wasn't the Department who thought "It would be great if Warren Mundine had a television show. Why don't we go and approach him and see if he'd be interested Maybe Mr. Murdoch would chip in as well?" Was that the Department's idea?*

**Sharpe:** *A very strong part of our Indigenous Business Policy is the importance of celebrating Indigenous success. So that's written into the Indigenous Business Sector Strategy. The exact mechanism – how we were going to do it, as in how we were going to produce Mundine Means Business – no, that wasn't written in. Mr Mundine approached – I think – the Minister first and the idea was put to us for consideration.*

**McAllister:** *Oh I see – Minister, Mr. Mundine approached you, in fact? So the genesis of this was a conversation between yourself and Mr. Mundine – is that correct?*

**Scullion:** No.

**McAllister:** *Oh, well Ms. Sharpe just said that – I asked her who came up with this idea, that it would be nice for Mr. Mundine to have a television show. She talked about the importance of valuing and supporting Indigenous success and she said that the genesis for the television show was a conversation between yourself and the Minister – and that you then approached the department. Is that correct?*

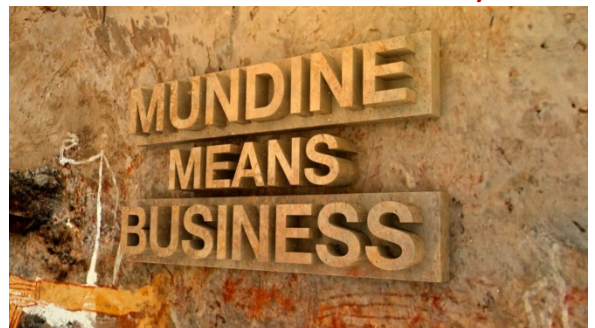
**Scullion:** *It was a fair time ago and my recollection is that as part of the business strategy – to try and meet some of the demand that had been created by the IPP – there was a number of suggestions about how we would talk about Indigenous business and how much there was of it and where to get hold of it – that this was a part of that strategy. Now I can't recall who – I certainly didn't come up with the idea of a TV show, I can tell you that, so I can't recall exactly the genesis of that. It certainly wasn't me or my office – I'm reminded that I signed a brief on that and that's fine – but my recollection – and I would have a clear recollection – that this was some idea generated by myself is not correct. The Minister then admitted it did come from his office.*

**McAllister:** *But the department's advice is that the genesis of this is an e-mail from a member of your staff with a word document attached suggesting a television program.*

**Scullion:** *Well if that's the evidence they give then that's probably the case.*

Minister Scullion was further questioned.

**McAllister:** *You can see the problem though, can't you? Because what has actually taken place is that a person who was known to be very close to the Prime Minister – is sitting on the Prime Minister's Indigenous Advisory Council – receives a direct grant which no other person was able to apply for to develop a television program to raise his profile and then that person nominates as a candidate for the Liberal Party. Can you see why people might find that just a little bit unacceptable in terms?*



*Scullion: No, I can't at all, Senator. And, as you would recall – so if you're making a point about being on the Indigenous Advisory Committee, it's not because he was close to the Prime Minister, Senator, it was because he is a high profile, very articulate, very smart, Aboriginal man who is providing leadership in this area – I don't think anyone would deny that. But the fact that he is now of great interest because he's a member of the Liberal Party...*

**McAllister:** *There are other high profile, highly intelligent, highly articulate, highly successful Indigenous people – and none of those people have been given a very large amount of money to develop their profile on television.*

Australians would be appalled to see money from the Coalition's Indigenous Advancement Strategy going towards a profile-raising exercise on Sky for someone who is now running as a Liberal candidate at the Federal election.

This is yet another demonstration of this Government's priorities when it comes to First Nations peoples.

### **NATIONAL PARTY SLUSH FUND PASSES THE HOUSE– Fitzgibbon/Albanese**

**Regional road projects were the big losers yesterday when, despite Labor's best efforts, the legislation to establish the National Party's latest slush fund was passed.**

Robbing Peter to pay Paul, the Morrison Government stole \$3.9 billion out of the Building Australia Fund to fund its Future Drought Fund. That is bad news for regional Australia.

Labor's **Farm Productivity & Sustainable Profitability Fund** will invest the same amount of money to help our farmers build drought resilience without taking roads and rail money away from our regions. We will fund it from the Budget and we'll invest the same amount of money that the Government has promised but we will invest it more quickly and more effectively.

Our expert Panel of Guardians, including economists, agronomist and scientists will develop a plan and we will fund it through the **Farm Productivity & Sustainable Profitability Fund**.

Investing in our farmers is sound policy and it should be funded in its own right. It should not come at the expense of other much needed regional infrastructure.

## **FINANCE**

### **LABOR WILL MAKE MERGER ANALYSIS SMARTER - Leigh**

**Corporate misbehaviour at the expense of everyday Australians will be targeted under a Shorten Labor Government, which will require the competition watchdog to learn from its track record on approving mergers.**



Many sectors in Australia are heavily concentrated, which can lead to firms using their market power to raise prices. Despite this, there is currently no official process for the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission to decide whether it made a mistake in allowing mergers.

From 1989 to 2018, the [number of mergers](#) in Australia increased seven-fold, from 259 to 1909, with the total value of merger transactions rising from US\$34 to US\$146 billion. As every sports fan knows, if you don't learn from your past performance, you're less likely to improve in the future.

Post-merger reviews would allow the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission to test the claims that were made at the time the merger was approved. These independent and transparent reviews – to be carried out twice in the decade following the merger – will consider the impact of mergers on

economic outcomes such as productivity, prices, employment and wages.

Such measures would help Australia avoid the negative impacts of mergers, such as the problematic US mergers between America Online and Time Warner, or between eBay and Skype.

It will not attempt to undo mergers that have already taken place.

This measure will build on Labor's competition policies, including:

- giving consumer and small business advocacy groups the power to make 'supercomplaints' about consumer rip-offs;
- protecting small business through making unfair contract terms illegal;
- making it easier and cheaper to send money to family and friends overseas by requiring full fee disclosure on remittances;
- making it more affordable to fix your car by requiring car manufacturers to share technical information with independent mechanics on commercially fair and reasonable terms;
- introducing an industry-specific code under the Competition and Consumer Act to deliver clear rules to better regulate negotiations between manufacturers and dealerships;
- introducing Access to Justice reforms to Parliament, which helps small businesses take court cases to address anti-competitive conduct;
- Doubling the competition regulator's litigation budget and amending the Competition and Consumer Act to give a truly independent market studies function to the regulator;
- Allowing the Courts to apply higher penalties for conduct that targets or disproportionately impacts disadvantaged Australians;
- Requiring the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission prioritise investigations of conduct that targets or disproportionately impacts disadvantaged Australians;
- Investigating the impacts of increased market concentration on income inequality in Australia and produce policy recommendations on how the negative effects of market concentration can be mitigated;
- And encouraging States and Territories to include competition principles in planning and zoning legislation, as recommended by the Harper Review, with a specific focus on shortfalls of appropriately zoned land for key services in disadvantaged communities.

While Scott Morrison and his chaotic Coalition continue to back millionaires and multinationals, Labor is shaping policies that will help all Australians.



## **\$640 MILLION BANKING FAIRNESS FUND – Shorten/Clare O’Neil/McAllister**

**Labor will give bank victims a fairer chance to fight for their rights with a \$640 million Banking Fairness Fund.**

**The fund will raise \$160m per year from Australia’s biggest banks to revolutionise the services available to Australians in financial difficulty – a key recommendation from the Royal Commission.**

Labor fought for the Banking Royal Commission – unlike Scott Morrison and the Liberals who voted against the Royal Commission 26 times, called it a “populist whinge” and refused to give parliament more time to implement the recommendations.

Labor will **double the number of financial counsellors** across Australia from **500 to 1000** with a **\$320 million** commitment from the Banking Fairness Fund over the next 4 years.

These new financial counsellors will provide advocacy, support and advice to an additional **125,000 Australians each year**.

These **500 new financial counsellors** will be able to assist Australians to pursue fair compensation through the Australian Financial Complaints Authority under significantly increased compensation caps announced by Labor last week.

Commissioner Hayne recommended that Australia’s hardworking financial counselling sector should be given “predictable and stable funding”. Commissioner Hayne noted in his final report that “their services, like financial services, are a necessity to the community”, but that the sector currently **“struggles to meet demand, which is increasing”**.

Financial counsellors provide invaluable assistance, free of charge, to Australians who find themselves in disputes with their banks and other financial service providers.

A stronger, larger financial counselling sector is just one part of **Labor’s plan to restore fairness to financial services**.

Labor will make further announcements about the other programs that will be funded by the Banking Fairness Fund over coming days.

Labor called for the Royal Commission, Labor fought for the Royal Commission, and Labor will work day and night to give victims of financial misconduct the support they need to fight for their rights.

## **WORKERS**

### **TRADIE PAY GUARANTEE – Shorten/O’Connor/Leigh**

**A Shorten Labor Government will protect sub-contractors working on Government projects from being left unpaid when dodgy businesses go bust through the implementation of the Tradie Pay Guarantee.**

Labor will establish a new requirement for large Commonwealth construction projects that would see project bank accounts established that use cascading statutory trusts, ensuring that all businesses down the supply chain involved get paid on time.

Labor will also develop a national framework to ensure that no sub-contractors or small businesses are left out of pocket as a result of dodgy “phoenix activity”.

We will set up an efficient process for handling disputes and establish a federal security of payments legislative regime based on the recommendations of the Murray Review.

Labor will then work with the states and territories to harmonise schemes across the country where possible, including consulting on the referral of powers to the federal program. This would apply to a broader range of construction activity.

Further, we will create a \$7 million *Tradie Litigation Fund* for subbies to access justice and see regulators take dodgy bosses to court and win.

Only a Shorten Labor Government will protect the livelihoods of small businesses, workers and subcontractors who fall victim to dodgy building bosses and ensure perpetrators face their day in court.

The practice of so-called “Phoenix activity” – where dodgy directors deliberately burn companies in an attempt to avoid their obligations to employees, government and honest businesses – is estimated to cost the Australian economy more than \$5 billion per year.

The new \$7 million *Tradie Litigation Fund* will give the Australian Securities and Investments Commission the ability to run more difficult court cases without draining the corporate watchdog’s resources.

Not only will this give tradies their day in court, it will also act both as a punishment and deterrent for dodgy directors. People who deliberately burn their companies should be subject to the full consequences of failing directors’ duties, including being liable for compensation, fines of up to \$200,000 or five years behind bars.

These measures - along with previous commitments such as [naming and shaming phoenix directors](#) and increasing penalties associated with phoenix activity – will help protect Australian jobs and the economy.

It’s time the Morrison Government stopped going soft on corporate crooks, and adopted Labor’s plans to crack down on dodgy phoenix activity. Only Labor will stand up for tradies and make dodgy bosses pay.

### **WHO’S TELLING THE TRUTH? – O’Connor**

**Just when you think it couldn’t get worse, the scandal involving Senator Cash and her office’s unlawful leak to the media of the Registered Organisation Commission (ROC) raids on AWU offices gets deeper.**

It has been revealed today in Federal Court that the former Registered Organisation Commission’s media advisor, Mark Lee, denies he told Minister Cash’s former Chief of Staff, Ben Davies, about the raids, contradicting evidence given by Mr Davies.

While the evidence given by all involved is a tangled mess, one thing is clear, it was Senator Cash’s responsibility as a Minister to find out what happened and set the record straight.

If she had told the truth and acted honestly in the first place we wouldn’t be in this situation.

This mess has cost more than \$800,000 of taxpayers money, which has been spent on legal fees to defend Senator Cash, her office, and the politicised agency this government established to attack its perceived political enemies.

Nearly \$1 million in tax payer’s funds has been wasted because Senator Cash’s office unlawfully leaked to the media the Registered Organisation



Commission raids on AWU offices.

Had she just come clean and stopped the cover up, stopped hiding behind whiteboards, this money would not have been thrown away. This scandal gets murkier by the day and the Prime Minister should have the integrity to sack both Ministers who are involved up to their necks in this.

### **FEWER PRESS RELEASES, MORE JOBS, PLEASE - Marles**

**Two weeks ago the Government signed up to the biggest procurement in Australia's history, and the country had to find out from news reporting that it didn't guarantee a single Australian job.**

On Monday the Government announced they'd signed "another important document for the future of Australia's submarines" – so important they bothered to write a whole 57 words to explain what it was.

This simply isn't good enough. The Future Submarine program is worth \$50 billion, is years behind schedule, and the Government has spent years walking away from its commitment to Australian industry.

Australians deserve to know what the Government is signing up to and what it means for jobs and defence capability in our country, not just an endless stream of self-serving press releases.



### **DAIRY FARMER CONSULTATIONS - Fitzgibbon**

**Today [Wednesday] I continued my on farm consultation with Australia's dairy farmers.**

On a farm just outside Denman in the Hunter Valley, I received the same positive responses to Labor's Minimum Farm Gate Milk Price proposal as I did visiting dairy farmers in Milton on the NSW South Coast.

Dairy farmers told me again today that their revenues are not covering their costs and in the absence of some form of Government intervention, they see no future for their farm businesses.

I will continue my consultations in as many dairy farming regions as is possible between now and the coming Federal Election.

As I have acknowledged in my Minimum Farm Gate Milk Price proposal every region is different and therefore responses are likely to be varied.

But what I absolutely expect to hear everywhere I go is that business as usual is not an option for dairy farmers.

That is exactly what I heard today [Wednesday].

### **LITTLEPROUD DESPERATELY SCRAMBLING ON FARM MILK PRICES - Fitzgibbon**

**Farmers are understandably angry that Agriculture Minister David Littleproud has dismissed Labor's pledge to pursue a minimum farm gate milk price and their frustration has him scrambling.**

The Agriculture Minister today [launched a review](#) of the Federal Government's Milk Price Index amid concerns it is not helping dairy farmers. At the [index launch](#) in July 2018 the Minister said the Index would enable farmers to better understand and interpret commodity market price signals.

But on Tuesday he admits "I'm not convinced the index is working as well as it can for farmers". With his Department reporting only 38 farmers participating, it would indicate the Index is not working at all well.

Labor supports the retention of a Milk Price Index and it should be improved. But alone it's no solution for struggling dairy farmers. Government intervention is needed.

Our plan to fast-track a Mandatory Code of Conduct and to ask the ACCC to investigate a minimum farm gate price for farmers is providing dairy farmers with real hope for the first time in many years.

The Morrison Government should get on board. Labor is prepared to work in a bi-partisan manner to ensure our dairy farmers are able to receive a fair farm gate price.



### **MORRISON HAGGLING OVER ROYAL COMMISSION COSTS—Plibersek/Dreyfus/Burney/Brown**

**While people with disability continue to wait, Scott Morrison is haggling with states and territories over who would fund a royal commission. This is a cheapskate move.**

On Wednesday, we were reminded once again that Scott Morrison had to be shamed into action, after the Government said no to a royal commission three times - including voting against it twice in the Parliament.

Scott Morrison continues to defer and delay, by trying to offload the cost of this royal commission onto the states and territories.

This didn't happen with the *Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse*, nor the *Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety* – why is this any different?

This royal commission should be fully federally funded and Scott Morrison could easily set aside the money for this in the budget.

Just last week, Bill Shorten wrote to the premiers and chief ministers to make it clear that if Labor is fortunate enough to form government he would seek their support for this royal commission.

Labor committed to a separate, dedicated and fully federally funded royal commission in May 2017.

For years, the Abbott-Turnbull-Morrison Government opposed the royal commission. 15 months after the Senate delivered its report into violence, abuse and neglect against people with disability, the Government rejected its recommendations for a royal commission.

It has since voted against a royal commission in the Senate twice, as well as attempting to shamefully obstruct it in the House.

Scott Morrison can always seem to find the money for the top end of town - why can't he find it for a proper inquiry into the abuse of people with disability?



People with disability, their families, advocates and representative organisations have fought hard and long enough for this royal commission, they deserve a government who takes it seriously.

People with disability deserve a proper, broad-based inquiry to get to the truth. It should cover a wide range of contexts, including into health, mental health, justice and educational settings, as well as historic abuse.

The test for the Government is to fully fund this in the budget and ensure that people with disability and their families are properly consulted in developing the terms of reference.

## HOUSING AFFORDABILITY

### **SOCIAL HOUSING MUST BE VIEWED AS ESSENTIAL INFRASTRUCTURE - Cameron**

**A new report examining the economic benefits of appropriately located and affordable housing echoes Labor's calls for governments to prioritise housing investment as an economic and social imperative.**

The UNSW Sydney and Community Housing Industry Association NSW's [Strengthening Economic Cases for Housing](#) mirrors Labor's position that housing be considered essential infrastructure akin to roads and public transport.

The report modelled the economic impact of a housing program half the size of Labor's proposed policy of building [250,000 new affordable homes](#) and found significant social and economic benefits.

The report found a range of benefits including that:

- a worker could save \$2,500 per year in travel time through shorter commute times, leading to an extra \$1.13 billion of labour supply in the NSW economy
- by moving workers closer to a wider range of jobs that better suit their skillset, incomes increased by between \$12,000 to \$41,000 a year
- these increased earnings would provide \$17.57 billion boost to the economy over 40 years
- that investing in 125,000 affordable rented homes over 10 years would provide a net boost to the economy of \$12 billion

The Australian housing market is failing under the Liberals hands-off approach with increasing numbers of people, particularly women and children, not having access to safe and affordable housing.

While the Liberals want to maintain the world's most generous tax concessions for wealthy investors, housing experts all agree that additional investment is critical to expanding social and affordable housing stock.

If elected, Labor will build [250,000 new affordable homes](#) to address the estimated [520,000 shortfall of affordable rental properties](#) across Australia.

Labor's scheme will drive residential construction and establish a secure long-term pipeline of investment on the scale required to address the massive shortfall.

This will build the capacity of the community housing sector, boost employment and address the profound shortage of affordable housing in Australia.

***Strengthening Economic Cases for Housing*** comes on top of a recent [Productivity Commission Report](#) showing the number of low-income households in rental stress has now reached a staggering 599,049.

The Coalition's obsession with privatisation, competition policy and their faith in the invisible hand of the market has resulted in an incoherent, incompetent and failed approach to housing policy in Australia. Only Labor has the policies and commitment to assist hundreds of thousands of our fellow Australians to put a roof over their head, live in increased security with better health, education and productivity outcomes for the nation.



## SENIORS

### **UNHAPPY ANNIVERSARY OF GOVERNMENT'S HOME CARE REFORMS – Julie Collins**

**Older Australians won't be celebrating the anniversary of the introduction of the Abbott-Turnbull-Morrison Government's home care packages with a growing crisis in aged care.**

The latest publicly available figures on the waitlist for home care packages show 127,000 older Australians are languishing in limbo waiting for care.

Under the Liberal Government the waitlist has grown from 88,000 to 127,000 older Australians in just over a year. The Productivity Commission last month revealed the median wait time for a home care package has blown out in the last year by more than two months.

Older Australians are entering residential aged care or even emergency departments instead of receiving their approved home care package. Many older Australians are waiting more than a year for the package they have been approved for and some are waiting more than two.

We know that the majority of older Australians waiting without care require a higher level package.

Despite this, the Department responsible for home care last week revealed the majority of the new packages announced by the Morrison Government earlier this year are lower level packages.

If the Government is committed to transparency in our aged care system they will release the latest data on the home care package waiting list when it is due later this week.

As the home care waitlist has grown, Scott Morrison and the Liberals have not done enough to fix this crisis. They have been too distracted by dysfunction and division.

Scott Morrison cut \$1.2 billion from aged care in his first Budget as Treasurer - backing in his \$500 million cut in his first MYEFO.



After five years, three Ministers and years of cuts this Government called a Royal Commission into Aged Care . Older Australians deserve better and won't be fooled by Scott Morrison and the Liberals' chaos, who have done nothing but cut aged care funding for years.

## HOME AFFAIRS

### **BORDER FORCE CONFIRMS GOVT STOPPED BOATS PATROLLING BORDERS - Neumann**

The Australian Border Force (ABF) has confirmed they pulled the Cape Class fleet from patrolling our borders late last year to save money on fuel – confirming the cuts and chaos of the Abbott-Turnbull-Morrison Government put Australia's national security at risk.

In December, Peter Dutton tried to deny these cuts ever took place.

"There has been no budget cut, there will be no reduced presence on the water, we have been very clear about that." [Peter Dutton, [press conference](#), 12 December 2018]

However in a [letter](#) to the Senate standing committee on Legal and Constitutional Affairs, ABF Commissioner Michael Outram has admitted, "there was a brief period between 3 and 11 December 2018 where ABF vessels adopted a more risk based approach."

The head of the ABF was correcting evidence he gave to Senate Estimates just last week where he denied [reports](#) that "operational limitations" had been imposed on the ABF's fleet to achieve a fuel saving.

**Mr Outram:** I do recall an article that suggested that we were proposing to withdraw ABF vessels from operations. My point was that that's not accurate... that, though, was a proposal that was not implemented.

**Senator KITCHING:** Can you guarantee that no ABF Cape class vessel stopped active patrolling to save money on fuel?

**Mr Outram:** Yes. That did not happen.

**Senator KITCHING:** So who is responsible for reducing patrols? Was the government was aware of any changes—

**Mr Pezzullo:** I think the commissioner said that that wasn't proceeded with—

**Mr Outram:** It wasn't proceeded with and it wasn't a reduction in patrols; it was a change to the way that we patrol

**Senator KITCHING:** Okay, so you made a change to the—

**Mr Outram:** We didn't make a change, it was a proposal.

**Senator KITCHING:** You didn't make a change? Nothing happened?

**Mr Outram:** Nothing happened.

**Senator KITCHING:** There was no change at all.

**Mr Outram:** There was no change. It was a proposal to see if we could save money on fuel from patrolling differently. [*Senate Estimates, Monday 18 February 2019*]

It is clear – Scott Morrison and Peter Dutton chose to put Australia's border security at risk with their savage cuts.

The Liberals tried to sweep their cuts and chaos under the rug. If the Morrison Government hadn't been caught out, how far would have Scott Morrison and Peter Dutton been willing to go?

Peter Dutton has an ever growing list of failures he needs to come clean over – from handing over a \$423 million contract to a company run out of a beach shack to these vicious cuts to the ABF.

Under Labor, Operation Sovereign Borders will be fully resourced – we will maintain Australia's strong border protection measures and strengthen them even further with new measures to stop people smugglers in their tracks.

Unlike the Liberals, we'll make sure there is enough fuel for the Australian Border Force fleet to protect our borders.

Scott Morrison uses every opportunity to spread baseless lies about Labor's strong position on border protection when he is the one who has undermined Australia's border protection and national security.

## CONSUMER AFFAIRS

### **THE DIGITAL AGE IS A PAY DAY LENDERS FEAST - McAllister**

"So now, as an infallible way of making little ease great ease, I began to contract a quantity of debt."

At one time or another we have all felt as Pip did in Dickens' Great Expectations. Being a consumer in 2019 we are faced with fast fashion, digital innovation and an ease of consumption like never before.

Spiralling debt is not uncommon, with stagnating wage growth and increased cost of living forcing Australians to turn to credit providers to service financial needs.

With 2.1 million Australians under severe or high financial stress<sup>[1]</sup> – the impact of credit has never been more important.

That is why I initiated a Senate Inquiry into credit products targeted at Australians in financial stress.

The rise of financial products that offer quick credit are compounding the pressure to spend. Pay day lenders, and consumer leases offer a quick cash injection.

Not all of these products are new to the market. But they are reaching new audiences via online. 15 years ago, pay day loans were issued in shop fronts or over the telephone. Now 83 percent of loans are accessed via a mobile device or computer.

It's an effective channel.

In just the last few years, 332,000 householders have taken out payday loans for the first time.

Young men and women who would never have dreamed of visiting their local pawn shop are increasingly taking on pay day loans by another name, attracted by modern marketing and a seamless consumer experience that puts a clean new façade on an old, grubby product.

The growth is most pronounced in women. While men still significantly outnumber women as borrowers, the number of women is growing rapidly. Digital Finance analytics calculates that the number of women using payday loans has increased by 22 percent between 2016 and 2018.<sup>[2]</sup>

With effective annual interest rates running up to between 112.1% and 407.6%, why are these consumers willing to pay so much?<sup>[3]</sup> Consumer psychologists are increasingly highlighting the shortcomings in human reasoning that keep financial products like this moving off the shelf as a result of careful marketing campaigns.

The constant stream of ads, carefully targeted at young consumers, leverages the psychological principle of 'mere exposure' – where simply becoming familiar with a brand or product can make it seem more attractive.

In the vision presented in the marketing, pay day lending is no longer for the desperate. It's in fact perfectly normal part of aspirational living. The reality is, these products are still being used and often targeted at vulnerable people, who are using the credit to pay for dentist visits, electricity cost and children's needs.

Consumers are not in a fair fight.

When you're lying on the couch after work browsing online retail, you're no match for complex pressure selling techniques and highly sophisticated targeting.

[In 2012 ASIC indicated that the regulatory framework overseeing internet advertising will need refreshing. However no changes have been made to date.](#) The Senate inquiry recommended that a review is needed, and it is needed urgently.

In the past, the challenges of time and space slowed things down, and helped consumers. To obtain additional credit, you needed to leave the retail environment, and physically present at a bank. Even if credit was approved, it was likely days before it was available.

These built in protective features of the old bricks and mortar shopping environment have now been superseded, but our consumer protection regimes haven't caught up.

Further protections are needed to rein in the excessive fees and charges on these products that end up pushing vulnerable consumers into a debt spiral.

The inquiry, which reported on Friday, recommended that legislation be passed to rein providers that offer products unsuitable to many of their consumers. In 2017, Treasury released a draft exposure bill that would tackle these questions. For over a year the Government has failed to take action and introduce legislation.

These providers have gone largely unchecked for too long. Continuing to ignore these issues will only hurt consumers.

**Senator Jenny McAllister is the Shadow Assistant Minister for Families and Communities and Acting Chair of the Senate inquiry into credit and financial services targeted at Australians at risk of financial hardship**

*This opinion piece was published in The Sydney Morning Herald on Monday 25th February 2019.*

<sup>[1]</sup> NAB and the Centre for Social Impact [Financial Resilience in Australia 2018](#) p15.

<sup>[3]</sup> Consumer Action Law Centre Submission 37, p6.

### **STILL NO EXCUSE TO DELAY PAY DAY LENDING REFORM – Madeleine King**

The [Senate Committee's report](#) into *Credit and financial services targeted at Australians at risk of financial* urges the government to end years of inaction and legislate pivotal reforms to pay day lending practices, to protect Australian consumers. .

Labor knows that many working Australians have been devastated by banks and financial institutions, which is why we called for a Royal Commission into the banking sector, and why we initiated this senate inquiry.

Last week I introduced the Small Amounts Credit Contract reform legislation drafted by the government itself, but which has seen delay after delay due to Liberal infighting and leadership instability.

Assistant Treasurer Stuart Robert assured Labor last year - in writing - that he would delay any action on pay day lending reform until the release of Commissioner Hayne's final report.

Well, the Royal Commission report is out.

The Senate inquiry report is out.

There's no more excuses.

Try looking after vulnerable consumers rather than your chums in the banking and finance industry.

Your move Stuart Robert.

**MARITIME**

### **LABOR WILL CREATE A STRATEGIC FLEET – Shorten/Albanese**

**A Shorten Labor Government will enhance Australia's economic sovereignty and national security by creating a Strategic Fleet to secure our access to fuel supplies, even in times of global instability.**

Australia relies on shipping to move 99 per cent of our imports and exports - it is in Australia's economic, environmental and national security interests to maintain a vibrant maritime industry.

But Australia's own merchant fleet, as well as the skilled workforce it trains and employs, is fast disappearing.

Over the past 30 years, the number of Australian-flagged vessels has shrunk from 100 to now just 14 – and it is in our national interest to change that.

For the past five years the Abbott-Turnbull-Morrison Government has stood idle as large multinationals dumped Australian flagged and crewed vessels so they could hire overseas crews.

This has destroyed the jobs of Australian seafarers and created a situation where none of the vessels our nation relies upon to deliver its essential supplies of crude oil, aviation fuel and diesel are registered in this country or crewed by Australians.

So as a first step, an incoming Labor Government will appoint a Taskforce to guide it on the establishment of the Fleet, which is likely to include up to a dozen vessels including oil tankers, container ships and gas carriers.

The Australian-flagged and crewed vessels will be privately owned and operate on a commercial basis. But they will be available to be requisitioned by the Government in times of national need.

Labor's Strategic Fleet Taskforce will examine the fine details of the



establishment of the fleet.

It will include representatives of oil companies, ship owners and operators, industry body Maritime Industry Australia Ltd, maritime unions and the Department of Defence.

Labor will also enforce existing laws around coastal shipping. That means for trading within Australia where domestic freight is moved between Australian ports, we will require firms to seek out an Australian operator. When none are available, foreign flagged vessels can be used so long as they pay Australian-level wages on domestic sectors.

A Strategic Fleet will put an end to this unilateral economic disarmament, while also providing a platform for the training of more Australia seafarers.

In addition to creating the Strategic Fleet a Shorten Labor Government will address skills shortages in the Australian maritime sector by re-establishing the Maritime Workforce Development Forum, abolished by the Coalition Government after it took office in 2013.

We would also order the Department of Infrastructure to resume proper oversight of the issuance of temporary licences that allow overseas-flagged and crewed vessels to work around our coasts where no Australian flags are available.

Other first-world nations have established shipping fleets - Australia should too. Over the past 30 years, the number of Australian-flagged vessels has shrunk from 100 to now just 14. Compare that to Norway with 519 vessels carrying the Norwegian flag, the United Kingdom with 1157 flagged vessels and China with 4608 flagged vessels.

The Coalition, as part of its attempts to undermine Australian shipping, has been abusing the system by issuing licences for work that is not temporary and in cases where Australian vessels have been available.

The existence of a vibrant Australian shipping industry serves the nation's economic, environmental and national security interests.

## HEALTH

### **\$170 MILLION INVESTMENT IN MEDICARE HEART HEALTH CHECKS – Shorten/ King**

**A Shorten Labor Government will take on the country's biggest killer – cardiovascular disease – with a new \$170 million investment in Medicare that will save lives and improve the health of Australians.**

If elected, Labor will fund a new Medicare item for comprehensive heart health checks so that doctors can better prevent, detect and manage this deadly and costly disease.

Cardiovascular disease, which causes both heart attacks and strokes, is Australia's leading cause of death and illness – with almost 8,000 deaths a year from heart attacks alone.

Labor's investment, part of our Fair Go Action Plan to protect and strengthen Medicare, will prevent an estimated 76,500 heart attacks and strokes over five years.

It will ensure that all at-risk Australians can undergo heart health checks as part of a comprehensive vascular screen that tests their blood pressure and cholesterol, and looks at lifestyle factors such as smoking status.

Similar programs have been used successfully around the world to bring down heart disease rates.

This investment is our first down-payment on a broader Medicare funding package to help GPs tackle chronic disease among patients who enrol in their practices.

We will announce further investments in the lead up to the federal election.

And it comes on top of our commitment to ending the six-year Liberal freeze on Medicare rebates, which has already ripped \$3 billion out of Medicare and out of the pockets of patients.

This is Scott Morrison's Medicare freeze. As Treasurer in 2016, he extended the freeze to 2020, cutting another \$925 million from Medicare.

Scott Morrison has also failed to fund these heart health checks. He should match Labor's investments immediately.

Heart disease is caused by a range of factors, including high blood pressure, high cholesterol, obesity, tobacco use and physical inactivity. That means this is a largely preventable disease – we just need to give GPs and patients the tools to combat it.

Many of the risk factors for heart disease are the same for cancer and other chronic diseases, meaning this investment in general practice and Medicare will improve the nation's health more broadly.

Beyond the personal toll, heart disease has an estimated economic impact of \$6.7 billion a year including \$2 billion in direct health costs. So this is a smart investment that will ultimately save our health system money.

This plan has the backing of the Heart Foundation and a range of other health groups, including the Royal Australian College of General Practitioners, the Cardiac Society of Australia and New Zealand, the Consumer's Health Forum and the Public Health Association.

We will work with GPs, patients and these stakeholder groups on the design of the new Medicare item.

But it shows once again that only Labor can be trusted to protect and strengthen Medicare.



## **Sign up to join the Stop TAFE Cuts campaign.**

**Our TAFE manifesto is a blueprint which outlines a path to fixing Australia's TAFE system.**

**READ THE TAFE MANIFESTO**





# QUEENSLAND WOMEN'S WEEK

## MOVING FORWARD

Open Day for Women of Refugee, Migrant and Asylum  
Seeker Backgrounds

Join us for info sessions on finance, fair work, Small business and Social  
Enterprise employment & training opportunities,

There will be Food, Fun & Dance!

**Saturday 2nd March**

**10am to 2:30pm**

**MDA, 28 Dibley St, Woolloongabba QLD 4102**

**RSVP by 28 of Feb**

For more info and to register, Call on 073844878 or email to [eat@muooz.com.au](mailto:eat@muooz.com.au)



**MAKES SENSE.**

# Cent Auction Fundraiser.



**Sunday 31 March 2019**  
**Doors open 12 noon for**  
**a 1 p.m. start.**

**\$5 ENTRY**  
**FREE TEA & COFFEE**  
**\$1 TICKET SHEETS**  
**BRING YOUR FRIENDS**

Burnie Brae Hall  
60 Kuran Street, Chermside  
4032

It's on again! Be Uplifted Inc is  
hosting our fun and very  
successful Cent Auction  
fundraiser.

**ORGANISER** Kim 0422 072 068

**TICKETS** <https://www.eventbrite.com.au/e/cent-auction-fundraiser-tickets-559510521032> 068



ABN 49 270 645 534

# HAVE YOUR SAY ...

Tell the Government why YOUNG people shouldn't be pushed into aged care

**#EveryStoryMatters**

We can help tell your story to the Royal Commission into Aged Care

Are you younger than 65 years old and... live in a nursing home?

Are currently living in hospital or rehab?

Have lived in a nursing home at some stage in the past 5 years?

At some time in the past 3 years, have been told that you might have to live in a nursing home, but didn't end up having to?

Or do you have a family member or someone you care about in one of these situations?

If so, you have an important story that the Royal Commission into Aged Care needs to hear.

We can help you tell your story

We are holding half-day workshops in many places around Australia. At the workshops, we will help you work out what you want to say, and help you write it for the Royal Commission.

Workshops will be conducted in a one-to-one discussion format with places limited to 6 per workshop. At the end of the workshop, you will have finished a submission for the Royal Commission. Refreshments will be provided.

*If required, we will pay your travel and support costs.*

## QUEENSLAND ROYAL COMMISSION HEARINGS

Toowoomba: 2 April

Brisbane: 3 April

Cairns: 5 April



**End  
Deadly  
Disability  
Discrimination**

**Our health counts. Can we count on you?**

"When I was a baby I got meningitis. This is the reason I have an intellectual disability. My intellectual disability means I am up to three times more likely to die from preventable causes. It also means I could die 27 years earlier than most people."

- **Shu Hua Chan, Chairperson, Council for Intellectual Disability.**

In NSW, with your help, CID has done strong advocacy on the need to reduce the high rate of preventable deaths of people with intellectual disability. As a result of advocacy by us and others, the NSW Government put \$4.7million into specialist intellectual disability health services last year. This is a good win but there is a lot more to do.

So we have joined with our national organisation Inclusion Australia to launch the "Our Health Counts" campaign across Australia. Down Syndrome Australia, the Australian Association of Developmental Disability Medicine and the Department of Developmental Disability Neuropsychiatry (UNSW) have joined the campaign too.

We need leadership now on this issue from the Government of Australia.

We want the Government to commit to doctors and nurses getting a lot more help and training on how to work with people who have an intellectual disability.

We need to fund at least 90 intellectual disability health workers around Australia to train and support GPs and other health workers to provide good health care to people with intellectual disability.

And we want a national inquiry to find out why the health system is failing people with intellectual disability.

**The health of people with intellectual disability counts**

**Can we count on you?**

Can you help us persuade the Australian Government to take the health of people with intellectual disability seriously?

Please [sign our new petition to the Australian Government](#) and ask your friends and family to sign.

[View and share a video of Shu](#) talking about why it is important for the Government to act.

And [go to our website](#) for more ways you can help this campaign. We are counting on you to help us end Deadly Disability Discrimination.

The CID Team



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## Date Claimer

### Union of Australian Women International Women's Day Dinner

Friday 8 March - 6:00 for 6:30 pm

Queensland Council of Unions Building

Great company, speakers and discussion, quizzes and dinner!  
(Bar open as usual.)

Guest Speaker

**Jo-Anne Bragg**

Jo-Anne is the CEO of the Environmental Defenders Office and has been instrumental in the reformation of Queensland's environmental Laws.

**Invitation and Booking Details to be circulated very soon.**

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## Current Senate Inquiries

### Community Affairs Legislation Committee

- **New** [Social Security \(Administration\) Amendment \(Income Management and Cashless Welfare\) Bill 2019](#)

### Community Affairs References Committee

- [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 practised](#)

### Economics Legislation Committee

- **New** [Australian Business Securitisation Fund Bill 2019 \[Provisions\]](#)
- **New** [Banking System Reform \(Separation of Banks\) Bill 2019](#)
- **New** [Commonwealth Registers Bill 2019 and 4 related bills \[Provisions\]](#)
- **New** [Treasury Laws Amendment \(2019 Measures No. 1\) Bill 2019 and the Excise Tariff Amendment \(Supporting Craft Brewers\) Bill 2019 \[Provisions\]](#)
- **New** [Treasury Laws Amendment \(2019 Petroleum Resource Rent Tax Reforms No. 1\) Bill 2019 \[Provisions\]](#)
- **New** [Treasury Laws Amendment \(Combating Illegal Phoenixing\) Bill 2019 \[Provisions\]](#)
- **New** [Treasury Laws Amendment \(Consumer Data Right\) Bill 2019 \[Provisions\]](#)
- [Parliamentary Joint Committee on the Australia Fund Bill 2018](#)
- [Lower Tax Bill 2018](#)
- [Treasury Laws Amendment \(Prohibiting Energy Market Misconduct\) Bill 2018 \[Provisions\]](#)

### Economics References Committee

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

### Education and Employment Legislation Committee

- **New** [Fair Work Amendment \(Right to Request Casual Conversion\) Bill 2019 \[Provisions\]](#)

### Environment and Communications Legislation Committee

- **New** [Environment Legislation Amendment \(Protecting Dugongs and Turtles\) Bill 2019](#)
- **New** [Water Amendment \(Purchase Limit Repeal\) Bill 2019](#)

### 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](#)
- [Australia's faunal extinction crisis](#)
- [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

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

### Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade Legislation Committee

- **New** [Australian Veterans' Recognition \(Putting Veterans and their Families First\) Bill 2019 \[Provisions\]](#)
- **New** [Export Finance and Insurance Corporation Amendment \(Support for Infrastructure Financing\) Bill 2019 \[Provisions\]](#)

### Legal and Constitutional Affairs Legislation Committee

- **New** [Combatting Child Sexual Exploitation Legislation Amendment Bill 2019](#)
- [Migration Amendment \(Streamlining Visa Processing\) Bill 2018 \[Provisions\]](#)

- [National Integrity Commission Bill 2018 \[Provisions\], National Integrity \(Parliamentary Standards\) Bill 2018 \[Provisions\], and National Integrity Commission Bill 2018 \(No. 2\)](#)
- [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](#)

#### **Legal and Constitutional Affairs References Committee**

- **New** [Resolution of disputes with financial service providers within the justice system](#)
- [The effectiveness of the current temporary skilled visa system in targeting genuine skills shortages](#)

#### **Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport Legislation Committee**

- **New** [Performance of the Australian Maritime Safety Authority](#)
- **New** [Export Control Amendment \(Banning Cotton Exports to Ensure Water Security\) Bill 2019](#)
- [Performance of Airservices Australia](#)

#### **Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport References Committee**

- **New** [The feasibility of a National Horse Traceability Register for all horses](#)
- [The provision of rescue, firefighting and emergency response at Australian airports](#)
- [The policy, regulatory, taxation, administrative and funding priorities for Australian shipping](#)
- [The operation, regulation and funding of air route service delivery to rural, regional and remote communities](#)

#### **Select Committee into Fair Dinkum Power**

- [Fair Dinkum Power](#)

#### **Select Committee on Electric Vehicles**

- [Electric Vehicles](#)

#### **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**

- [Parliamentary Scrutiny of Delegated Legislation](#)