



Senator Claire Moore

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THIS WEEK:

Happy New Year to all and we hope you have had a very enjoyable – and rested - break over the festive season.

Ahead of us is a tough and busy time leading up to the Federal election – picking the date is like picking the lottery numbers however an election is expected by May.

Indications are that the Morrison government will try to wait as long as possible in the hope that their shattered electoral reputation improves. Good luck with that!

However you can be assured there will be lots of very negative and deceptive tactics rolled out; expect scare campaigns around boats, the economy, superannuation and negative gearing and that will just be the start.

We must maintain our positive discipline and maintain the hard work that has been done up 'til now.

Just like the hard working members in the seat of Ryan who have working for the election of our candidate, Peter Cossar, who is seen below with supporters at a fundraiser at the Bardon Bowls Club last weekend



SENATOR CLAIRE MOORE, LABOR SENATOR FOR QUEENSLAND

Senator Claire Moore
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CLAIRE'S WEEKLY UPDATE NEWSLETTER

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WHAT'S BEING SAID ...



PRAKASH CITIZENSHIP - DREYFUS-PRESS CONFERENCE - MELBOURNE

"The mess that has been made by the incompetent Mr Dutton who seems more worried about reviving his shrivelled political career than worrying as he should be, about national matters and national security."

PRAKASH CITIZENSHIP- SHORTEN- PALMERSTON - NT

"This shouldn't be a political football and I sincerely hope that Mr Morrison can paper over the problems with Fiji caused by his Home Affairs Minister and his lust for a headline."

PRAKASH CITIZENSHIP - DREYFUS-PRESS CONFERENCE - MELBOURNE

"The government has made a shocking mess of this. It's not too early to apologise. I think the starting point should be an apology to the people of Fiji for the extraordinary behaviour of Mr Dutton and Mr Morrison in trying to tell Fiji how their own citizenship law works."

FISH KILLS - SHORTEN- PALMERSTON - NT

"We have an ecological disaster, an environmental disaster and I just don't like the Government just dismissing people's concerns. This is not business as usual. We've had drought before in our nation, but we're seeing fish dying on an unprecedented scale. Let's get to the bottom of this and work out what's going on."

FISH KILLS - BURKE - MENINDEE

"I don't think you could have a more constructive attempt at dealing with this than for the Leader of the Opposition, the alternative Prime Minister, to write to Scott Morrison and say let's put the scientists in charge and have them report directly to the Parliament, and whatever they recommend you have already got bipartisan support to deliver it. And when you are dealing with 100 year old fish, who have survived drought after drought after drought but couldn't survive the last week? We know we are dealing with something of a different proportion from previous droughts and it's not good enough to simply say maybe it will rain."

ANAO REPORT – GBR FOUNDATION FUNDING - BURKE – ABC RN BREAKFAST

"It didn't look at their past fundraising performance; it didn't look at the fact that the administration costs were significantly more. The Environment Minister told the Parliament only 5% of this money could be spent on administration. That's around \$22 million. The audit office revealed yesterday \$86 million can be spent on administration."

ANAO REPORT – GBR FOUNDATION FUNDING - BURKE – ABC RN BREAKFAST

"They gave nearly half a billion dollars to a small private foundation to do work that is properly done by the CSIRO, by the Department of the Environment, by the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority, by our Universities and our scientists."

SUPERANNUATION - BOWEN – FAIRFIELD WEST SYDNEY

"The Government commissioned a three year Productivity Commission Review which reported just last week. The review explicitly rejected a monopoly government default superannuation fund. Explicitly rejected it. Said it would provide risks to the economy. We see a senior Cabinet Minister out there today in Kelly O'Dwyer endorsing an idea that the Productivity Commission explicitly rejected a week ago."

AGED CARE ROYAL COMMISSION - COLLINS –HOBART

"When you've got a Government that's been in five years, had three Ministers and ripped millions of dollars out, they need to be held accountable for where we are today."

'NEW' MENTAL HEALTH FUNDING – KING – FRANKSTON - VICTORIA

the funding the Government has announced is in fact the existing funding. There'll be no additional or new services out of that funding. It's the existing funding that goes to the Primary Health Networks. So whilst we welcome that there'll be ongoing funding for the Primary Health Networks, what the government hasn't done unfortunately is really work with states and territories, lead a process to actually get better coordination for our mental health services.

AUSTRALIA DAY - SHORTEN - CHANNEL NINE - 'TODAY'

People want to be left alone on Australia Day. I don't want to be the 'Fashion Police' telling people what they can wear at citizenship ceremonies. I just think we ought to leave the politics alone, catch up with our family and friends, and on Australia Day, my wish is for all Australians just to realise what a great country we live in.

CLIVE PALMER - SHORTEN – JABIRU

"I won't take him seriously, and I don't think any of you should either. He can find money for billboards with a vacuous sort of message, or he can pay the workers the money he owes them. To my way of thinking, you look after the workers who have made you the money, you don't look after yourself."

QUOTES OF THE WEEK

"You can't start the story at Chapter 2."

- Tony Burke (Speaking about the Morrison government's defence of its \$450 million grant to the GBR Foundation)

"In a week, five Aboriginal girls have taken their own lives — prompting a warning from one researcher that Indigenous children and young people could soon comprise half of all youth suicides. Researcher Gerry Georgatos says poverty is a major issue in suicide among young Indigenous Australians, but also that sexual predation is a factor in a third of cases. My heart breaks for these girls and their families and their unimaginable pain."

- Belinda Duarte (The Australian)

"In addition to the condescending attitude to one of the region's bigger states, Dutton's announcement is an insult to us, too – to our intelligence."

- Hamish McDonald –SMH (Re the Prakash Citizenship fiasco)

"The Basin Plan needs to be amended to actually look after the environment, rather than just pretend it does."

- Barney Stevens is former secretary of the Darling River Action Group.



Claire, Dr Donnell Davis, Dr Michelle Maloney and Rod Welford at the United Nations Association of Australia (Queensland) Awards night on the 70th anniversary of the UN declaration of Human Rights. The awards this year focused on the UN's Sustainable Development Goals. Dr Michelle Maloney won an award for her environmental work.

AUSTRALIA SETS DEBT-TRAP

Former minister for international development and the Pacific senator Concetta Fierravanti-Wells has slammed the Morrison government for pushing "debt-trap diplomacy" amongst small Pacific countries despite criticising China for the practice.

In the middle of Scott Morrison's tour of Pacific nations, [The Sydney Morning Herald and AAP report](#) that Fierravanti-Wells has labelled the \$2 billion Australian Infrastructure Financing Facility "disingenuous" and, in a corresponding [op-ed](#), advocates instead for mobilising private-sector investments. Her comments come ahead of Morrison's visit to Fiji today, where, amidst the [Prakash citizenship fiasco](#), he will announce a series of "soft-power" initiatives (\$) including low-skilled working visas, new research and drug testing ties and Australian media content.

INCOMPETENCE

An official audit has criticised the Australian government and the environment department for applying "insufficient scrutiny" to numerous aspects of a controversial proposal to award \$443.3m to the [Great Barrier Reef](#) Foundation. [In a report tabled on Wednesday](#), the Australian National Audit Office said the department was given just 11 business days by the government to find a private organisation to deliver the record grant, announced in April last year.

The department decided the foundation was the "obvious" partner after just three days.

The report also finds that the administration costs associated with the grant could be as high as \$86.41m.

The audit was begun last year after the grant was awarded to the small not-for-profit foundation without a tender process.

It identifies "shortcomings in aspects of the department's advice, partly as a result of non-compliance with elements of the grants administration framework". The ANAO identified numerous failings in the department's approach including:

- insufficient scrutiny of the "capacity and capability of the foundation's delivery partners to scale-up their activities",
- insufficient scrutiny of the "foundation's past fundraising performance", despite the foundation's fundraising efforts being a factor in the decision to award it the grant, and
- insufficient scrutiny of the "total administration costs of the partnership model".

The audit finds the department focused on the foundation's costs and did no evaluation of the likely administration costs for delivery partners that worked with the foundation. It says that, once these costs were factored in, the total administration costs associated with the grant could be \$86.41m.

The report finds that the department did not properly consider the risks or potential conflicts of interest that could arise when it assisted the foundation to develop its grant proposal.

It says the approach taken by the department failed to set clear targets for what the grant was to achieve, did not allow for a proper assessment of whether it was value for money and gave "no consideration" to the financial cost to the commonwealth of paying the full grant amount in one year.

BILL BUS HITS THE ROAD

Bill Shorten is launching a nine-day pre-election blitz in Queensland today, starting with a \$33 million plan to take pressure off Logan Hospital's emergency department. The nine-day bus tour – with the Opposition Leader actually on the bus – will cover 1400km and 16 electorates as Mr Shorten road tests the slogan "jobs not cuts". Policies and sweeteners are expected as Labor seeks to take up to eight seats off the Coalition in Queensland. announce a \$33.4 million Urgent and Specialist Care Centre for Logan Hospital, which is suffering from ambulance ramping and corridors used as mental health "wards" due to crowding. The walk-in centre will have 11 beds and 22 specialist consultation rooms to threatening illnesses and injuries and handle up to 15,000 patients a year. He will hold a rally with Labor faithful in South Brisbane today, with national president Wayne Swan. Mr Shorten will then hit the road, accompanied at times by his wife Chloe.



RESIGN



Peter Dutton has won the unenviable honour as the Australia's most unwanted politician in a savage reverse popularity contest run by GetUp. More than 28,700 people cast their vote in the GetUp's poll to find out which conservative politicians people most want to see lose their job at the upcoming election. Mr Dutton (pictured) secured 22,000 votes – more the five times the number of votes cast for Scott Morrison. Mr Abbott (15,932) and Mr Christensen (6090) were next, while former Nationals leader Barnaby Joyce (5065) and Attorney-General Christian Porter (4458) rounded out the top five. Scott Morrison followed with 3835 votes.

MEANWHILE ... DUTTON SAYS – "NO SAUCE!"

Around 300 detainees at the Yongah Hill Immigration detention centre in Western

Australia will enter the third day of a hunger strike today.

Detainees interviewed by Crikey last night said they met with managers from Australian Border Force and Serco yesterday to talk through the issues that have led to the strike. Tensions in the Melbourne and Perth centres have been [high](#) since last week when guards were [filmed](#) forcibly removing an asylum seeker from the canteen area after he reportedly asked for some sauce with his food.



Detainees are also routinely physically restrained with hand or ankle cuffs while they are taken for medical appointments.

The men interviewed said, "Why are we being kept here like this in indefinite detention like we are terrorists at Guantanamo Bay? What kind of country is this? It's worse than a prison and many of us have not committed any crime."

But perhaps the worst aspect of Peter Dutton's personal Gulag is the dictum of "indefinite detention", Many asylum seekers have been in these centres for well over two years. Crikey has interviewed people who have been in detention for over five years and is aware of a young man with no criminal history who

will turn thirty two this year after being in detention for ten years.

[I personally know of one individual who has been incarcerated in this fashion for almost 12 years. – David Margan, Editor]

DUD DUTTON

Decisions made by Peter Dutton when he was immigration minister show the hypocrisy of Australia claiming to have a "non-discriminatory" immigration policy, according to a leading human rights group. Human Rights Watch has expressed the sentiment in its annual assessment of more than 100 countries.



"The hypocrisy of Australia's professed 'non-discriminatory' immigration policy was evident when it was revealed that then-Immigration Minister Peter Dutton intervened to grant tourist visas to foreign nannies on 'public interest' grounds in 2015, while his office denied medical transfers to Australia for asylum seekers in offshore detention," the 674-page report states.

It also examined three other major issues;

There were 570 refugees and asylum seekers on Manus Island in Papua New Guinea and about 600 on Nauru at the time of the report's writing. "Many refugees and asylum seekers suffer from poor mental health or mental illness due to, or exacerbated by, years of detention and uncertainty about their futures, the report states.

The significant over-representation of indigenous Australians in the prison system has also been highlighted in the annual assessment. So too have some cybersecurity and surveillance measures. They include draft laws - introduced to parliament in February - that would allow government agencies, banks and phone companies to use facial recognition to identify customers using identity matching services.

"The proposed laws lack adequate safeguards against abuse," the report said.

MISSING MINISTER



The hapless Federal Environment Minister, Melinda Price, is again missing in action. Despite its significance she has refused to discuss the ANAO office audit of the \$450 million government grant to the Great Barrier Reef Foundation. The report was trenchantly critical of the decision and the process that led up to it. Price, who its believed spends a lot of her time under her desk eating popcorn, couldn't even be bothered responding to a request from the ABC's 'AM' program for an interview on the subject. It would appear 'communication' is not part of her job description or ability. **[ED]**

PECUNIARY INTEREST

Energy Minister Angus Taylor is the latest MP to run into questions over section 44 of the Constitution, after claims emerged over a family company he owns having contracts with the government. "He's had shares in a company, Derwent, which has had a number of contracts with the Commonwealth and he's refusing to make clear exactly when he held those shares.

"It appears that he still held the shares at the time of the last election, which would put his eligibility to sit in Parliament in doubt. "But he's now saying that he sold the shares in January 2016. His problem is that that is inconsistent with what he told the register of interests, with

what he himself put on the register of interests, that members are required to record their interests in. It's also inconsistent with what Derwent, the company in question, told ASIC."

NATS ON THE NOSE



"Nats are plagued by scandal, vested with bullies and riddled with incompetence. The one thing they were supposed to be good at were looking after farmers and they have failed at that." Who delivered that scorching assessment? A senior Labor figure, or one of the more bellicose Greens? Nope, that was [Wagga Liberal branch president Colin Taggart](#), who has "declared war" on the National Party in the state seat of Wagga — which, incidentally, overlaps a great deal with Nationals leader Michael McCormack's own federal seat.

NONSENSE

Mr Palmer is fighting to have criminal charges brought against him by the Australian Securities and Investments Commission thrown out. Mr Palmer claims the charges against him and his company Palmer Leisure Cooloom relating to a failed takeover bid in 2012 are an abuse of process and designed to foil his political aspirations. Palmer argues there is a Federal government conspiracy to ruin his political fortunes .

ONE OF CAPITALISM'S GREATEST GRIFTERS GET THEIR COMEUPPANCE

According to ARA executive director Russell Zimmerman, the latest data adds a further difficulty to an already tough environment brought on by the cost of shop rental.

"Most of the retailers in Australia, a majority of them have a reasonable amount of their stores in larger-style shopping centres. If you're renting from those landlords at the moment you're looking at a lease that either says you'll pay an increase of CPI plus 2 to 2.5 per cent, or an increase of 5 per cent year on year, depending on who the lease is with," Mr Zimmerman said.

At the same time, online shopping and other factors have cut into retailers' growth and brought it down from the 4.5 to 5.5 per cent year-on-year figures seen five to seven years ago, to the 2.76 per cent year-on-year recorded in November, Mr Zimmerman said.

"Explain to me how you can run a business when you're sitting at 2.76 growth year on year, yet your landlord is charging you roughly 5 per cent year on year?" he said.

Roger David's management cited the cost of rent as one of the factors in its closure, announced in October, while veteran fund manager Solomon Lew — whose company Premier Investments owns stakes in Jay Jays, Just Jeans, Jacqui-E, Peter Alexander and Smiggle — has threatened mass store closures if shopping centres don't reduce their rents.

DRUG DEATHS



Before the current apoplexy over music festival drug deaths gets totally out of hand it's worth checking the facts. These are from the National Drug Strategy Household Survey 2016 Which drugs are actually killing us?

- Prescription drugs cause the highest numbers of drug induced deaths.
- Across the whole population, Australians under 35 years of age have lower rates of drug induced death when compared to 1999, while Australians 45 and over, generally have higher rates.
- [According to the ABS](#), in 2016 the most likely person to suffer a drug induced death in Australia would be a middle aged male, living outside of a capital city, misusing prescription drugs such as benzodiazepines or oxycodone in combination. It was considered to most likely be accidental.
- Again, for contrast, there were 1366 registered [alcohol-induced deaths in 2017](#), mostly effecting men in their early 60s. There were an additional 2820 deaths where alcohol was mentioned as a contributory cause of death. A total of 4,186 registered deaths were alcohol related.

People in their 20s continue to be the most likely age group to have used illicit drugs in the last 12 months but use has declined since 2001



In 2015, [an estimated 5785 Australians](#) aged 15 and over died from alcohol-attributable causes in 2015.

MENTAL CRISIS

Almost 4500 Victorians have flooded a major inquiry into the state's mental health system with submissions about the crisis in services for people suffering mental illness, including those at risk of suicide.

Those making submissions are most likely to be women, to be close to someone who suffers from a mental illness or to have one themselves — and they are fed up.

The submissions have arrived in less than a month to help shape the terms of reference for the Mental Health Royal Commission, which was announced by Premier Daniel Andrews before the November election.

Even at this early stage, it is more than four times the number of people who made submissions to Victoria's family violence royal commission.

Figures supplied to The Age reveal that more than 75 per cent of those who have lodged a submission are women.

More than 80 per cent of respondents have used mental health services in Victoria in the past five years, or have someone close to them who has, and more than a quarter of respondents were aged 26 to 35. Their three top priorities for the royal commission were:

- Prevention and early intervention (including early assessment).
- Accessing and navigating the mental health system.
- Acute mental health services (assessment and treatment of people both in hospital and in the community).

LORD HIGH EXECUTIONERS

China has hit back at Australian criticism of the death sentence handed to a Canadian man for the attempted smuggling of 200 kilograms of methamphetamine, calling it "strange". "The smuggled drugs were going to be sent to Australia. You should ask the Australian officials if



they were happy to see these drugs being imported into their country," Chinese foreign ministry spokeswoman Hua Chunying told reporters on Wednesday afternoon. What the Chinese don't get is that Australia has a long running opposition to the use of capital punishment based, in part, on clear evidence that it does not deter crime.

JUST DON'T SMOKE - ANYTHING!

The TGA is alerting consumers to the potential risks of purchasing electronic cigarette liquid. This advice stems from a study which found undisclosed and potentially harmful ingredients in electronic cigarette liquid being sold in Australia, including nicotine and traces of other chemicals, in liquid that claimed to be 'nicotine-free'.

Electronic cigarettes, also known as e-cigarettes, electronic nicotine delivery systems or e-cigs, are devices that turn liquid into mist for inhalation. This is generally done to simulate the act of cigarette smoking.

The study published online by the [Medical Journal of Australia on 14 January 2019](#) details how researchers purchased 10 'nicotine-free' electronic cigarette liquids (a variety of brands and flavours) online and over-the-counter from Australian suppliers. Testing of these products found 60 per cent actually contained nicotine. It is illegal to sell liquids for use in electronic cigarettes which contain nicotine.

All electronic cigarette liquids tested in the study also contained traces of 2-chlorophenol, which is a common breakdown product of some insecticides, herbicides and disinfectants, and is known to irritate human airways and skin. Another substance detected was 2-amino-octanoic acid, which is found in blood, urine, and faeces of mammals and may indicate the contamination of the product during manufacture.

The TGA is reminding consumers that, while these products are sometimes promoted as an option to help people quit smoking, the evidence for electronic cigarettes in smoking cessation is mixed.

The TGA has previously published [information for consumers about electronic cigarettes](#), including information about regulatory issues and potential legal and health risks which remains current and applicable. The TGA is also advising consumers to exercise extreme caution when [buying medicines online](#).

Additional information about electronic cigarettes is available on the [Australian Competition and Consumer Commission \(ACCC\)](#) website. Consumers are encouraged to discuss quitting smoking with their health professional, or by calling [Quitline](#) on 13 78 48.



BAD DOCTOR

The Queensland Civil and Administrative Tribunal (QCAT) has found the behaviour of Dr Robert John Cooke, an orthopaedic surgeon, amounted to unsatisfactory professional conduct in relation to his treatment of a patient in late 2005 and early 2006.



In late 2005 Dr Cooke performed a hip resurfacing procedure on a patient. Five days later, the patient suffered a fracture of the femoral neck and Dr Cooke performed a total hip arthroplasty.

The patient had a complicated post-operative course, requiring re-admission. She developed a wound haematoma, ongoing ooze from the wound, a large deep collection on CT scan and a deep wound infection. The Medical Board of Australia (the Board) referred Dr Cooke to a professional conduct review panel because of his treatment of the patient in respect of the infection, following the total hip arthroplasty. The Board alleged that Dr Cooke's treatment of the patient with respect to the infection amounted to unsatisfactory professional conduct.

Dr Cooke elected to have the matter heard by QCAT, which heard the case on three dates in 2014. QCAT handed down its finding in July 2015.

The Board alleged that Dr Cooke failed to order certain blood tests (erythrocyte sedimentation rate and C reactive protein) before commencing the patient on antibiotics, commenced antibiotics without confirming the presence of an infection and failed to treat the site of the infection with a wound washout.

QCAT found that Dr Cooke's behaviour fell far short of the standards of medical practice expected by the public and the profession, and that his behaviour amounted to unsatisfactory professional conduct. The reasons for the tribunal's decision are available on [AustLII](#).

DISABLED

The rollout of the National Disability Insurance Scheme has created considerable distress within ACT's mental healthcare sector, a study has found. Researchers from the ANU's centre for mental health research surveyed more than 90 per cent of the ACT's mental healthcare providers, finding there was significant uncertainty in the sector. The ACT was a pilot site for the NDIS and the first to fully transition in the country, which saw the transfer of funding from organisations to individuals. The study suggested the NDIS was failing to achieve its core aims for people with a mental illness related disability. It found one-third of ACT provider organisations interviewed did not have guaranteed funding beyond the next 12 months. Nine of the 12 services that commented on the impact of the NDIS expressed deep concern with problems involving planning and other issues. **The ANU study has been published in Australian Psychiatry.**

HOTTEST FURNACE

Australia was home to all 15 of the world's hottest temperatures on Tuesday, a feat it may well repeat later this week as a huge swathe of the nation bakes in 45-degree-plus heat. Tony Abbott, skiing in Austria, responded saying "Climate change was a concoction of Green, Labor and Leftist activists seeking to subvert the very foundations of capitalism." **[That 'quote' was made up ... I think! Ed]**

MEANWHILE

Land-clearing figures show 314,000 hectares felled in Great Barrier Reef catchment

IT'S NOT CRICKET

A recording of an alleged "sonic attack" on US diplomats in Cuba has been analysed by scientists and found to be ... crickets.

Rumours of a mysterious attack on staff at the US embassy in Havana first surfaced in 2016 after diplomats reported hearing loud, piercing noises at night and experiencing strange symptoms including headaches, hearing loss, and problems with memory and concentration.

Medical studies conducted by the US government and several US universities concluded that some embassy staff were showing neurological symptoms from unknown causes.

At no point was there any solid evidence that the symptoms experienced by US embassy staff were due to a targeted attack, let alone evidence of the existence of a 'sonic weapon'.

The incident caused a major rupture in fragile US-Cuba relations. While stopping short of blaming the Cuban government directly, the US pulled more than half of its staff out of the embassy in Havana and expelled 17 Cuban diplomats. In January 2018, [special hearings](#) were held by the US Senate Committee on Foreign Relations into "Attacks on US Diplomats in Cuba."

The emergence of apparently [similar symptoms](#) in US diplomatic staff in China in June 2018 was treated as further confirmation that US diplomats not just in Cuba but around the world were being targeted by some unknown technology, leading to more evacuations and the creation of a specialised task force to investigate the “health attacks”.

The Cuban government has loudly and consistently denied any knowledge or involvement, calling it “[science fiction](#)” and accusing the Trump administration of seeking an excuse to derail the diplomatic thaw initiated under president Barack Obama. Despite devoting thousands of its own personnel to investigating the phenomenon, none of the Cuban government’s efforts were enough to quash swirling rumours about the possibility of a hypothetical “sonic weapon”, or possibly [weaponised microwaves](#). The Chinese and [Russian](#) governments were also publicly floated as possible culprits.

However, [new analysis](#) of a recording of the alleged attack (provided by US diplomatic personnel in Cuba and published this month by the Associated Press) has found that, far from being a ground-breaking new piece of military technology, it is, in fact, the calling song of the Indies short-tailed cricket.



ABATTOIRS

More than 13 million animals were used for scientific research, testing and teaching in Queensland last year. That was a staggering 194 per cent increase on the previous year, when 4.52 million animals were used. Poultry, such as chickens, were the most common animal to be used for scientific purposes in Queensland last year. Poultry made up the biggest group of animals used for scientific purposes in 2017-18, with more than 12 million, followed by almost half a million “other native mammals”, which included flying foxes and bandicoots. Turtles, cattle, kangaroos, rabbits, dogs, whales and dolphins, possums, pigs, cats, koalas, mice and wombats were also used.



BOTTOMS

More than a half of Australians are still throwing their free bowel cancer home-testing kits in the bin, as a new advertising blitz is launched to encourage more people to participate in the life-saving program. Despite offering a 90 per cent chance of being successfully treated if detected early, of the 3.2 million Aussies invited to screen themselves between January 2015 and December 2016, 41 per cent participated in the program — only a 2 per cent increase on the previous screening period. **DROP THE KIT AND USE THE KIT! –Ed**



Is this a visiting space ship - named Oumuamua, a Hawaiian word meaning “a messenger from afar arriving first”?

RETIRED

ALP senator to quit politics Labor’s longest-serving female Victorian senator, Jacinta Collins, has announced she would not contest the next election, citing “family health issues” for her decision to quit politics. The manager of opposition business in the Senate said it had been a “real privilege” to represent the state but the time was right to move on. “I have been grappling with challenging family health issues for several years and I am keen to pursue a better work and family balance,” she said yesterday. Senator Collins, who is the second longest-serving female Labor Senator after Dorothy Tangney, declared Bill Shorten was leading a team “ready to govern”.

JACINTA COLLINS - Shorten

On behalf of my colleagues and the entire labour movement, I thank my friend Jacinta Collins for her valuable contribution to our party and to the Parliament.

Jacinta is Victoria’s longest serving female Labor Senator.

In the Senate, in the Ministry and Shadow Ministry, in Estimates – Jacinta has won a reputation as a smart, fearless and determined Parliamentarian.

As Shadow Cabinet Secretary and Manager of Opposition Business in the Senate, Jacinta has run a tight ship, and helped deliver Labor’s stability and purpose in Opposition.

She has also been pivotal in Labor’s outreach to multicultural and faith communities.

As Opposition Leader, I have often benefited from Jacinta's personal counsel, always delivered without fear or favour. After more than two decades in Canberra, Jacinta has certainly earned the right to spend more time with her family. With our thanks and goodwill, we wish Jacinta all the best for the next part of her life.



LABOR TO DELIVER MEDICARE-FUNDED MRI SCANS FOR BRISBANE'S NORTHSIDE

Shorten/King/Swan/Wells -Labor Candidate –Lilley/France-Labor candidate - Dickson

The people of Brisbane's north side will benefit from better access to affordable life-saving medical scans under a Shorten Labor Government. Labor will deliver a full Medicare-funded MRI licence to The Prince Charles Hospital, ensuring locals can access the scans they need close to home without paying high out-of-pocket costs.

This is part of Labor's Fair Go Action Plan to protect Medicare and fix our hospitals.

The Prince Charles is a major Brisbane hospital with over 600 beds. It has a particular speciality in heart imaging and has two MRI machines as part of its Centre of Excellence in Cardiovascular MRI.

However neither MRI machine has a full Medicare licence – meaning Medicare doesn't cover scans for most outpatients.

Labor will upgrade one of these MRIs to a full licence, expanding access to bulk-billed MRI scans and cutting wait times.

A bipartisan Senate inquiry recognised Brisbane's north side as an area of major shortage a year ago.

The Government's own data shows that the Brisbane North Primary Health Network has one of the lowest numbers of fully eligible MRIs per capita in the country. The Liberals have acknowledged there's a shortage but after nearly six years in power they've done nothing about it. That's typical of the Abbott-Turnbull-Morrison Government. They know there's a problem – but they're too distracted by their own divisions to actually fix them.

This announcement builds on Labor's commitment to also deliver an MRI licence to nearby Redcliffe Hospital. Elsewhere in Queensland, Labor has also promised an MRI licence for Gladstone.

MRI scans are used to detect and diagnose conditions that affect soft tissue – including tumours and cancer – and can mean the difference in detecting a disease as early as possible. But they only attract a rebate if they are performed on a machine with a licence.

Labor has a proud record on MRIs, granting 238 licences when we were last in office. That means hundreds of communities are benefiting from the early detection and diagnosis of disease today because of Labor's investment.

The Liberals on the other hand neglected this issue for most of their time in office, granting just one a year in their first five years. It has only been in recent months they have recognised their dismal failure in this space and moved to match Labor's commitments.

Labor has already announced 10 new licences for public hospitals around the country. We will still deliver a further 10 licences through a transparent application process if we win Government. Labor's investment in MRI licences comes on top of our commitment to invest an extra \$2.8 billion in public hospitals.

We will reverse the Liberal public hospital cuts and ensure our emergency departments and hospital wards have the doctors, nurses and hospital staff to keep up with record demand.

Labor can afford to protect Medicare and fix our hospitals because we are tackling unfair tax loopholes and making multinationals pay their fair share.

LABOR WILL BUILD URGENT CARE CLINIC AT LOGAN HOSPITAL

King/Chalmers/Hardman ALP Candidate -Forde

A Shorten Labor Government will deliver better access to emergency and specialist outpatient care for the people of Logan – and reduce pressure on the local hospital's emergency department – by building a new Urgent and Specialist Care Centre.

This is part of Labor's Fair Go Action Plan to protect Medicare and fix our hospitals.

The Logan region is growing rapidly, and its population is ageing and has more complex health requirements than most, putting enormous pressure on local health services.

Labor will invest \$33.4 million to establish the new Centre, which will treat people with urgent but not life-threatening illnesses and injuries – meaning they won't end up in Logan Hospital, freeing up doctors and nurses to deal more quickly with more serious emergencies.

The Centre will be run by the hospital and include 11 urgent care beds to treat people with injuries such as minor fractures, dislocations, abrasions and lacerations, as well as respiratory tract infections.

Outpatient care will be a key focus of the Centre with the inclusion of 22 specialist consultation rooms – boosting Logan Hospital's capacity by a

third – and boast pathology, diagnostic imaging and pharmacy services.

The new walk-in Centre will operate seven days a week and is expected to see over 15,000 patients a year.

This will not only reduce pressure on Logan's emergency department – and the hospital car park – but also reduce the need for people to travel for hospital services. More people will be able to access care in their own community.

This is another example of Labor's commitment to delivering the best possible health care for all Australians, no matter where they live or how much money they have.

The Liberals on the other hand just cut and cut and cut: including a \$6.1 million cut from Logan Hospital from 2017 to 2020, equivalent to 9,000 ED visits or 15,000 outpatient appointments. That's part of a \$160 million cut to Queensland and a \$715 million cut nationwide.

Now Scott Morrison is trying to lock in those cuts for another five years - but the Queensland Labor Government has rejected their inadequate deal.

Labor will reverse the Liberal cuts with our \$2.8 billion Better Hospitals Fund – including through projects such as this one.

This announcement builds on Labor's proud record in Logan. In 2011, federal Labor invested \$175 million to deliver 50 new beds and a new ED building at Logan Hospital.

And in 2017 Queensland Labor committed \$281 million for the Logan Hospital redevelopment, including a bed increase from 448 to up to 640, and \$12.6 million for a new maternity ward. This project will support the redevelopment.

The site for the new Centre will be determined in consultation with Logan Hospital and the local community, including the council and local education institutions.

Only Labor can be trusted to fix Queensland's hospitals.

STUART ROBERT GETS IT WRONG - Leigh

Back at the desk after a year being [investigated by ASIC](#), justifying his [business dealings](#), and being forced to repay a [\\$38,000 internet bill](#), Stuart Robert has blundered again.

In a media release this week, Mr Robert states that Labor voted against the Coalition's Multinational Anti-Avoidance Law.

In fact, Labor supported that bill through both the House and the Senate.

Perhaps Mr Robert is confusing Labor's position with that of the Coalition, who when in opposition voted against Labor's 2013 crackdown on multinational tax avoidance. At the time, the Coalition claimed that Labor's multinational tax avoidance measure was retrospective (it wasn't). That Labor law has since yielded [hundreds of millions of dollars](#) for the budget bottom line.

Rather than cooking up pork pies, Mr Robert should adopt Labor's 15-point plan to crack down on multinational tax avoidance.

1. Tighten debt-deduction loopholes used by multinational companies, improving the Budget by \$3 billion over the medium term.
2. Close a debt deduction loophole to ensure consistent treatment in related party financing arrangements.
3. Automatically deny deductions from companies for travel to and from tax havens.
4. Increase penalties for individuals and entities promoting tax evasion and avoidance.
5. Crack down on citizenship shopping by requiring all individual Australian taxpayers to notify and declare to the Australian Taxation Office if they have residency or citizenship of any other jurisdiction and the name of that jurisdiction.
6. Introduce public reporting of country-by-country reports, ensuring the release of high-level tax information about where and how much tax was paid by large corporations (over \$1 billion in global revenue).
7. Provide protection for whistle-blowers who report on entities evading tax to the Australian Taxation Office and, where whistle-blowers' information results in more tax being paid, allow them to collect a share of the tax penalty (a reward of up to \$250,000).
8. Introduce a publicly accessible registry of the beneficial ownership of Australian listed companies and trusts, allowing the public to find out who really owns our firms.
9. Introduce mandatory shareholder reporting of tax haven exposure, requiring companies to disclose to shareholders as a 'Material Tax Risk' if the company is doing business in a tax haven.
10. Appoint a community sector representative to the Board of Taxation to ensure community sector voices are heard in tax design and review processes.
11. Introduce public reporting of Australian Transaction Reports and Analysis Centre (AUSTRAC) data and require the annual public release of international cash flow data.
12. Require all firms tendering for Australian Government contracts worth more than \$200,000 to state their country of domicile for tax purposes.
13. Develop guidelines for tax haven investment by superannuation funds.
14. Require that the Australian Taxation Office's annual report provide information on the number and size of tax settlements.
15. Restore Labor's \$100 million threshold for public reporting of tax data for private companies, which was raised to \$200 million by the Liberals and Greens in a move which exempted two-thirds of private firms from tax transparency.

FOREIGN AFFAIRS

CHAOS AND DIVISION UNDERMINES PACIFIC POLICY, AGAIN - Wong/Moore

Scott Morrison's attempts to repair relations with Pacific nations has been dealt another blow after former Minister for International Development and the Pacific, Concetta Fierravanti-Wells, launched an extraordinary attack midway through the Prime Minister's tour of Vanuatu and Fiji.

In an opinion piece for [The Sydney Morning Herald](#) and *The Age*, the former minister slammed Morrison's key Pacific initiative – the infrastructure financing facility – accusing it of being “disingenuous” and “not in the long-term interests of Pacific Island countries”.

This latest Coalition division follows Peter Dutton's bungling of the Neil Prakash citizenship issue. Mr Morrison will now need to spend his time in Fiji repairing the damage that Dutton's incompetence has inflicted on the bilateral relationship with Fiji.

Labor has long argued that Australia must demonstrate greater leadership in the Pacific and play our part in ensuring a stable and prosperous region. But the chaos and division inside the Coalition continues to undermine Australia's engagement in the Pacific.

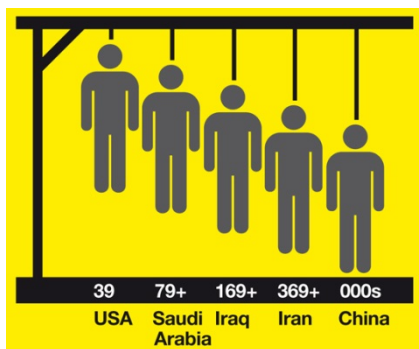
Mr Morrison's announcement of funds for projects to deal with the impacts of climate change is welcome, but disingenuous. No issue has done more damage to Australia's standing in the region than the Coalition's refusal to take seriously the issue of climate change.

The Pacific has felt the impact of the record \$11 billion in aid cuts under this government. A quick trip by Morrison to the Pacific after years of his government's neglect of these critical relationships isn't going to fix that.

Unlike the Morrison Government, we will treat our Pacific partners with respect. Unlike the Coalition, we understand the need to reflect our commitments to our Pacific neighbours in our actions.

A Shorten Labor Government will work in partnership with Pacific island states to contribute to the security and prosperity of the entire region.

LABOR OPPOSES DEATH PENALTY IN ALL CIRCUMSTANCES – Wong/Moore



Labor as a matter of principle opposes the death penalty in all circumstances for all people. This is a long-held bipartisan position.

Like the government, we are deeply concerned regarding the death sentence delivered by the Intermediate People's Court of Dalian in the Chinese province of Liaoning to Canadian citizen Robert Lloyd Schellenberg.

Labor stands by Canada in its efforts to ensure its citizens are treated in a fair, unbiased and transparent manner.

ECONOMY

FRYDENBERG BUNGLES TIMING ON DEFENDING THE WEALTHY– Bowen

The latest scare campaign by Josh Frydenberg to protect the tax concessions of the wealthiest Australians has turned into another Liberal Party own goal.

Professor John Glover (RMIT), one of the authors of the recent report commissioned by the Australian Tax Office 'Current Issues with Trusts and the Tax System' has stood by the report today, saying on Australia's much needed trust taxation reform ***"The rest of the world has moved on, but we still have that very old method of taxing trusts."***

The [article posted online](#) today by the ABC details the report which found that misuse of trusts has been potentially costing the Budget billions of dollars through tax avoiding "income tax shuffles" including income splitting via beneficiaries.

Under the Liberals, multinationals and millionaires aren't paying their fair share of tax.

Labor's reforms to the taxation of trust is simply an extension of John Howard's work as Treasurer, in seeking to apply a minimum standard tax rate of 30 per cent to discretionary trust distributions to beneficiaries over 18 years of age.

This Treasurer is ignoring the experts and facts when it comes to critically needed reform to benefit the country, preferring a shrill political scare campaign to defend the wealthy.

Only Labor will close down tax loopholes that overwhelmingly benefit the top end of town so we can pay for better schools and hospitals for all Australians.

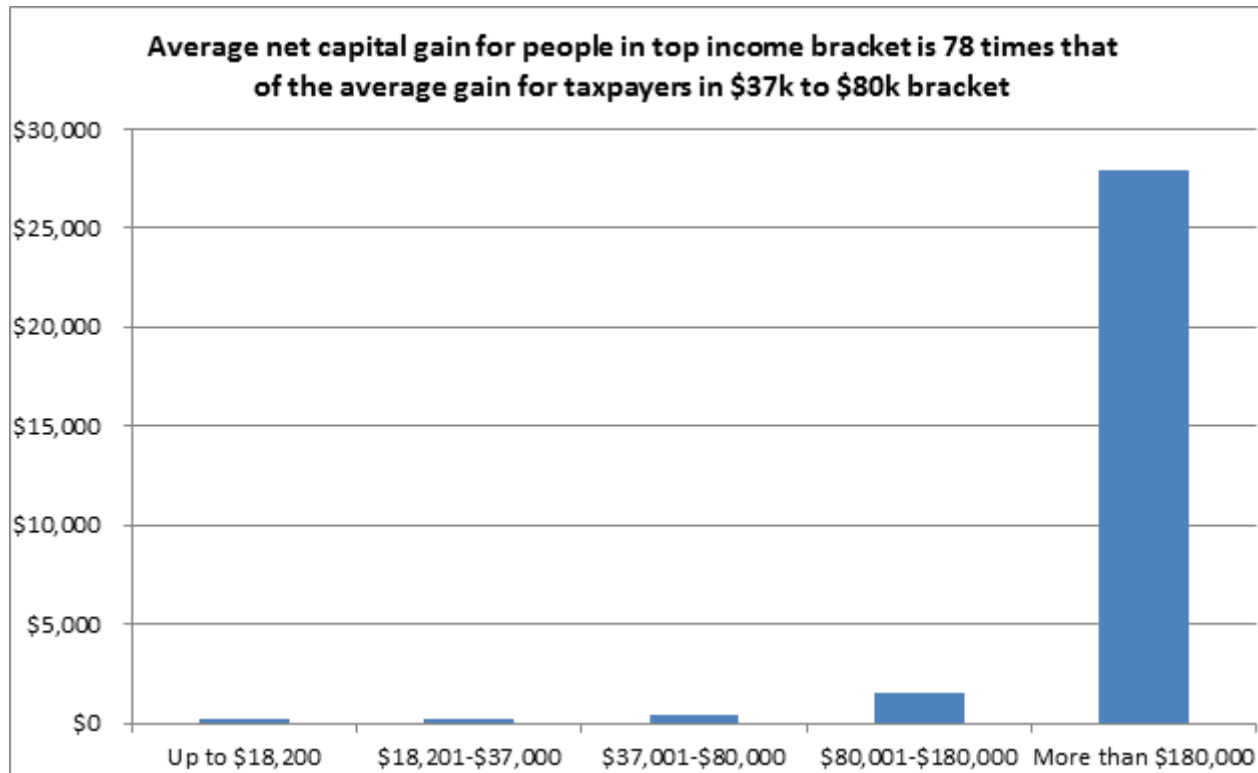
FRYDENBERG'S TAX HANDOUTS FOR TOP END OF TOWN - Bowen

Josh Frydenberg needs to confirm that 70 per cent of the benefit of the capital gains tax discount flows to the 10 per cent of income earners. The Liberal Party continues its pathetic defence of tax concessions that benefit the wealthy while refusing to properly fund Australia's schools and hospitals.

The fact is that there is no tax concession or discount that is so heavily skewed towards high income earners – the capital gains tax discount was created 20 years ago in a high inflation environment and it's time that it was reformed.

The repeated use of taxable income data by the Liberal Party goes far beyond being misleading, it's just plain embarrassing.

It has been repeatedly called out by independent economists like the [Grattan Institute](#) too.



Taxable income data shows the amount of tax paid – it does NOT represent your financial position. Higher income earners are in a better position than low or middle income earners to drive down their taxable income through use of tax concessions and deductions.

Despite the obvious flaws with using taxable income data to demonstrate who benefits from tax concessions when they are deliberately designed to drive down your taxable income, the Liberal Party's pet data does show:

- The average capital gain for all people in the top income bracket was 78 times higher than that of all income earners in the middle income bracket;
- Just 1 in 25 for of all taxpayers received a capital gain in the middle income bracket which compares with 1 in 6 taxpayers in the top income bracket – that is, people on lower income don't typically have capital gains compared with higher income earners;
- Almost two thirds of capital gains that were realised went to income earners in the top income tax bracket.

OUT OF TOUCH LIBERALS PROTECT TAX LOOPHOLES – Bowen

Another day, another dishonest scare Liberal Party scare campaign to protect the tax concessions of the wealthiest.

Labor makes no apologies for closing down tax loopholes that overwhelmingly benefit the top end of town so we can pay for better schools and hospitals for all Australians.

Under the Liberals, multinationals and millionaires aren't paying their fair share of tax.

Labor's reforms to the taxation of trust is simply an extension of John Howard's work as Treasurer, in seeking to apply a minimum standard tax rate of 30 per cent to discretionary trust distributions to beneficiaries over 18 years of age. Labor's reforms means wealthy people will not be able to artificially split up their income to minimise their tax.

Nurses, teachers and tradies can't minimise their tax through tricky loopholes – so why should anyone else? It's not fair.

Federal Labor's plans are well targeted, with 98 per cent of all taxpayers unaffected by the changes. That's because most Australians aren't able to access this loophole.

Given that both Peter Costello and Joe Hockey and previously *The Australian* newspaper thought trust taxation should be reformed, it is

remarkable that Josh Frydenberg thinks what is clearly tax minimisation should be defended.

The Australian newspaper was highly critical of the Rudd government in 2008 for not clamping down on family trusts.

“The government has yet to show it is serious about biting the bullet on the bigger tax-reform issues that have proved too difficult for successive governments in the past. These include the use of family trusts to shelter taxable income,” - an editorial in The Australian argued on June 18, 2008.

The Australian Taxation Office has expressed concerns around income splitting and the ‘spiking’ of taxpayers just below the marginal tax rate thresholds who receive a distribution from trusts.

An increase in the numbers of taxpayers just under tax thresholds – as the ATO argues is partly due to the use of trust distributions – is clear evidence that some are trying to avoid paying their marginal rate of tax.

Research commissioned by the tax office – and released under Freedom of Information laws – showed that the abuse of trusts is potentially costing the Budget billions of dollars, and concluded that ‘orchestrating income tax shuffles can be particularly advantageous for high wealth individuals’.

It is completely unsurprising to see the Liberal Party continue its full frontal defence of all tax concessions that overwhelmingly benefit the wealthy at the expense of low and middle income PAYG tax payers.

The current law that the Liberal Party supports has let wealthy individuals use family and discretionary trusts to split their income and make use of the tax free threshold and lower income brackets of non-working family members.

Wealthy individuals are much more likely to have a trust than low and middle income earners. The average amount held in private trusts by the wealthiest 20 per cent of households in Australia is more than \$123,000, while for the next quintile it’s just \$4,000.

Small businesses using trusts legitimately such as asset protection can restructure to retain these benefits.

MORRISON PLAYING POLITICS WITH AUSTRALIANS’ SUPER - Bowen

2019 sees the Abbott-Turnbull-Morrison Government continue with its blind prejudice against industry funds and refusal to put members’ interest first.

This has reached bizarre levels with a Senior Cabinet minister supporting moving default members into a monopoly government fund, despite this fund achieving lower returns than most industry funds and despite the Productivity Commission explicitly finding such a move would create fiscal risk.

This prejudice hit new lows yesterday with a bizarre intervention from the Prime Minister.

Yesterday, the Prime Minister doubled-down on the Liberals’ war on industry super funds, stating:

“I think what it has highlighted is the real weakness that is there in the system, which is being built up by the power-grab of the unions when it comes to managing Australians’ money.”

These comments are ridiculous. The Productivity Commission report confirmed what the APRA data has told us for years – “underperformers span both default and choice, and most (but not all) affected members are in retail funds.”

It’s time for Scott Morrison, Kelly O’Dwyer and the Liberals to drop their obsession with industry funds and get on with the job of fixing the superannuation so that it works for all Australians, no matter what type of fund they are in.

Scott Morrison voted against the Banking Royal Commission 26 times. The Liberals are divided, out of touch, and only for the top end of town. They simply have no interest in fighting for a better deal for ordinary Australians.

Labor is the architect of compulsory superannuation in Australia. It is a world-class system which Labor is committed to protecting and strengthening. Our number one priority for superannuation is putting members’ interests first – this means getting Australians defaulted into high-quality funds, and helping people out of dodgy and poor-performing funds.

We want members to get a good deal, regardless of whether they’re in an industry, corporate, or retail super fund.

The Productivity Commission has highlighted some big areas for reform in the superannuation sector. Labor will carefully examine the Productivity Commission’s findings and recommendations, alongside the Royal Commission’s Final Report and consult experts and stakeholders in the coming weeks about how we can improve the system for all.

LIBERAL CHAOS AND DIVISION GREETES 2019 LIKE AN OLD FRIEND - Bowen

It’s a new year, same Liberal Party, as the Prime Minister was today forced to rebuke Cabinet Minister Kelly O’Dwyer for endorsing the Future Fund as a government monopoly default fund.

Mr Morrison said in relation to this proposal being pushed by Minister O’Dwyer: “...I’m aware of that proposal, it’s not Government policy.”

This is a suggestion being pushed by Peter Costello and rejected as creating ‘fiscal risk’ by the Productivity Commission in its three year inquiry report into superannuation.

Part-time Treasurer Josh Frydenberg said last week that the Government would respond to the Productivity Commission after the release of the Banking Royal Commission final report. Fair enough.

But then today, Kelly O’Dwyer who is a Cabinet Minister with no responsibility for superannuation, decided to announce her support for the Future Fund default proposal telling the Australian Financial Review that a **“very simple, low-fee government default fund option, via the Future Fund, makes sense for a compulsory system”**.

Is Ms O’Dwyer using the partial vacancy in the Treasury portfolio being created by Josh Frydenberg who is more focused on the Labor Party than the economy, wages or superannuation, to assert her claim on his job? Ms O’Dwyer when she was the minister with responsibility had the single achievement of waging war on industry funds in the name of ideology.

Given the concerns around performance of retail funds that has been outed by both the Banking Royal Commission and the Productivity Commission, some Liberals are now taking their anti-industry fund crusade to bizarre lengths, now mounting the argument for a new government monopoly default fund.

The Productivity Commission did not recommend the Future Fund be adopted as a monopoly default fund and instead highlighted the risks with adopting such an approach.

It is the latest sign of government chaos and dysfunction that the only thing the Liberal Party is discussing out of the Productivity Commission's superannuation report is something it firmly rejected.

MORRISON AND FRYDENBERG AT ODDS OVER ECONOMY - Bowen

The Liberal Party is completely rudderless regarding its messaging as shown by Scott Morrison and Josh Frydenberg now being at odds about risks to the Australian economy.



According to Scott Morrison, there is now global economic 'storm clouds' brewing that

threatens the Australian economy. Before Christmas I warned about some of the global economic risks we face in the coming period.

Josh Frydenberg jumped on my speech and comments at the time and accused me of talking down the economy.

Does he now accuse Scott Morrison of the same thing?

The Australian people have every right to be confused about the Liberal Party given one minute they're talking up the strength of the economy and the next minute talking about storm clouds brewing.

At MYEFO, the Treasurer had nothing to say about the global economic risks. This was despite MYEFO showing lower growth, investment and wages growth than what was forecast at Budget time.

We have seen at the last National Accounts and at MYEFO that we have a slowing Australian economy, with low wages growth and weak investment.

Unfortunately all we have for a national government and Prime Minister and Treasurer is an obsession with the Labor Party and a reckless failure to provide a vision or plan for the economy and country.

FRYDENBERG'S 'NO COMMENT' SHOWS HE'S NOT UP TO BEING TREASURER - Bowen

'No comment' is the best the Treasurer of Australia can offer on an issue where our regulators – and the Government's five year old financial systems review – have been voicing concern over the risks for years.

The Liberal Government was warned about the risks of limited recourse borrowing arrangements for self-managed superannuation by its own Financial Systems Inquiry (FSI) back in 2014, yet we've now seen borrowings since then nearly double to \$32 billion.

These sorts of risks have gone unchecked by the Abbott-Turnbull-Morrison Government. The focus for the Liberal Party is on the Labor Party and not where it should be, which is on the economy and insuring against emerging global and domestic risks.

This is a Government that has been asleep at the wheel when it comes to listening to the advice and managing risks in the economy.

Federal Labor has highlighted the concerns of regulators and the FSI for years and announced we would ban SMSF limited recourse borrowing arrangements two years ago now.

The Liberal Party has continued to recklessly ignore the financial stability risks associated with Australia having the second highest household debt in the OECD for years now.

ANALYSIS PROVES LABOR'S NEGATIVE GEARING POLICIES 'SOUND' - Bowen

New analysis this week again demonstrates that Josh Frydenberg's scare tactics aren't deterring independent experts from pointing out Labor's changes to negative gearing and capital gains are well founded.

Analysis released by KPMG today in a new housing report commenting on Labor's changes to negative gearing and capital gains policies states:

"From an investment perspective, it would seem these policies are unlikely to distort the investment mix decision based on existing settings (ie property versus shares or other assets)"

"Overall, the policies proposed are sound"

This analysis comes on the back of research earlier this week conducted by global bank Citi which concluded Labor's policies would likely have a *"relatively muted impact"* given Labor's responsible grandfathering arrangements.

This is yet further evidence that Josh Frydenberg is out of his depth when it comes to commenting on economic matters preferring to rely on mistruths and the views of vested interests rather than

credible analysis by independent experts.

There's no surer sign of a flailing government when its chief economic spokesperson has nothing to say except spend every minute of every day talking about Labor and not about the slowing economy or wages growth.



The Australian people know what whenever Josh Frydenberg talks about Labor's policies he is really just trying to divert attention away from the fact he's fast losing control of the current credit crunch facing households and small businesses and has no positive economic plans of his own for the Australian economy.

Reforming negative gearing and the capital gains tax discount will improve housing affordability, help with Budget repair, and importantly improve financial stability.

AUDITOR-GENERAL PINS LIBERALS ON GBR FOUNDATION DEBT HIT – Bowen

Scott Morrison and Josh Frydenberg have been caught red handed failing to consider the interests of the taxpayer of their cash splash of \$440 million to the Great Barrier Reef Foundation in one hit.

The Auditor-General concluded that: "no consideration was given to the financial cost to the Commonwealth (in terms of additional public debt interest) of paying the full grant amount in 2017–18."

This is a serious abrogation of ministerial responsibility by Scott Morrison, Josh Frydenberg and Mathias Cormann.

All handing over the amount in one lump sum did was give a private benefit to a small, private foundation with a cost to the taxpayer through higher public debt interest.

Labor called out the then Treasurer Scott Morrison on 16 August 2018 for neglecting his duty on debt despite being in the room when the decision was taken to hand the money over.

[Mr Morrison's answer in Question Time](#) in response to this specific matter being raised was more focused on Nemo than the taxpayer.

It's completely unsurprising that Josh Frydenberg, the then Environment Minister and now Treasurer was complicit in adding millions of dollars to public debt without any sort of consideration. He's not up to the job of Treasurer now let alone when he didn't have the job.

REFORMS TO IMPUTATION MAKE TAX SYSTEM FAIR AND SUSTAINABLE– Bowen

A research note by Citi's financial analysts forecasts three of the big four banks with higher share prices than now under Labor's reforms to dividend imputation.

The note says **"a change of government is not to be feared"** and is advising clients to buy bank shares in 2019.

And in a cruel blow for Josh Frydenberg's 'it's all Labor's fault' campaign, the Citi research note says in relation to Labor's reforms to negative gearing that **"the impacts of changing government policy are expected to be somewhat muted"**.

These are the facts on dividend imputation and cash refunds:

- The stock market more than doubled between 1987 and 2000 when cash refunds weren't part of the dividend imputation system;
- 92 per cent of individual tax payers do not receive cash refunds;
- The vast majority of countries don't have any dividend imputation, let alone refundability, and their stock markets do just fine;
- When the UK unwound refundability it resulted in little impact on the price of UK equities.

Federal Labor wants to move the Australian tax system away from one that distorts investment to one that encourages diversification which will ultimately benefit savers.

Australia is the only economy with a fully refundable dividend imputation system, it has become unsustainable, and Labor's priorities mean this must be reformed in favour of plans to properly fund schools and hospitals.

ENVIRONMENT

AUDIT REPORT MARK ON THE REEF GRANT COMES BACK TO A - FAIL - Burke

The release today of the Australian National Audit Office's (ANAO) investigation in to awarding of a \$443.3 Million to a small private foundation, the Great Barrier Reef Foundation, comes back to a single word - Fail.



Great Barrier
Reef Foundation

The damning report found that the government:

- failed to properly scrutinise the Foundation's proposal in regard to the capacity and capability of the Foundation's delivery partners to scale-up their activities;
- failed to adequately check the Foundation's past fundraising performance – whether they could deliver on their claims;
- failed to realise that the total administration costs of the Grant could be almost double what they thought – "the department focused on the foundation's costs, with no evaluation attention given to the administration costs of the foundation's delivery partners (pg. 9);"
- failed to consider government debt - "no consideration was given to the financial cost to the Commonwealth (in terms of additional public debt interest) of paying the full grant amount in 2017–18" (pg. 31);
- failed to properly look for other funding partners – picking a winner in their corporate

mates; and

- failed to properly consider whether the grant proposal would deliver value for money – taxpayer's money.

The Report makes it clear that the Department only took three days to decide on the Foundation as the preferred recipient of the huge grant (pp.25-27). The Report also makes clear the Department signed a funding agreement allowing the Foundation and its partners to spend nearly \$87 million on administration costs (p.63).

This is a Government that is reckless with other people's money. The simple message to Scott Morrison and Josh Frydenberg is - it's not your money - it's not your money to throw away to your corporate friends.

The Reef belongs to all of us.

It's a critical period now for coral reefs around the world and this government had no right to throw away nearly half a billion dollars without proper due diligence and process.

It's clear from this report that the Great Barrier Reef Foundation should not have been given this money. It is almost laughable that the Department helped them write their funding proposal and it still falls short.

If elected Labor will be demanding all remaining funds and interest are returned in accordance with the contract.

FISH KILLS A NATIONAL EMERGENCY, THE PRIME MINISTER MUST ACT – Shorten/Burke
Reports from the NSW Primary Industries Minister Niall Blair that there have been more fish kills across the State, including on the NSW-Victorian border at Lake Hume, are unacceptable.

This ecological disaster is now becoming a national emergency. The Australian Government needs to act now.

The reports of a new fish kills surfaced soon after it was revealed that the NSW Water Minister did not know about the Government's "emergency meeting" that Ministers, including the Federal Water Minister, won't attend.

Minister Blair is quoted in Fairfax Media saying: *"It was all news to us" - "I'm at a bit of a loss - what is it going to do?"*

It is astounding that the NSW Water Minister doesn't know why the meeting is happening. It is also being reported the reason the Federal Minister hasn't visited affected areas is because he is travelling to Germany.

On Monday, the Shadow Minister for Environment and Water visited Menindee to inspect the disaster first hand, and to meet with locals. The Prime Minister must direct his Water Minister to do the same.

Labor has written to the Government requesting an urgent scientific taskforce to immediately get to the bottom of how this unfolding disaster has taken place. This review was to be focussed on the Darling River and Menindee. It now needs to include the latest fish kills.

Labor has offered to support the findings of the scientific review and if that means urgent changes to legislation, we will support that.



But Australia also needs the Prime Minister to show leadership:

- if reports are true, recall his Water Minister from Germany and direct him to visit affected areas;
- respond to Labor's calls for a science taskforce, and establish and resource taskforce so it can report to Parliament;
- identify actions that can be taken now to prevent further fish kills, including where there is water in the system; and
- make available the full resources of the Commonwealth to help with river clean up as this is no longer just a matter for NSW.

Once we know all the facts the Prime Minister needs to convene an emergency meeting of Basin State leaders.

While acknowledging the drought is extreme, the nature of this is unprecedented and requires an immediate national response informed by experts.

At a time when a national emergency is developing, the Prime Minister, the Federal Water Minister and even the Government's special envoy on drought, are nowhere to be seen.

ENERGY POLICY

FUTURE POWER PRICES SKYROCKETING UNDER MORRISON - Mark Butler

Electricity futures prices have [today](#) confirmed that the Morrison Government's energy policy chaos will see Victoria and New South Wales experience record rising wholesale power prices this year.

The 2019 futures prices represent an increase in prices of 76 per cent in NSW, 65 per cent in SA, 37 per cent in QLD and 101 per cent in VIC, compared to wholesale prices when Labor left government.

Under five years of Liberal government anti-renewable energy policy chaos, power prices and carbon pollution have gone up, and up, and up. Australian households and businesses are sick of the lies that come from Scott Morrison and his Energy Minister about bringing power prices down.

The fact is Australians know their electricity prices are going up and the futures market confirms prices will only keep going up in 2019 under the Liberals.

Not only have the Liberals failed to deal with their own energy crisis, for two years skyrocketing gas prices have meant Australian manufacturers are failing to secure affordable gas contracts, and the latest data shows this crisis is far from over.

Australians need a Shorten Labor Government who will invest in more renewables, bring energy prices under control and ensure affordable gas supply for Australians.

ENERGY POLICY CHAOS COSTING VITAL ENERGY INVESTMENT – Bowen/Mark Butler

The Liberal government's chaotic energy policy is undermining the investment we need to modernise our electricity system and deliver lower prices and pollution.

In their annual [Australian Infrastructure Investment Report](#), Infrastructure Partnerships Australia (IPA) have slammed the Abbott-Turnbull-Morrison government for "growing investor uncertainty in the energy sector due to the absence of a clear national energy policy or approach to emissions reduction and energy reliability".

The report stated "an overwhelming 87 per cent of participants agreed there is widespread uncertainty in Australia's energy sector", up by 13 percent in just the last year alone.

The report criticises the Morrison government's decision to abandon the NEG, saying this decision has "stifled investment in energy generation because there is no clear policy on integrating renewables into a reliable and cost effective energy system."

Assessing attitudes to investing in Australian infrastructure, IPA surveyed investors holding a total of \$380 billion in infrastructure assets worldwide.

One global investor stated "There's been a lot of misinformation and now the result is you don't have an energy policy that people can understand, trust or believe in."

In 2015, 35 percent of respondents to this survey said Australia's political instability was worse than average. After 4 more years of chaotic Liberal government, that number is now 50 percent.

The Liberal's energy policy has been a master class in ideologically driven policy chaos, and its impact has been ever higher power prices, rising emissions and a worsening energy crisis.

Australia deserves clear, consistent and credible energy policy, to modernise the system, invest in new generation and bring carbon pollution and prices down. That is exactly what Labor will deliver.

HOME AFFAIRS

LIBERAL LIES DAMAGE BORDER PROTECTION MEASURES - Neumann

Labor's tripling of Australian Federal Police officers overseas will deter and disrupt people smuggling operations at their source.

These officers are critical in the fight against people smugglers, by preventing risky boat ventures before they start – stopping people drowning at sea.

The Liberals' cuts and chaos mean they have slashed the number of officers to just four dedicated officers covering the entire region. This is putting our border protection framework at risk.

The effectiveness of these deterrence measures was confirmed by the outgoing Operation Sovereign Borders Commander, Air Vice-Marshal Stephen Osborne on 21 May 2018 when he said that ***"The first aim is to deter and disrupt the ventures from taking to the water in the first instance. That's a lot more effective; it has a lot less risk, particularly for the people who want to use the people smugglers, so that's always our preference."***

Labor has committed \$8.5 million to establish an additional eight dedicated AFP officers throughout the region to support Australia's neighbours and prevent people smuggling journeys.

Peter Dutton talks a big game on border protection, but cutting resources from programs designed to stop boat ventures before they start demonstrates the Liberals have little interest in putting people smugglers out of business.

Unlike the Liberals, Labor will not make cuts to border protection. Under Labor, Operation Sovereign Borders will be fully resourced, we will maintain Australia's strong border protection measures and strengthen them even further with these new measures to stop people smugglers in their tracks.

The Liberals want to play politics with vulnerable people's lives – they prefer to lie about Labor's strong policies on border protection and market the people smugglers' product for them.

The Government risked Australia's border security by ordering the Australian Border Force Fleet to stop patrols to save money on fuel and cut frontline ABF staff at Australian airports over the Christmas period.

Labor will keep the people smugglers out of business and maintain Australia's strong borders, ensuring they are never able to exploit the lives of vulnerable people again.

Labor is committed to strong borders, turn backs when safe to do so, offshore processing and regional resettlement because we know it saves lives at sea.



DUTTON'S DEPARTMENT SPENDS MILLIONS FIGHTING THEIR OWN STAFF - Neumann

Reports have [revealed](#) Peter Dutton's Department of Home Affairs has spent \$2.76 million in external legal services to fight their own departmental staff in a dispute over pay and conditions that has dragged on for over five years.

It is a disgrace that Peter Dutton has been spending millions of taxpayers' dollars fighting the Department's most important asset – dedicated and hard-working Australian Border Force (ABF) officers and staff in the Department of Home Affairs.

The extraordinarily high legal bill comes at the same time Scott Morrison and Peter Dutton have been inflicting cuts and chaos on the ABF including stopping maritime patrols to save money on fuel and slashing frontline ABF officers at airports over the busy holiday period.

It has also been reported that ABF officers who screen cargo and mail entering the country were pulled off the job to plug airport staffing gaps created by Dutton's poor management of his portfolio – risking drugs, firearms, illicit tobacco, and other contraband slipping through our borders undetected.

ABF officers have a critically important job protecting Australia and Australians alike. They control our borders at airports, inspect cargo at our ports, ensure the integrity of the visa system, and patrol our seas to secure the country from serious transnational crime including people smuggling.

Why does the desperate and divided Abbott-Turnbull-Morrison Government think it's acceptable to spend millions upon millions of dollars on legal fees to fight thousands of hardworking Australian public servants?

It is clear Peter Dutton and the Liberals do not respect the hard work these public servants perform on a daily basis protecting our borders and ensuring Australia's national security.

Only Labor truly appreciates the dedication and commitment of ABF officers and staff in the Department of Home Affairs.

DUTTON BLOWS BUDGET ON ENTERTAINMENT AND PERKS— Neumann/Keogh

[It's been revealed](#) that Peter Dutton's mega Department and relevant agencies have spent over \$450,000 on corporate hospitality and a further \$100,000 on executive office upgrades in a single year.

Is this overspending one of the reasons why the Australian Border Force fleet had to stop patrols to save money on fuel? Is it the reason why Peter Dutton cut frontline ABF staff at Australian airports over the Christmas period?

The excessive and completely unacceptable spending of taxpayers' money in the 2017/18 financial year by Dutton's Department of Home Affairs was revealed by answers to Senate Estimates Questions on Notice by Labor Senator Catryna Bilyk.

The \$452,922.39 of taxpayers' dollars spent on corporate hospitality included one dinner worth over \$60,000 with representatives of the World Customs Organization in Cairns and another \$35,000 event entertaining officials from the Oceania Customs Organisation in Melbourne.

Given the inordinate number of events Dutton's Department has been hosting, they were incapable of answering specific details requested about the functions – such as who attended or details of what the money was actually being spent on, including the food and beverages being served.

The money spent on executive office upgrades included \$43,000 on storage units, \$13,000 on meeting room chairs, close to \$9000 on two sofas, and \$1400 on a single coffee table.

It is unacceptable that Peter Dutton has prioritised spending more than half a billion of taxpayers' dollars on entertainment and office furniture over national security.

Why does the Home Affairs Minister think it's appropriate to put Australia's border security at risk while allowing his Department to splash the cash?

This exorbitant spending follows [news](#) the Department of Home Affairs has spent over \$2.7 million in external legal services to fight their own departmental staff.

Dutton's incompetence knows no bounds and it's clear he is incapable of managing his portfolio – why does Scott Morrison still trust him with unprecedented powers over Australia's national security agencies?



SENIORS

FIRST HEARING OF ROYAL COMMISSION INTO AGED CARE - Collins

Labor welcomes the start of the Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety this week.

The stories Australians hear will be shocking but they are not surprising. Labor has been saying for a long time that the aged care system is in crisis.

Scott Morrison cut \$1.2 billion from aged care in his first Budget as Treasurer, with the Government cutting billions over the last five years. You don't fix aged care by cutting it.

The Royal Commission is an opportunity for older Australians and their loved ones to tell their stories. Labor will be following closely. There should be no issue off limits. This includes examining the use of psychotropic drugs and physical restraints in residential aged care settings.



Over the past five years under the Liberals there has been little action from three Prime Ministers and three Aged Care Ministers.

When Bill Shorten said the aged care system was in crisis in the Parliament in May last year, the Government likened it to committing elder abuse.

The waiting list for home care has grown to 127,000 older Australians, with many waiting more than a year to receive the care they have been approved for. There are more than a dozen reviews and hundreds of recommendations on aged care issues that have been ignored by the government. This isn't good enough.

We should judge ourselves as a nation by how we treat our elderly. We will be a fairer and more generous country when we give elderly Australians the love, care and respect that they deserve.

CHILDCARE

FURTHER INCREASES IN CHILD CARE FEES UNDER THE LIBERALS - Rishworth

The latest [quarterly report on child care fees](#) confirms what most families already know - child care fees continue to rise under the Liberals.

Since the election of the Liberals in 2013, total child care fees have grown by more than 20 per cent (to March 2018).

The cost of long day care, the type of child care most people use, increased by more than \$2,500 a year for child care under the Liberals – 20 per cent more.

When the Liberals were elected in September 2013, families paid on average \$11,016 for a year of care (30 hours a week, 48 weeks a year, before government subsidies are applied).

In March 2018, they paid \$13,680.

What is more worrying, since the Liberals introduced their unfair child care changes, according to the government's own figures, 1 in 4 families have been left worse off.

It will cost, on average, \$5,300 a year for families on less than \$65,710 that don't meet the Liberals' new activity test to replace the day of early education they have lost.

For single income families of those marginally attached to the labour market, they will pay more than \$10,000 more a year to replace the two days of care they have lost.

For parents struggling to pay these fees, the Government's response has been to helpfully suggest families simply '[change centres](#)'.

In stark contrast, Labor announced the biggest ever investment in early childhood education in Australia with our \$1.75 billion National Preschool and Kindy Program.

Labor's plan will see around 700,000 three and four year olds access preschool and kindy every year. This will also help parents balance work and family and help reduce the child care bill for families with children already in early education.

HEALTH

LABOR'S RECORD BOOST FOR TYPE 1 DIABETES RESEARCH FOR KIDS – Shorten/King

A Shorten Labor Government will provide a record boost for Type 1 diabetes research by investing \$50 million in clinical trials and supporting our best and brightest researchers in their quest for a cure for Australian children.

Labor will extend funding for the Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation's Clinical Research Network, an effort we established in 2010, which takes research where it's needed most - directly to the people living with this chronic disease.

More than 120,000 Australians have Type 1 diabetes and Labor has a proud record of supporting them. Today's announcement is all about helping kids living with diabetes and finding a cure to protect them in the future.

Under the Liberals, the Network's funding is due to expire in June 2019 – less than six months away. In its first Budget, a Shorten Labor Government will extend and increase that funding for a further five years to 2024 – meeting the request of JDRF and its thousands of advocates.

Labor's extra funding would allow the CRN to enter phase three of its mission, which would involve:

- Increasing the volume and impact of type 1 diabetes clinical trials;
- Translating research findings into new technologies and treatments; and
- Supporting Australia's world-class type 1 diabetes researchers in their bid to find a cure.

Labor's commitment will cost \$50 million from 2019-20 to 2023-24. Labor is able to make investments like this in health because we've made the right calls on unaffordable tax giveaways to wealthy Australians.

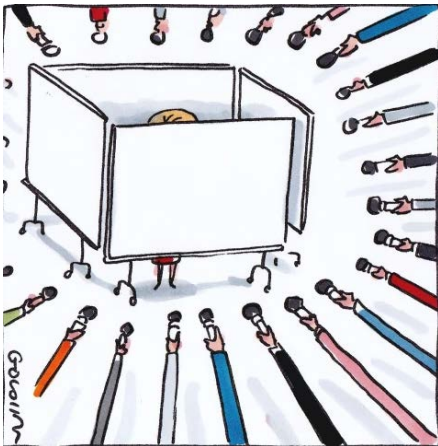
Of course Scott Morrison could end the funding uncertainty immediately – and we urge him to do just that by matching Labor's commitment. The JDRF CRN is a world-leading research effort that deserves strong bipartisan support.

So far the Network – a collaboration between researchers, patients and industry – has enrolled 13,000 Australians in clinical trials of new drugs and devices, as well as prevention and early detection projects.

In addition to establishing the JDRF CRN in 2010, we went to the last election with a major commitment to expand support for Continuous Glucose Monitoring devices so that pregnant women and high-risk adults could get access to this life-changing technology. We are glad that the Liberals have recently emulated this policy after consistent advocacy from Labor and diabetes groups.

Labor believes in making health care affordable and accessible to all Australians, and in the power of health and medical research to achieve breakthroughs that improve lives.

WORKERS



NOWHERE LEFT TO HIDE: TIME FOR CASH TO COME CLEAN – O'Connor

Senator Cash has nowhere to hide and no excuses left after today's reports that the Commonwealth Director of Public Prosecutions (CDPP) will not lay charges despite Michaelia Cash's office admitting to unlawfully leaking to the media the Registered Organisation Commission raid on AWU offices.

For more than a year, Senator Cash has used a Public Interest Immunity (PII) claim to avoid scrutiny and evade telling the truth. She must now come clean about her involvement in this scandal.

She can no longer rely on the criminal investigation to avoid answering questions about her role in leaking the details of an AFP raid to the media.

While Labor respects the independence of the AFP and the CDPP it has to be said that it is very disappointing that no charges are to be laid in a matter where Senator Cash confirmed to the Senate that a staffer confessed to a crime.

Senator Cash's ongoing conduct is treating the Parliament and the Australian people with contempt.

REMOVAL OF TWO SHIPS FROM BLUESCOPE FREIGHT SERVICES – Albanese/O'Connor



Australia's maritime laws exist to protect jobs for Australian workers on trade between domestic ports from being undercut by exploited foreign workers who have been shown to be paid as little as \$2 an hour.

The Government must prevent the loss of these Australian jobs by not issuing temporary licenses for any replacement ships that don't have Australian crews under Australian conditions on the leg between Port Hedland and Port Kembla.

This cynical move is against the intent of existing maritime laws, which requires the Government to uphold the national interest as Labor would.

The iron boat trade has for more than 100 years secured Australian industry in times of war and peace and is absolutely essential for our economic independence and national security.

WOLLONGONG COAL AGREEMENT WIN FOR PAY AND JOB SECURITY – O'Connor

Labor will always stand up for a worker that's why we welcome reports today of an agreement between workers, employers and unions at Wollongong Coal that improves pay and job security.

Labor has always encouraged both parties in enterprise bargaining to come to the table to negotiate in good faith a resolution, and we congratulate the parties involved and encourage others to do the same.



Shifting an entirely casual workforce to permanent workers with pay and conditions on par with nearby sites, stops the race to the bottom on pay and conditions, which benefits both workers and employers.

Last year Labor announced a crackdown on the exploitation of workers. Labor will legislate to ensure that workers employed at a site through a labour hire company, who work next to direct employees, will receive the same pay and conditions.

Labor will also introduce a national labour hire licensing scheme to protect workers from exploitation, providing an important floor of standards. We will require all labour hire companies to be licensed. Companies that are based overseas and supply labour to Australian firms, either directly or through other companies, will also have to be licensed to do business here.

Federal Labor will also legislate an objective definition of casual. At the moment, there are too many workers in Australia subject to unfair labour hire practices, often treated like second class citizens with lower wages, worse conditions and no job security.

For some workers labour hire and casual work is a pathway into a permanent job, but for too many workers it has become a way of life. For these workers it's tough to pay the rent and the bills, let alone make longer-term decisions like taking out a car loan or buying their own home. While there are workers who like the flexibility that labour hire provides, too often it's used purely as a mechanism to pay workers less, or to deprive them of conditions and security.

Labor's reforms are about protecting workers and giving them and their families a fair go, making sure that labour hire workers aren't caught in a cycle of precarious work and unfair conditions which they can't escape from.

As Labor leads on policies for decent jobs, higher wages and secure work, Scott Morrison is dealing with his divided and dysfunctional government interested only in themselves.

A fairer labour hire industry is good for workers and good for business.

FIRST PEOPLE

LABOR WILL RESCUE KAKADU – Shorten/Burke/Albanese /Clare/Snowdon/McCarthy

A Shorten Labor Government will invest \$220 million in infrastructure and community development projects to dramatically improve Kakadu National Park as a tourist destination and secure the future of the township of Jabiru.

Mr Shorten will travel to the Northern Territory on Sunday evening and visit Kakadu on Monday as one of Labor's long planned first official events of the year. He will be joined by Chief Minister of the Northern Territory Michael Gunner, Member for Lingiari Warren Snowden, Member for Solomon Luke Gosling, Chair of ALP First Nations Caucus Senator Malarndirri McCarthy and Traditional Owners.

Labor will invest:

- \$100 million to upgrade four key access roads in the Kakadu National Park, to allow for year-round access to key sites in Kakadu;
- \$44 million for environmental and national park infrastructure upgrades, including work to tackle invasive species, better fire management, and improved camping facilities and car parking;
- \$25 million for a new Kakadu visitor and world heritage interpretive centre in Jabiru;
- \$2.5 million to improve mobile connectivity in the Park, for increased visitor safety and better reception for locals;
- \$2.5 million for a new Tourism Masterplan to help ensure Kakadu remains a world tourism leader and continues to grow visitor numbers;
- \$45 million to undertake urgent asbestos remediation work in Jabiru; and
- \$1 million for a new roads strategy to be developed to improve safety on Kakadu's remote roads.

There has been a great deal of work done by the Northern Territory government and stakeholders on improving tourism in Kakadu and helping Jabiru transition from mining to tourism. We applaud the Chief Minister Michael Gunner and his government for undertaking this important work.

Kakadu is one of Australia's most recognisable tourist destinations and a World Heritage listed environmental and cultural site. Cared for by its Aboriginal custodians for 65,000 years, Kakadu is home to spectacular scenery, pristine environment, and immense cultural value. It is a natural wonder that should be celebrated and shared with the world.

With the Ranger mine coming to an end in the next few years, Jabiru's businesses and residents face an uncertain future. They need economic activity and jobs for their region – and that means more tourism. Because the upgrades that the national park desperately needs have been ignored for too long, fewer tourists are visiting and Kakadu has gone backwards.



In the late eighties, 300,000 people were visiting Kakadu every year. Now it has about 185,000 visitors a year – and international visitor numbers have plummeted.

Kakadu National Park is a key driver of the Territory economy and supports jobs. A recent NT Government study noted that tourism supported around 1,700 jobs – or 18 per cent of total employment – in Kakadu and surrounding regions. Tourism accounts for around 10 per cent of the Gross Regional Product in regional NT.

We want Kakadu to be at the top of the list for Australian and international visitors – and Labor will help make that happen. The local Traditional Owners have developed a blueprint for the future of Kakadu and Jabiru – for more investment, more tourism and more jobs. Labor is backing this blueprint.

A Shorten Labor Government will:

Invest \$100 million to upgrade four key access roads in Kakadu National Park – allowing for year-round access to key tourist destinations in Kakadu.

Labor will upgrade:

- Jim Jim Falls Access Road;
- Gimbat Road;
- Gunlom Falls Access Road; and

- Maguk Gorge Access Road.

These roads are currently unsealed, which means they have to be closed for long periods during the wet season, shutting out tourists. Upgrading the roads will make it easier for people to access key environmental and cultural sites, and allow for accommodation and visitor facilities to be provided for the areas.

Making sure these destinations are open year-round will help boost visitor numbers to Kakadu.

Invest \$44 million for national park infrastructure and heritage upgrades.

Labor will provide Kakadu National Park with funding to:

- Upgrade existing camp sites and build new camp sites;
- Upgrade car parks;
- Refurbish and improve visitor amenities throughout the national park; and
- Upgrade signage to make it easier and safer for visitors to travel through the national park.

Some of this funding will also be used for environmental management works – such as traditional burning, weed control, management of feral animals, and crocodile management.

Road safety is a huge issue in Kakadu, with nine people killed on the roads in the first 10 months of 2018. We will invest \$1 million in a new Kakadu roads strategy, consulting with experts to improve safety for locals and tourists.

Invest \$25 million to build a new Kakadu visitor centre

A new visitor centre in the Jabiru township will connect to transport routes in the national park, securing Jabiru's position as the gateway to Kakadu. It will be a World Heritage and Interpretative Centre for the park's visitors, and also house an art store, museum store, café and function space – as well as provide for further commercial opportunities.

Invest \$2.5 million to improve mobile phone reception in the national park

There is currently no mobile coverage in most of Kakadu National Park, and limited coverage in Jabiru and surrounding areas. This investment, which will be matched by the Northern Territory Government, will improve mobile phone coverage for the region – making Kakadu a more attractive and safer destination for visitors, and improving life for residents and businesses.

Invest \$45 million for urgent asbestos removal and remediation works in Jabiru.

There is remnant asbestos in the wall sheeting of many residential and commercial properties in Jabiru, as well as in water and sewerage pipes. These funds will be used to deliver a 10-year program of asbestos removal and remediation.

Invest \$2.5 million in a new Kakadu Tourism Masterplan

The masterplan will help bring all of these ideas together to ensure the best result is delivered for Kakadu. As well as roads, access, park infrastructure and a healthy environment, the masterplan will also look at how to increase visitor numbers and access tourist markets in Australia and around the world.

Labor believes Kakadu National Park and Jabiru have a bright future.

While Scott Morrison and the Liberals have been fighting themselves in Canberra, locals have been left waiting to hear if his government will support the Jabiru masterplan. With a Shorten Labor Government, the future of Jabiru and Kakadu is guaranteed.



QUESTIONS REMAIN OVER APVMA RELOCATION TENDER PROCESS- Fitzgibbon

The Morrison Government has further questions to answer in relation to the Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority (APVMA) relocation to Armidale in Barnaby Joyce's electorate.

The Department of Agriculture and Water Resources has refused to directly answer whether any tenders for the APVMA building site were received before 16 September 2016.

Answers to questions taken on notice at the Senate Committee [inquiry](#) into the independence of regulatory decisions made by the APVMA should have been a simple "yes or no". Instead the department just restated what we already knew, which was when the tender process ran.

Transcript Extract - Tuesday, 20 November 2018

CHAIR: Did the department receive any tenders before 16 September 2016?

Ms Gaglia: My understanding is that they were received earlier that month. I think most of the tenders came in around about 7 September, but I'd have to take that on notice to confirm.

Answer: The department can confirm that the request for information by JLL Corporate Solutions was released on 15 September 2016 and closed on 7 October 2016.

It is critical that the Morrison Government answer the question as to whether any tenders were received prior to 16 September 2016 as this would have been prior to the deliberate [fire](#) that destroyed the Armidale Club at 91 Beady Street, Armidale, the confirmed address for the APVMA's new headquarters. This would mean that there were interested parties who knew that the location of 91 Beady Street would be available for the APVMA site prior to the fire.

Further, without 91 Beady Street, Armidale becoming available, the adjoining site of 102 Taylor Street could not have been considered as a potential site for the co-location of the APVMA and Centrelink.

The forced relocation of the APVMA to Barnaby Joyce's electorate has been a shambles from the moment the former Deputy Prime Minister and Agriculture Minister announced the blatant pork barrel. Scott Morrison must investigate whether a proper tender process was undertaken for the forced relocation of the APVMA to Armidale.

CITIZENSHIP

AUSTRALIA DAY – SAVE WHICH DATE?



Andrew MacLeod - Opinion

Australia Day is heading our way. Not only will we celebrate, many will commiserate and call for the day to be changed. More and more local councils have begun to reject Australia Day ceremonies. Are they right to call for change?

Some say there are two sides to the Australia Day debate, one for January 26 and one against January 26. Some simplify the debate as the pro-January 26 side being non-Indigenous, and the anti-January 26 side being Indigenous.

The debate is not that simple. It may be complex, but there is a solution.

Most Australians accept that to many Indigenous Australians, January 26 is not a day for celebration. But neither should it be for free-minded British-descended democrats either.

This is not mere political correctness. Let's look at some facts and ask, should British descendants even be celebrating what happened on January 26, regardless of the Indigenous issues?

Here are some facts.

Firstly, Captain Cook did not discover Australia. Not only was he not the first person here, as we now recognise Indigenous Australians were, Cook was not even the first European. That honour goes to the Dutch.

Secondly, January 26, 1788, did not see the foundation of modern Australia. It didn't even see the arrival of the First Fleet in Australia.

The First Fleet arrived in Botany Bay between January 18 and January 20 and moved to Port Jackson on January 26 because there was not enough fresh water in Botany Bay.

In a sense then, January 26 is not the first landing; it is the anniversary of the first fix to the first stuff-up. Hardly an auspicious start.

Thirdly, on January 26, 300 soldiers who probably did not want to be here, and 700 convicts who definitely did not want to be here, took their first look at Port Jackson. They didn't like it and wanted to go home.

Think about it this way: January 26 marked the foundation, not of a thriving modern and free country, but of a prison.

Is that really the event a free-minded British descendant wants to celebrate as the foundation of our modern, democratic and free nation?

As a nation we have invented a story of what happened on January 26, 1788. We invented a story of national foundation and modern democratic liveability. This fiction is far from the truth.

Putting issues of dispossession to one side for just a moment, January 26 represents nothing of what we are today.

For the Indigenous among us, January 26 is legitimately seen as the day they lost sole possession of this land. That we must all surely understand is not cause for celebration for the Indigenous communities.

But anti-January 26 advocates can never answer the obvious question: "If not January 26, then when?"

Choosing a new Australia Day

What is a credible alternative to January 26? Without an alternative, the day will never move.

Some say January 1, as it marks the official commencement of the Constitution. But let's be pragmatic here. Dawn on January 1, most Australians are either just going to bed, or wanting to stay in bed, and they won't want to rush out to raise the flag. A hair of the dog at lunchtime is more likely.

Anzac Day is a commemoration and not a celebration. The two things are different and should be kept that way.

The US celebrates independence the day it declared independence (July 4, 1776) not the day that it actually received independence (September 3, 1783). We have no equivalent.

The New Zealanders celebrate February 6 as the day the Treaty of Waitangi was signed. Unless and until Australia gets around to having a similar treaty, then New Zealand history gives us no guide.

Canada celebrates its national day on the day the constitution passed the British Imperial Parliament in Westminster. The equivalent for Australia is July 9, 1900.

If we wanted to make the whole thing more Australian, we could celebrate the day the Constitution passed the Australian Parliament. That was not the ceremonial opening on January 1, 1901, but rather the first sitting on May 9, 1901.

But there is one date we can claim as all ours. February 13 is the date where our national parliament duly acknowledged the past and laid claim to a future that embraces all Australians.

The Parliament apologised for past wrongs, including dispossession, recognised we are all here now and committed to build together for the future.

Perhaps February 13 is a better foundation for a modern, democratic and free nation than the day a prison was founded on a remote shore by 1000 people who did not want to be here.

But like the Republic referendum lost because as a nation we could not agree on a model, we will never agree to shift Australia Day until we agree on which day to shift it to.

So let's do an opinion poll, vote in a plebiscite, binding or non-binding. Let's choose between February 13, May 9 and July 9.

Then let's put the winner of that poll up against January 26 and then decide what we, as all Australians, would like to celebrate.

Andrew MacLeod is a former CEO of the Committee for Melbourne and is now a non-executive director and chairman. His father was a patrol officer in the 1950s and authored Patrol in the Dreamtime. He can be followed on twitter @AndrewMMacleod

Terry Hampson Inaugural Dinner 2019

Climate Change and Human Rights

—
**Keynote by Stephen
Keim, SC.**



**We aim to promote
greater equality of
power, wealth and
opportunity.**

The event will be held at 6.30 pm on Wednesday February 20 at 66 on Ernest Restaurant (Southbank TAFE).

Parking available on site.

Cost is \$60 members; \$75 to non-members.

The Speaker will be Stephen Keim SC on the topic of Climate Change and Human Rights.

Afterwards we will have a panel consisting of Stephen; Geoff Edwards President of Royal Society of Queensland and Hon Leanne Enoch Minister for the Environment and Great Barrier Reef, Science and the Arts.

The Fabians have decided to dedicate this annual event to Terry Hampson who was a long term Fabian who maintained the organisation and who with his wife Ann is the only Queensland Life Members of the Fabians.

Terry was both an environmental hero; a Labor Hero and a Community Hero.

Terry kept the Fabians active in Queensland for many years and worked hard for their cause. He and his wife Ann became the first and only life members of the Fabians in Queensland.

Terry worked with Peter Beattie and Dr Denis Murphy to reform the ALP in the late 70's and early 80's. He was assistant secretary to Peter Beattie in the ALP and central to the campaign that ended the Nationals epoch of power and saw Wayne Goss become the first ALP Premier since the early 1950's.



Terry became Secretary of the Labor Party when Peter entered Parliament. Later he became the Councillor for Marchant in the Brisbane City Council.

Terry worked side by side with John Sinclair in the Fraser Island Defenders Organisation.

Together they organised lobbied and "shirtfronted" a Prime Minister to enable Fraser Island to be declared a World Heritage Area and become the tourist mecca it is today.

In Council, Terry also produced the Mountains to Mangroves project which saw a green island stretching from the Mountains around Brisbane to the sea front - another great achievement for the environment.

Terry passed away four years ago and he is sorely missed by all of us who called him friend.

To Purchase Tickets please go to: <https://www.fabians.org.au/glddinner2019>