



WEEKLY UPDATE: 28th September, 2018

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THIS WEEK:

Australians expect their ABC to act 'with independence and integrity'.

Consistently, when asked, we celebrate our respect and affection for the national broadcaster, with high ratings for trust and reliability. The recent series of personal acknowledgements from people in the media, shown on the ABC, capture the intimate relationships which reinforce the concept of 'our ABC'.

While naturally, there will always be critics and claims of political bias or inappropriate product, our system encourages people to express their views, and detailed statistics are maintained on the number and nature of complaints, as well as the response.

Recently, we have seen that the current Minister has been a regular user of this service, showing the democracy of the process.

However, this week, the ABC has been in the media for all the wrong reasons.

The termination of the Managing Director, half way through her contract, and the resignation of the Chair of the Board days later, have raised real concerns about the role of government, not just as a critic, and funder, but the levels of direct influence on content and personnel.

Our Shadow Minister, Michelle Rowland, has called for a Senate inquiry, to investigate the questions around contact between the Chair and the Prime Minister and the alleged demands for the sacking of journalists whose work was 'hated' by the government.

The impacts of the budget cuts over several years from this government have been dismissed by the Minister as matters for the Board, but more information needs to be exposed about the direct influence of Ministers on this board.

When the Howard government attacked the ABC with the Mansfield enquiry in 1996, thousands of responses supporting the ABC flooded the process, surprising Bob Mansfield and the government.

*The Friends of the ABC which have been raising community awareness of the role of the ABC, and highlighting government attacks since the 1980s from governments of both parties, have been campaigning on the latest budget cuts for months, through rallies, and emails to the Minister. We must maintain this community response to show the government that we do care about independent public broadcasting, and we support **Our ABC**.*



SENATOR CLAIRE MOORE, LABOR SENATOR FOR QUEENSLAND

Senator Claire Moore

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CLAIRE'S WEEKLY UPDATE NEWSLETTER

If there is material you would like included or expanded upon, please let us know. If you think that others would like to receive copies please let us know and we will include them on the mailing lists.

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WHAT'S BEING SAID ...

ABC CRISIS - ROWLAND - ABC RADIO DRIVE

"We welcome an inquiry, but Labor has called for an inquiry to be done by the Senate. We don't believe that having an inquiry done by the Minister's own department will provide the necessary level of transparency and certainly in the public's eyes, the public being a key stakeholder in all this, or give the public confidence in the outcomes of this inquiry."

"This is an article of faith for us; that the ABC is able to maintain its independence and integrity and that it is supported in deed and not just in word." - Michelle Rowland

ABC CRISIS -ALBANESE-2GB RADIO SYDNEY

"The real story here of course is there is ongoing intimidation of the ABC by members of the Government. It should be allowed to operate independently of government."

ABC CRISIS - BOWEN – TOWNSVILLE

"The ABC is a public broadcaster, not a state broadcaster. Just because the Government doesn't like a journalist, does not mean that



journalist gets sacked. This is Australia in 2018; it's not some tin pot dictatorship where a Government can order the sacking of a journalist they don't like."

ABC CRISIS -ALBANESE – SKY NEWS

"Here we have a Government that from time to time speaks about freedom of speech, but really don't act like it, don't want alternative voices to their own."

ABC CRISIS O'CONNOR-SKY NEWSDAY

"You've seen the Federal Council of the Liberal Party move a motion successfully to privatise the ABC and not one Minister stood up and argued against that proposition. You've seen cuts to the ABC, very significant cuts to the ABC, and now there are allegations that if they do not sack a particular journalist then there will be further cuts to the ABC's budget."

BANKING ROYAL COMMISSION - O'CONNOR-SKY NEWSDAY

"Even to date there is a remarkable amount of misconduct, a culture where clients and customers came second and thousands and thousands of Australians are paying as a result. So we'd like to

see the commission continue. And we're glad, after efforts by the government to stop it happening, that it is doing the work we expected it to do."

BANKING ROYAL COMMISSION -PLIBERSEK-SYDNEY

Despite the fact there have been 9,000 submissions, only about 27 Australian customers have had the chance to tell their stories in person. So if there is an argument for more time and more scope for the Royal Commission, the Government really ought to consider that.

BANKING ROYAL COMMISSION - O'NEILL - SYDNEY

"They did everything they could to prevent this Royal Commission from happening. And we cannot trust them to properly implement its recommendations. We saw very good evidence of this, this morning where we had the Assistant Treasurer, Stuart Robert give a shocking interview on Sky News where he inferred that the type of misconduct that we've seen through the Royal Commission is somehow inevitable. That government really can't do anything about it. Well that is wrong.

REAL DEBT-CHALMERS-SKY NEWS AM AGENA

"Stuart Robert just said then that debt is at \$10 billion dollars, which is the lowest its been for some years. Somebody needs to tell the poor fellow that that is the deficit number, the \$10 billion number. Debt is actually at record highs. Gross debt is around \$530 billion, the highest its ever been. Net debt is something like \$340 billion, which is double what they inherited from Labor. So that's a really extraordinary gaffe that Stuart Robert has just made."

LABOR IN QLD - CHALMERS – SKY NEWS

"We are putting a lot of effort into Queensland. Bill has done more town hall meetings in Queensland than any leader of either party in modern history."

ROCKHAMPTON RING ROAD COMMITMENT - ALBANESE – ROCKHAMPTON

"Now we have had five years in which the current Government under Scott Morrison, the latest version of the ATM Government – Abbott, Turnbull and Morrison - have taken deposits from the people of Rockhampton and Central Queensland into their ATM Government, but they haven't taken anything out. They haven't put back into the community and Federal Labor will do just that."

NQ INFRASTRUCTURE - BOWEN – TOWNSVILLE

"We want to build on our existing commitments to the people of Townsville. These are already very substantial commitments, \$100 million for water security, \$200 million for Hydro, the money for the port which has now been matched by the Government, the other initiative haven't been matched by the Government but we know Townsville needs more. We know that the Townsville economy needs more. Unemployment is too high in Townsville; youth unemployment is too high in Townsville."

QLD TOURISM INFRASTRUCTURE - ALBANESE- CENTRAL QUEENSLAND RADIO NETWORK 4RO

"Quite clearly Great Keppel has suffered, both through natural disasters and through other issues over the years. It's a great, iconic tourism asset for Queensland and particularly for Central Queensland. What we are keen to see is that it be restored to its former glory and be made even better in the future. Queensland, of course, has the commitment of \$20 million for power and for water and we're going to be talking about in what way the Federal Government could potentially help."



QLD TOURISM - ALBANESE – YEPPO

"We've had at the Commonwealth level a failure to invest in tourism infrastructure, whether it be major projects like that or whether it be the programs that used to exist like the T-QUAL program, making small grants available to private operators who want to improve their business and therefore create more local jobs and expand their economic activity."

"We used to have a Tourism Infrastructure Regional Fund that has also been abolished by this current Government".

QLD HEALTH INFRASTRUCTURE -BEERS (ALP Candidate For Flynn)-GLADSTONE HOSPITAL

"It is not good enough that Gladstone residents right now have to make a hard choice between paying up to \$500 out of pocket for an MRI scan, or jumping in the car and heading up the highway to Rockhampton. It's not good enough that the people from this region are treated like second class citizens when it comes to health care."

"That's why we're proud to announce that, if elected we'll deliver a publicly-funded MRI license for Gladstone to make sure that locals can access bulk-billed scans here in Gladstone."

QLD HEALTH INFRASTRUCTURE - KING – GLADSTONE HOSPITAL

"Here in Central Queensland there's been over \$6 million cut over the three years from 2017 to this region of hospitals. It's been a \$1 million cut to Gladstone Hospital. That means less outpatient capacity, it means less capacity in elective surgery and less capacity in the emergency department. All that we've had from Scott Morrison and Ken O'Dowd is cuts to our public hospital system, but under Labor we've got investment."

AGED CARE ROYAL COMMISSION - COLLINS – ABC STATEWIDE TASMANIA

"What I'm concerned about is we already know some of the failings now. The Minister has had the Carnell Paterson report into the previous issues at other facilities such as Oakden SA on his desk now for almost a year. The Government said it accepted those ten recommendations, it's only implemented one of those fully to date, and the other nine are still in progress. What I don't want to see is the reforms we know need to happen now slowed down because of the Royal Commission. We already know some of the issues that are wrong in aged care and some of the things that need to be fixed and I think we need to just get on with it. The current Government has been there for five years and had three ministers and I don't think that it can walk away from the fact some of this has happened on their watch and we need to do much better."

AGED CARE ROYAL COMMISSION -POLLEY-LAUNCESTON

"They have the evidence there are more than 14 reports that have been done over the last 4 years into aged care. We actually know what the issues are and we know what needs to be done. There is no way this government can use the Royal Commission to fail to invest in aged care."

AGED CARE ROYAL COMMISSION - COLLINS – ABC STATEWIDE TASMANIA

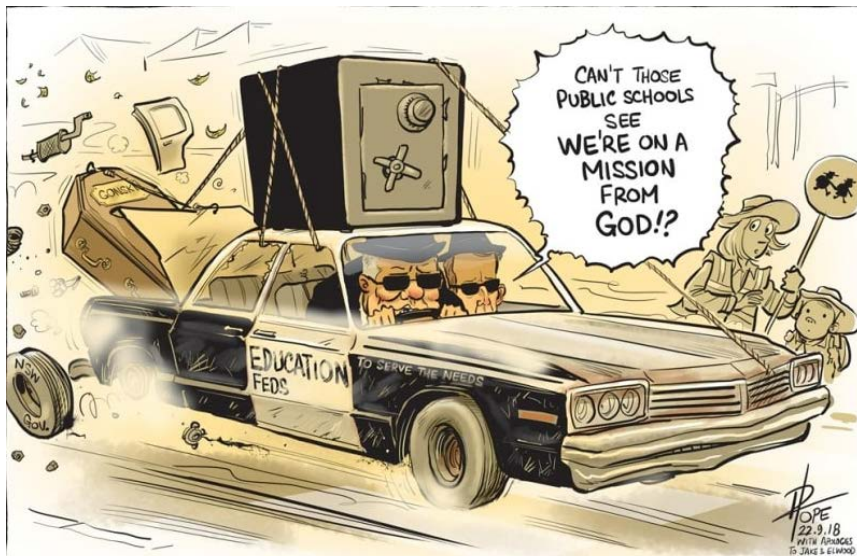
"I think what we've got is a really serious issue with the regulator, the Quality Agency. I'm not sure how you can get a 100% accreditation after somebody has been behaving the way one of those careers did to an older Australian. I'm just am appalled that they got 100% re-accreditation, I can't believe our regulation system is so soft."

AGED CARE ROYAL COMMISSION -POLLEY-LAUNCESTON

"The waiting list with over 108,000 people waiting for home care and 54,000 of those are not getting any assistance whatsoever. So they are more likely to pass away, be in an acute hospital or have to go into residential care. There is no excuse, action needs to be taken now."

EDUCATION FUNDING - PLIBERSEK – MELBOURNE

"Public schools educate two thirds of Australian children; they educate the majority of children from disadvantaged backgrounds, the majority of Indigenous kids, the majority of children with a disability, the majority of children in rural and remote locations. It is inconceivable that a Commonwealth Government can say to one group of parents, we are going to fund your children's education because you send your kids to Catholic or independent schools, and to say to another group of parents, a much larger group of parents, that their kids' education doesn't deserve extra funding, it doesn't deserve to have the cuts restored."



genuine skilled shortages and if that's not occurring then that needs to be dealt with."

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LABOR'S \$300 MILLION UNIVERSITY FUTURE FUND - PLIBERSEK – ABC 'AM'

"There's been very little investment in university buildings, infrastructure, research equipment in the last five years. What we've seen from the Liberals are constant cuts. Cuts to the number of students attending university and an absolute freeze on spending on the infrastructure that makes our universities world class."

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NEWSTART - ALBANESE-2GB RADIO SYDNEY

"On Newstart, it hasn't been increased for such a long period of time so the truth is both sides of politics have been responsible for this and I'd like to see personally both sides of politics solve it."

457 VISAS - BOWEN – TOWNSVILLE

"457 visas and the like should not be used to replace Australian labour. 457 visas should be used only for

GENDER PAY GAP - KEARNEY –MELBOURNE

"It's Labor that's stepped up with more policies to help close the gender pay gap and to make sure that women can be financially secure. It is a complex issue. There is no silver bullet. It requires a suite of sophisticated strategies to deal with the gender pay gap, and I'm very proud to be here today with my Labor colleagues who are going to talk further about some of the policies that Labor will initiate when we are elected."

GENDER EQUITY - PLIBERSEK – HAWKESBURY

"Scott Morrison should pull his head out of the sand. He's got his head buried in the sand. He's had seven, probably eight female MPs now say, that they've got a culture problem in the Liberal Party. He's got members of parliament that are actually resigning, retiring, leaving parliament because the culture is so toxic for women in the Liberal Party. He ought to listen to his own people. He doesn't have to listen to me or to Susan or to anyone in the Labor Party, he should listen to his own people who are telling him that there is a problem."

INFRASTRUCTURE - ALBANESE – SKY NEWS

"In just one year. Over four years the underspend is \$4.9 billion. Now that's massive. A massive difference between what they said they would do and what they've actually done. And for some programs like the Beef Roads Program there's a 93 per cent underspend, but there's underspends all the way through – in smaller programs like the Black Spots Program, but also major programs of rail and road."

INFRASTRUCTURE - ALBANESE – MARRICKVILLE SYDNEY

"It shows that the politicisation of the Government's infrastructure agenda is leading to failure of policy. And just this week we saw Infrastructure Australia announce, through the Government, that they had listed the Gawler Line Electrification in South Australia as a priority project. But the fact is it was listed as a priority project way back in 2009, almost ten years ago and it was invested in by the Federal Labor Government. It was a project that was underway and was stopped by Tony Abbott when he came into Government in 2013. And now, five years later, they are announcing it as somehow a new project that's been approved by Infrastructure Australia as a priority."

INFRASTRUCTURE - ALBANESE – MARRICKVILLE SYDNEY

"This Government is failing on infrastructure. They are failing to invest the money that they themselves said they would do. They are failing to support Infrastructure Australia's independence and fund projects that have been endorsed as priority by Infrastructure Australia. And they are allocating money to projects, putting it aside, but not announcing them until the Federal Election campaign is actually launched, rather than getting on with projects."

THE LABOR CAMPAIGN - LEIGH – SKY NEWS AGENDA

"Bill Shorten, Chris Bowen, Jim Chalmers and I and the rest of the economic team engage extensively with business. I would have had hundreds of meetings with business people over recent years, talking through Labor's plans, discussing exactly how we plan to boost productivity, bring down unemployment, get wage growth going again. Bill has also had a record number of town hall meetings, more than 70 town hall meetings since he became leader. So he's extraordinarily accessible, as is the Labor team."

LABOR POLICY - LEIGH – SKY NEWS AGENDA

"There is no appetite in Australia for electing a government that won't go full term and won't keep its promises. You see that the real rot sets in with the Abbott-Turnbull-Morrison Government in the 2014 budget, backed by all three of those men, in which they tore up a whole set of their policies. We're not going to do that. We're laying out a clear agenda as to how we want to make a more egalitarian, a faster growing, a more productive Australia. We want to stop the cuts to schools, hospitals and penalty rates. We're ready for the honour to govern and we're fighting hard to earn it."

COALITION DISARRAY - - PLIBERSEK – MELBOURNE

"They are so consumed with their own petty internal political fights that they cannot govern in the interests of all Australians. I think it's incredible that Scott Morrison called his own show the muppet show, but very telling that that's how he feels himself about the illegitimacy of this Government, its inability to focus on what matters to Australians. Decent jobs with good pay and conditions and services they can rely on."

COALITION DISARRAY - BOWEN – TOWNSVILLE

"They can't even get their act together in relation to agricultural visas and you would think that National Party MPs would be across what is happening and that their Ministers, Michael McCormack and David Littleproud would be exercising leadership, but apparently not."

LATEST NEWSPOLL - ALBANESE - 6PR RADIO

"Well what today's poll shows is that Labor would win in the order of 25 to 30 seats if an election was held today. And the interesting thing I found about today was the question that was asked: "Are you more likely to vote for the Coalition now that they have changed Leader". And the answer overwhelmingly is no."

QUOTES OF THE WEEK

"Even a Wiggle would know that a chairman should never 'lean into' the 'CEO/MD' space and direct them to hire or fire any individual." – John Simpson (A council member at Monash University and a former ABC staff member - writing in The New Daily)

*"There was a time in the media where there was a sense of solidarity and camaraderie between organisations and between individual journalists. When News Corp decided to *go* for the ABC, and started obsessing about the ABC, and exaggerating criticism, and so many of their journalists signed up, the result of that was that emboldened the government to go after the ABC, and they went after them because they felt they had a big news organisations behind them, in their corner. And so I think that's what encouraged the government to behave as it has. " — Barrie Cassidy*

"This is not a suburban tuck shop we're talking about here; it's the ABC, a national icon." - Stephen Jones ABC RN DRIVE

"I've had many calls from my counterpart foreign ministers who are politely asking why I am no longer the foreign minister and what happened to the prime minister. There have been some rather unkind comments about Australia being the 'Italy of the South Pacific' and the 'coup capital of the world.'" — Julie Bishop

"There is no better illustration of the Coalition's lack of control than this week's Senate sittings, where the government was forced to filibuster its own bills and debate the Governor-General's address-in-reply from 2016 in order to stop parliament running out of legislation." - Kishor Napier-Raman (Crikey)

GLIMPSES

AGEING REFORM

Former NSW Health Complaints Commissioner, Merlyn Walton on ABC radio this week made some excellent comments on our aged care system and the proposed Royal Commission into it.

In particular she made the point that the system has been failing for some time and that a multitude of reports have been already written and that the fixes required are also well known. So much so, they question the need for a Royal Commission that will just slow down the process of reform and change.

It's worth remembering that Royal Commissions are often very political in nature and have often been commissioned to pretend something has been done, distract the voter and side-line criticism. Final reports also have a habit of becoming a dusty waste of paper stranded on the shelf of inactivity.

ZIPLINE

For those who are unaware there is a proposal seeking approval by the Brisbane City Council to install a tourist driven 'ZIPLINE' from the top of Mt Coo-tha.



Many local residents and conservationists are concerned that the proposal will cause degradation of the forest reserve and the plethora of wild life that inhabit it, including the powerful owl. As well there are also concerns that narrow local roads will, be further choked by traffic in an area increasingly occupied by young families.

What is of particular concern though is that the proposal is enveloped in a cloud of secrecy driven by that corrupting concept of 'commercial in confidence'.

Initial media on the proposal came from a private developer now it would appear from the latest council newsletter that it's a proposal that's been taken up by the Brisbane City Council

That newsletter is nothing more than a ratepayer funded

advertisement for the proposal. This is not the way government, acting in our name and interest should be behaving.

For those who think this is wrong a rally is being planned outside the electorate office of State government planning Minister Andrew Lynham seeking the State Government's intercession as the proposal ultimately can't proceed without their approval.

WHAT: Mt Coot-tha Anthony Lynham Rally

WHEN: October 08, 2018 at 9:30am

WHERE: Hon Dr Anthony Lynham Electorate Office 6 Babarra Street Stafford
Unit 207 Brisbane, Queensland 4053 [Google map and directions](#)

For more information please contact: Edna Philippa O'Callaghan · Eddiepippa@gmail.com · 0478412892

STATE AID JUSTICE



New school funding data has revealed that Australia's most disadvantaged government schools receive at least \$10,000 less per student in government funding than equivalent Catholic schools. The 2016 funding figures, released by ACARA after a Freedom of Information (FOI) request by the Australian Education Union (AEU), categorise the funding data by school sector and by the Index of Community and Socio-educational Advantage (ICSEA) score. ICSEA is a measure of student need.

The FOI request showed that on average, Catholic schools in disadvantaged areas received more total government funding than nearby government public schools.

AEU Federal President Correna Haythorpe said this data was more proof that Prime Minister Scott Morrison has abandoned Australia's 2.5 million public school students.

"The evidence shows that Australia's most disadvantaged government schools receive less government funding than Catholic and Independent schools in the same area," Ms Haythorpe said. "This is astonishing. Prime Minister Scott Morrison said his plan is needs-based, but clearly he hasn't looked at the national data which tells a very different story."

"National data shows that the most disadvantaged government schools are receiving the least help from the government, compared to the private sector," Ms Haythorpe said. "The gap can be up to \$10,000 per student, which for a school of 250 students would equate to \$2.5 million per year. This is absolutely astounding."

"This is just more proof that Prime Minister Morrison has abandoned Australia's 2.5 million public school students," Ms Haythorpe said.

"While Mr Morrison's attention has been on finding a political solution to his problems with the Catholic education sector, what the ACARA data clearly shows us is that the federal government is providing more funding to disadvantaged non-government schools than to equivalent public schools."

"This makes a mockery of PM Morrison's sector-blind, needs-based rhetoric," Ms Haythorpe said. "This data actually demonstrates the opposite of what the Prime Minister claims to support, and once again exposes his hypocrisy when it comes to public school funding."

"Many of the most disadvantaged public schools in Australia are in regional and remote areas," Ms Haythorpe said. "Why do the most disadvantaged private schools receive on average \$10,000 per student more in government funding than the most disadvantaged public schools?"

"Data from the Australian Bureau of Statistics shows that public schools teach 74% of children in outer regional areas, 77.5% of children in remote areas and 88% in very remote areas. It is the children in public schools in these regions which are missing out on vital resources"

The Morrison government has given Catholic schools more than 10 times the amount of money needed to maintain "affordable choice" for parents, according to analysis by the Grattan Institute.

"They could find that \$3-4 million from their own funds, they don't need an extra slush fund."

The schools were largely in inner-city Sydney, particularly the north shore, and Melbourne's eastern suburbs, Dr Goss said.

He said the Morrison government's argument that extra money was necessary to ensure "affordable choice" for parents was misleading.

"Affordable choice is not the same thing as low-fee," he said. "What's affordable to a family on \$300,000 is very different to what a family on \$60,000 can afford."

POOR, POOR - (The Australian)

A multi-billion-dollar turnaround in budget fortunes for the Coalition has come partly at the expense of people at the margins, with more than \$6.3 billion saved from social security, headlined by National Disability Insurance Scheme delays. The federal government spent \$2.5bn less on the NDIS in 2017-18 than first estimated, a result the final budget outcome attributes to "lower-than-expected numbers of participants entering the NDIS". The government also booked an underspend of almost \$900 million on the Age Pension because fewer people than anticipated were eligible after new rules came into effect. The pension age is creeping up to 67 — rising in six month increments every two years — with the age moving to 65½ from July last year

NO NONE WHITES

A group of Australian veterans has issued Home Affairs Minister Peter Dutton with a list of over 80 Afghan interpreters who worked for the ADF but still remain in the country and fear retribution from the Taliban.

The Herald Sun (\$) reports that retired captain Jason Scanes has been advocating for his former interpreter "Hassan" for five years now, while other interpreters have either been killed or remain in hiding while their visa applications remain in limbo over security concerns

SLOW PAYERS

The corporate regulator is pushing for tougher civil and criminal penalties after it found the big banks took more than five years to repay customers for misconduct such as poor financial advice or administrative errors. In a report released on Tuesday, the Australian Securities and Investments Commission found bank customers were left out of pocket by more than \$450 million for an average of 2145 days. "Our review found that, on average, it takes over five years from the occurrence of the incident before customers and consumers are remediated, which is a sad indictment on the financial services industry. This must not stand," ASIC chairman James Shipton said.

The report again exposes the failure of the big banks to investigate and report on their mistakes and misconduct to the regulator, a failure that was also exposed repeatedly in evidence before the banking royal commission, which is due to release its interim report ASIC's report named NAB as the worst offender when it came to identifying problems, taking an average of more than five years to recognise there was a problem to begin with. NAB also had a "systemic issue" of not notifying significant breaches to the regulator within the 10 business days required by the law. ANZ was the slowest at investigating and reporting a breach to ASIC, taking 213 days on average.

The report found the big four banks are the slowest taking an average of 2179 days - nearly six years - from the first instance of a significant breach and the first payment to customers. The customers of the big four were left out of pocket by more than \$450 million, \$50 million of which was still not repaid. The review included 715 significant breaches reported by the big four banks plus AMP, Bank of Queensland, Bendigo Bank, Credit Union Australia, Greater Bank, Heritage Bank, Macquarie and Suncorp between 2014 and 2017.

GREAT CITIZENS

The Tax Office has had a rare win over News Corporation Australia, which paid \$80.9 million to settle a string of contested assessments last year amid signs of a warming in relations with the taxman. During the hearings of the Senate corporate tax inquiry in 2015, The Australian Financial Review revealed that News was the only company in the Tax Office's highest risk category, which left it open to what tax officials described as near-continuous audits. Without identifying News as the high-risk taxpayer, Tax Commissioner Chris Jordan told the inquiry, "Historically, this particular taxpayer has made it quite clear that they have not had an interest in being open with us..."

DICKENSIAN

The business lobby's proposal for changes to workplace laws to create a new category of "permanent casuals" would remove rights for millions of working people and lead to the rapid casualisation of the work force.



People working under the business lobby's proposal would have their casual loading cut from 25 percent to 10 percent, would not have guaranteed hours and could not predict their income or hours from week to week. They would accrue leave at a rate relative to the number of hours they work.



The proposed introduction of this new category would worsen the insecure work crisis currently affecting Australia, as big business moves more and more people onto “permanent casual” contracts with no control over their working hours.

The big business proposal is a response to the Federal Court decision *Workpac v Skene* which ruled that a truck driver classified as a casual by his employer, but assigned to a regular pattern of work for 12 years, was not a true casual and was entitled to annual leave.

Business has cried foul about the decision and is actively lobbying new Industrial Relations Minister Kelly O’Dwyer to change the law to remove rights for millions of workers so they avoid paying people they have falsely classified as casual their accrued leave entitlements.

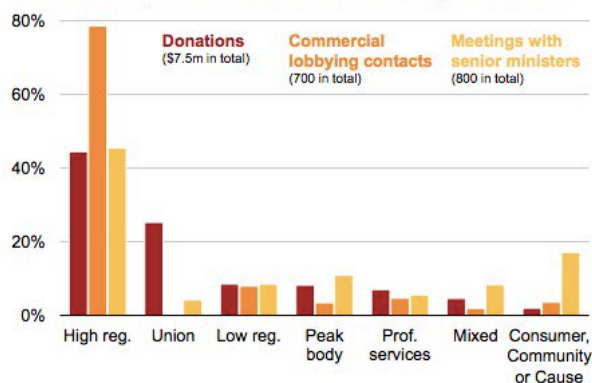
“Everyone needs a job they can count on, that gives them the security they need to provide a decent life for their families. The business lobby’s push to make workers permanently casual threatens the job security of all working people. Unfortunately, many employers would jump at the opportunity to casualise their workforce so they can chop and change their hours of work whenever they like.” Said ACTU Secretary Sally McManus:

INFLUENCE

The Grattan Institute’s “Who’s in the room? Access and influence in Australian politics” is ground-breaking work: a study that uses hard data to explore the disturbing extent to which special interests gain access to and influence within our political system at state and federal level. The report, by Danielle Wood and Kate Griffiths, goes to the heart of the lack of voter trust in our political system and why that lack of trust is justified by the ability of special interests to push for self-interested outcomes.

In Queensland, donations are dominated by highly regulated industries like property development, mining and gambling. But because Queensland, unlike the Commonwealth, publishes meeting diaries of ministers, another metric is also available there: more than 40% of ministerial meetings are with highly regulated industries, and 80% of all lobbying contacts, while low-regulation industries like manufacturing and retailing have much less contact despite playing similarly large economic roles.

Figure 2.3: Highly regulated industries lobby hardest
Share of external political donations, contacts and meetings in Queensland



Notes: Individuals and unknown entities excluded (individuals represented 13 per cent of major donations and unknown entities less than 1 per cent). All donations declared to April 2018. Lobbying contacts includes only clients that made at least five contacts. Analysis was only conducted for Queensland, where data on commercial lobbying contacts is available.

Sources: ECQ (2018), QIC (2018) and Queensland Government (2018).

The report also examines the growing role former politicians play as lobbyists, with the Commonwealth lobbyist register showing former ministers, MPs and senators reached a record level of nearly 40% of registered lobbyists in 2017. Since the 1990s, a quarter of federal ministers or assistant ministers took roles with industry in their post-political careers.

For the Full Report go to: <https://grattan.edu.au/report/whos-in-the-room/>

SCAM ALERT

People are increasingly being caught out by celebrity endorsement scams, with reports to Scamwatch increasing 400 per cent and losses increasing a staggering 3,800 per cent so far in 2018.

These scams often appear as online advertisements or promotional stories on social media or a seemingly legitimate, trustworthy website. They include fictitious quotes and doctored or out-of-context images of the celebrity, such as presenters from the TV show *Shark Tank*, promoting a product such as skin care creams, weight loss pills, or investment schemes.

The ACCC’s Scamwatch website has received almost 200 reports in 2018 and

losses totalling more than \$142 000. People aged 45 and older accounted for 63 per cent of losses to these scams. Women are more likely than men to be a victim.

“The growth in these scams is very concerning, particularly as over half the reports we received included a financial loss. Most people lost between \$100 and \$500 and in one case, a victim lost more than \$50 000 through fake celebrity endorsement of an investment scheme,” ACCC Deputy Chair Delia Rickard said.



The scam works by consumers signing up for a ‘free trial’ for a product. As part of this process, they have to provide their credit card details. The ‘free trial’ however, has strict terms and conditions such as having to return the product within a near impossible timeframe, and an automatically renewing

subscription that is difficult to cancel. These terms are often only visible on the document that arrives with the product.

“The groups behind these celebrity endorsement scams are organised and sophisticated fraudsters who are often involved in other scams. It’s easy for them to create fake ads and websites to give credibility to their con, so people need to be very careful and sceptical about ads they read on social media and websites,” Ms Rickard said.

“It is vital to research and read independent reviews of the company. Consumers should verify celebrity endorsement of products from the celebrity’s official website or social media account.”

The ACCC is calling on Google, Facebook and Instagram to do more to crackdown on these fake ads to prevent scammers reaching potential victims.

“Most of the reports to Scamwatch involve these scam advertisements running on Google ad banners or as ads in Facebooks news feeds. These tech giants must do more to quickly suspend ads, as every time consumers click on a scam ad, they are at risk of losing money,” Ms Rickard said.

“If you are caught up in one of these scams, call your bank immediately to try and arrange a chargeback and to stop any further debits to your credit card.”

For more advice on how to avoid or report scams, visit [Scamwatch\(link is external\)](#). People can also follow [@scamwatch_gov\(link is external\)](#) on Twitter and subscribe to Scamwatch [radar alerts\(link is external\)](#) to stay up to date with the latest scams targeting the community.

Background:

Below is a list of celebrities who have been used in celebrity endorsement scams based on reports to Scamwatch from members of the public.

- Cate Blanchett
- Deborah Knight (Nine News Sydney presenter)
- Delta Goodrem
- Dr David Sinclair (Head of Ageing Lab UNSW)
- Dr Oz
- Emma Thompson
- Georgie Gardner (Today Show)
- Jessica Rowe (Studio 10)
- Kyle Sandilands
- Lisa Wilkinson (Ch 10)
- Mark Shuttleworth (BBC/CNN)
- Meghan Markle
- Mikhail Varshavski (Dr Mike – US Celebrity)
- Nicole Kidman
- Oprah
- Sally Field (American actress)
- Sonia Kruger (The Voice, Today Extra)
- Steve Baxter (Shark Tank)



The peak body for working people has acknowledged the ALP's gender pay gap announcement as an important step towards fair pay for women within organisations.

The ALP announced today that:

- company-specific gender pay gap data would be released to the public

- taking adverse action against people for disclosing their pay to their colleagues would be illegal

- companies who didn't release their data would be unable to tender for government contracts

- all government departments would be required to conduct gender pay audits within the first year of a Labor government

The announcement represents a solid foundation for exposing the gender pay gap in comparable positions within organisations and industries.

Closing the gender pay gap will require additional changes to industrial laws which currently fail many working women.

This must include allowing collective bargaining beyond the enterprise.

More work must be done to ensure that workers in feminised industries and occupations, which are systematically undervalued, are able to secure fair pay rises that close the gender pay gap.

ACTU President Michele O'Neil said; "Today's announcement is an important step towards exposing the gender pay gap. Employers will no longer be able to punish people for the simple act of discussing their pay with one another. Companies will have to be publicly accountable for their performance on gender pay equity."

CAR SERVICING RIGHTS



Labor has announced that a Shorten Labor Government would require car manufacturers to share with independent mechanics the same data that they provide to authorised dealers. No special deals - just a level playing field. It's a policy that's been welcomed by motoring clubs and consumers groups, and backed by a careful report from the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission - the nation's competition watchdog.

For years car manufacturers have tried to monopolise the new car servicing business by all sorts of means including implying your car warranty could be voided if you didn't have your car serviced by a dealer, untrue! It's a huge business especially given the often inflated charges dealers often employ.

The most recent ploy of the manufacturers has been to restrict access to software programs that run most new cars.

Around four-fifths of mechanics are independent dealerships - either standalone enterprises, or part of chains such as Kmart, Pedders or Repco. For people living in remote areas, an independent mechanic is often the only repairer in town. If they don't get the data they need to fix the car, the owner can face a lengthy trek to find an authorised dealer.

POLLING

The latest Newspann poll has the Coalition government trailing Labor 46-54 on a two-party-preferred basis, a two-point increase since September 9 but a marked change compared to the 49-51 pre-Lib spill results.

[The Australian's national survey \(\\$\)](#) also has Prime Minister Scott Morrison increasing his lead as preferred prime minister over Labor leader Bill Shorten 45-32, and the Coalition enjoying a five-point turnaround in the primary vote (36-39). The report comes with a wave of new ReachTel surveys, including a [50-50 NSW election poll](#), a two-in-three push from Sydneysiders [against migration in the city](#), and a report that [70% of Queenslanders want the state government to cancel Adani's 60-year unlimited water extraction licence](#).

OPIATE (SMH)

School chaplains are being encouraged to promote a Christian theology course to students, despite being strictly forbidden from proselytising in schools.

Under the \$243.8 million national school chaplaincy program, introduced by the Howard government and [continued by successive Liberal and Labor governments](#), schools can apply for up to \$20,000 per year to engage a school chaplain to provide pastoral care to students.

The scheme is opposed by secular groups and the education union who [say taxpayers should not be funding religious officers in secular schools](#). As a way of appeasing these groups, the rules state that chaplains must not advocate religious teachings or try to convert students. But Generate Ministries, the largest provider of school chaplains in NSW, has begun offering a "faith building" course to students and told them their chaplain is one way of accessing the program.

Queensland Liberal/National Party MP Luke Howarth has recruited the support of at least 30 colleagues in a petition to Treasurer Scott Morrison and Education Minister Simon Birmingham calling for the program to be not just maintained but significantly expanded and indexed.

The petition, which was circulating among Coalition MPs last Thursday, calls for a 25 per cent increase in funding for the National School Chaplaincy Program to \$25,000 per school. It is understood 30 MPs have put their names to the demands so far, including Queensland independent Bob Katter.



"It's absolutely essential that it's refunded and the good work of chaplains continues in over 3000 schools around the country," Mr Howarth told Fairfax Media.

WHY NOT GAOL?

High-profile restaurants run by celebrity chefs George Calombaris and Shannon Bennett have also been embroiled in underpayment scandals. Bennett denies the claims.

A 2015 report by the Fair Work Ombudsman found about half of all restaurants and cafes audited did not pay legal rates. And in July this year the Ombudsman reported that 81 per cent of businesses inspected in Victoria Street, Richmond, did not comply with workplace laws. The Fair Work Ombudsman recently signed a three-year memorandum of understanding with the industry group aimed at improving compliance with workplace laws in fast food outlets, restaurants and cafes.

Ombudsman Sandra Parker said getting businesses to abide by workplace laws was a priority.

"Improving compliance will also establish a level playing field by eliminating the unfair competitive advantage gained by employers who are underpaying staff," she said.

TROUBLE AT MILL ...

David Margan



I have listened to the ABC for 52 years and in 1978 I was one of the successful of 5000 applicants for four cadetships in the ABC's Public Affairs Radio Unit that produced 'AM', 'PM' and 'The World Today'.

Listening these days can be an exercise in frustration with Australian place names constantly miss pronounced and supposed 'expert' broadcasters tumbling out phrases such as; 'like', 'sort of' and my personal favourite, 'you know', well I don't that's why I am listening to you, the supposed specialist!

The political correctness of the joint is also grossly annoying where opinion without evidence becomes

I do remember the former Head of Public Affairs Radio, the legendary Russell Warner giving a lecture on the fundamental precepts of broadcasting at the ABC.

He drew two dots joined by a line on a piece of paper, below that was a smaller dot.

He intoned that one dot was the talent, the second a listener and third, as he put it that piece of fly shit is you the

interviewer.

It's a precept that seems to have gone the way of the dodo.

Enough of my gripes and I'm sure you have some of yours and we're allowed our view but actually using your privileged and responsible position to seek the sacking of senior reporters for 'upsetting' a few politicians is simply outrageous.

There should be a criminal statute for attempting to subvert the foundations of our liberal democracy.

There are however other internal enemies of competence and professionalism.

ABC TV programming is horrendous at the moment. Crap programs, endless repeats and good stuff scheduled later in the evening when we workers need sleep.

I know and talk regularly to a host of ABC employees and despite the vast array of Managing Director's who've come and gone the same sad tales are still sung.

Staff morale is poor.

The number of 'managers' to actual program makers is ridiculous.

It's cumberdomously bureaucratic.

It's pathetically correct and if you prefer meetings to actually doing something the ABC is the place for you.

It reminds me of something the recently passed Sam Chisholm, former Managing Director of Channel Nine in its heyday, once said to me, "Losers hold meetings, winners hold parties." And according to one observer, John Simpson a former ABC staffer, there are even worse structural issues ailing Aunty

"It is not at all clear that the incumbent directors have the requisite skills to uphold standards of governance or to ensure the ABC delivers to its own charter. The appointment of directors is so shrouded in political interference – who would know whether appropriate appointments are being made (consistent with the requirements of a complex, national organisation) or whether political relationships hold sway over who gets the nod.



It's widely known the so-called advisory panel that advises the government on appointments is a joke and nobody takes the slightest notice of its conclusions."

On experience and qualifications of those supposedly in charge at Aunty journalist, Kishor Napier-Raman, had this to say;

"A quick glance at the CVs of the ABC's board of directors indicates that they are drawn overwhelmingly from the highest echelons of corporate Australia. Conversely, the board collectively has almost no journalistic experience."

I have always wondered why over many decades it's not possible to have red hot list of applicants with the media experience, creative brilliance and human resource management skills vying for the very well paid and prestigious job of running the ABC.

Perhaps it simply isn't in the interest of certain parties that the place is well run, I mean, at one point they even appointed a psychopath to run the place ... down.

As Crikey's Bernard Keane has noted; "Milne's resignation will mean the government will appoint a new chair. It is possible it may repeat the dose and appoint someone equally uncommitted to defending the ABC's independence"

This will be a test of how Prime Minister Morrison understands true leadership as opposed to petty politics. Having worked inside the Coalition I know only too well the hysterical ideological hatred many 'Liberals' have for the ABC.

The joint needs a leader who can fillet all those who would seek to bully the place or resist its improvement.

A bi-partisan search for a new M/D and Chair Person should start now.

Cast the net wide and let's get someone who is good, real good. The place, its audience and our democracy need it badly.

HOW CAN WE DO THIS?

[Rebekah Holt](#) (Freelance journalist - Crikey)

Three small girls living in a heavily guarded unit within the grounds of a Melbourne detention centre are showing signs of mental distress. The girls are aged three years, 14 months and six months. All have been there for six months and senior medical professionals have raised concerns about all three.



As well as Huyen and her [daughter](#), there are two young sisters from Biloela, Queensland, who the Department of Home Affairs attempted to deport to Sri Lanka. Dharuniga and Kopiga with parents Priya and Nadesalingam were removed from their family home in a [pre-dawn raid](#) in March.

In a medical report supplied to Crikey based on a visit in August, the clinician notes that three-year-old "[Kopiga] is showing behavioural disturbance, disorganised play and attachment since her time in detention ...

"Parents report [she] bites her own hands, frequently."

The younger sister who is 14 months old "is also showing behavioural disturbance and disorganised play since her time in detention, which is now of a prolonged duration.

"The family have been very isolated in detention, and the conditions described are not appropriate for young children, particularly the lack of contact with other children, and restrictions on their freedom of movement. No playgroup or early childhood learning in place".

The doctor also notes that "we were not aware that there were any long-term detained children in Melbourne prior to the referral".

The medical report on the sisters is now the second document written by a medical professional in the last three months raising concerns about the welfare of children housed at Melbourne Immigration Transit Accommodation.

A psychiatric report on Huyen and her baby daughter by Professor Louise Newman of the University of Melbourne and supplied to the department in July was reported on in Crikey earlier this month. That report outlined Huyen's significant depression and that at five months old, her baby was displaying symptoms of anxiety.

Since I began writing about Huyen and her daughter, the DHA has responded once to questions submitted and that was to state Huyen's baby was "housed" rather than detained.

While it is not appropriate to comment on the specifics of individual cases, the department can confirm that this individual is not being detained at MITA [Melbourne Immigration Transit Accommodation]. This individual is being housed, with her child, in an alternative place of detention (APOD).

An APOD may include temporary accommodation such as a hotel or motel room, a suburban house, a hospital, or any accommodation that might be used to facilitate the administrative detention of an unlawful non-citizen.

At all times the safety and security of minors is paramount. A range of care, welfare and support arrangements are in place to provide for the needs of children and young people in detention. Service providers are contracted to provide age-appropriate health, education, recreational, and cultural services. Health professionals regularly engage with detainees in regards to their mental health and individuals have access to counselling services as needed.

There are many similarities between the Biloela family's account of how they are treated in MITA and Huyen's. Both families say that beyond occasionally seeing a nurse from International Health and Medical Services (IHMS) there are none of the educational or welfare provisions for their children in MITA as described by DHA.

The families have Serco guards in their units 24/7, who Huyen says make note of everything she does but have been instructed not to interact or assist with her baby.

Huyen stays that one guard often cries during their shift in her unit and multiple guards have told her to talk to the media.

Despite living in the same compound, Huyen said she wasn't allowed to socialise with the Biloela family and their children until after the first story was published in Crikey. Now she is occasionally allowed to see them in a small, fenced playground area.

After citing the medical report on the sisters who are kept in the same area of MITA as Huyen and her baby, Crikey submitted the following questions to Dutton's office and the DHA media team last Thursday.

Could the minister or his advisors please advise exactly what the range of welfare, care and support arrangements are in place for these three children beyond access to IHMS?

2. Could the minister or his advisors please describe what the health, educational, recreational and cultural services that are delivered to these children beyond access to IHMS?

3. Huyen has said guards who are consistently monitoring her 24/7 are not permitted to assist with her child's care and that she receives no other support. Professor Newman who prepared the report on Huyen and her daughter (submitted to the minister) says that the guards not interacting with the baby will be very confusing and distressing for the infant.

Could the minister explain why the staff do not assist or interact with the baby?

4. Given that there are now three small children in the APOD unit within MITA, would the minister see the provision of or transport to an early learning centre or playgroup as being appropriate and part of the department's duty of care?

No answers were received before deadline.

FINALLY, JUSTICE

Lexy Hamilton-Smith

It's the real-life crime drama that struck terror into the hearts of a pioneering community — a white woman raped on the banks of the Brisbane River, near Ipswich, and the subsequent trial, conviction and death of an innocent man.



But more than 150 years on, partial justice may have finally have been served, thanks to the tenacity of former journalist and crime writer Ken Blanch.

The 90-year-old said he can now die happy believing he had set an innocent man's soul free, after winning an extraordinarily rare posthumous pardon.

Aboriginal man Kipper Billy was wrongly convicted of rape in 1861.

This morning, his Royal Pardon was handed over to Indigenous representatives at a special ceremony at Government House in Brisbane.

The injustice to Kipper Billy haunted Blanch for nearly 30 years.

'Unluckiest Aboriginal ever sentenced to death'

In a 1990 Sunday Mail magazine column Blanch wrote: "Kipper Billy must have

been the unluckiest Aboriginal ever sentenced to death".

Depending on what you believe, he was either shot or bludgeoned to death while trying to escape the hangman's noose at the old Petrie Terrace jail.

What Kipper Billy could not have known was the information that would have set him free was already in the possession of authorities.

Less than a month later, his alleged accomplice in the rape of Jane Rae, Billy Horton, would be pardoned.

Blanch's research found Mr Horton's pardon came through "just minutes after witnessing the appalling execution of a fellow prisoner, which he believed to be a macabre rehearsal of the fate that awaited him".

He was exonerated after a mailman came forward with an unassailable alibi for the time of the rape.

Judge Alfred Lutwyche later ruled Billy Horton was never there, nor was Kipper Billy, who was seen 8 kilometres away not long after the rape.

COMMUNICATIONS

LABOR WILL SEEK SENATE INQUIRY ON LIBERAL INTERFERENCE WITH ABC – Rowland

After astonishing allegations of intervention in staffing and editorial decisions of Australia's national broadcaster, Labor will be moving to establish a Senate Inquiry into the Liberal Government's political interference at the ABC.

Media reports outline an extraordinary situation in which the independence and integrity of Australia's most trusted news organisation risk having been compromised.

The ABC does not belong to the Liberals – it belongs to the Australian people.

Given the importance of maintaining independence and integrity, Labor will be seeking support from the Parliament to establish a Senate Inquiry to look at these allegations.

The Liberal/National Coalition have launched the biggest attack on the independence of the ABC in a generation.

Since 2014, they have announced over \$366 million in cuts to the ABC that has seen 800 jobs lost and a drop in Australian content and services. This is despite the Liberals' election promise of "no cuts to the ABC".

This year alone, this out of touch government has cut \$83.7 million in ABC funding, launched two damaging public broadcasting inquiries and has three bills before Parliament to meddle with the ABC Act and Charter.

The Liberals can't be trusted with the ABC – and they can't be trusted to act on these allegations of political interference.

Communications Minister Mitch Fifield has spent more time complaining to the ABC on behalf of the Liberal Party and the IPA than he has doing his day job.

The Liberal Party has a policy to privatise the ABC - the first step in this process is its determination to politicise the organisation.

The ABC is a public broadcaster, not a state broadcaster and Australians have a right to know what is going on.

A Senate Inquiry, if established, will help give Australians this knowledge – because the Liberals won't be honest and upfront about their interference.

ECONOMY

STUART ROBERT NOT UP TO THE JOB – Clare O'Neil

Stuart Robert's train-wreck interview today on Sky News confirms yet again that he simply is not up to the job of cracking down on misconduct in the financial services sector.



On Thursday,, Stuart Robert – the minister responsible for financial services – when asked about banking misconduct said that with the banks, “...we're always going to see problems.”

He went on to say, “[i]f we think for a second that government can solve all problems and provide nirvana for every organisation, we're kidding ourselves... Government should never try and regulate human behaviour.”

These comments are disappointing – but hardly surprising – from a Minister who only weeks ago declared banking scandals are “inevitable” and vowed to resist “left-wing” pressure to crack down on banking misconduct. Incredibly, Stuart Robert backs “self-regulation” – a practice which has comprehensively failed hundreds of thousands of Australians who have been ripped off by the big banks.

Australians cannot trust Stuart Robert or Scott Morrison to crack down on banking misconduct.

Their track record is disastrous. For 600 days, Scott Morrison and the Liberals fought tooth and nail to prevent a Royal Commission. Scott Morrison voted 26 times against setting up a Royal Commission. And as Treasurer, he was the loudest voice against the Royal Commission, describing it as a “populist whinge”, a “QC's complaints desk” and a “reckless distraction”.

And Thursday's comments by Stuart Robert just confirm that they're still running the same old protection racket for the big banks.

Only Labor can be trusted to stand up for Australian customers and businesses by cracking down on misconduct in the financial services sector.

ROBERT REMINDS US WHY HE WAS BROUGHT BACK TO FRONTBENCH – Bowen/Chalmers

The new Assistant Treasurer has added to the same old confusion and chaos in the Liberal Party when it comes to policy and Budget matters, confusing debt and deficit in an interview on Sky News AM Agenda this morning.

Without prompting, Stuart Robert decided to recite what he thought were Final Budget Outcome figures:

“We saw a great result reflecting on the 17-18 financial year, literally a \$19.3 billion turnaround, to the lowest debt in ten years at \$10.1 billion.”

Wrong.

FACTS:

1. According to the FBO released on Monday, net debt is at \$342 billion having doubled under the Liberals.
2. Gross debt is at record highs, well above half-a-trillion dollars.

Mr Robert went on to deliver a tremendous backhand to Tony Abbott, Joe Hockey, Malcolm Turnbull and then Treasurer Scott Morrison, stating that this is the:

“First Government in 10 years, this Government, to work sensibly to balance the books...”

No amount of gaffes or unintentional slap downs can paper over the Liberal's record high gross debt despite its agenda of cuts to schools, hospitals and the pension. Keep going Stuart Robert; you're a true asset to the Abbott-Turnbull-Morrison Government.

COALITION DRAGGED TO ACTION ON DODGY PHOENIX ACTIVITY – Leigh

More than a year after promising action, the Government has been dragged kicking and screaming to provide a timeline for legislation to tackle dodgy phoenix activity.

Phoenixing is an urgent problem – it has effects that reach out across the community, ruining innocent people's lives and livelihoods.

Director identification numbers have been cited as the single most effective measure to crack down on illegal phoenix activity with our current system so full of holes that the Australian Taxation Commissioner even warned one Senator:

[“I could appoint you as a company director without you even knowing and me then controlling the company.”](#)

Another expert warned that:

“... you can, almost literally, register your dog as a company director.”

It has been [16 months](#) since Labor first called for the introduction of director identification numbers, with support from:

- Australian Institute of Company Directors
- Australian Small Business and Family Enterprise Ombudsman
- Productivity Commission
- Tax Justice Network
- Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry
- Master Builders Australia
- Australian Council of Trade Unions
- Australian Restructuring Insolvency and Turnaround Association

- **Phoenix Project, comprising experts from Melbourne University Law School and Monash University Business School**
- **Australian Institute of Credit Management**

It has been [12 months](#) since the Coalition said they would follow Labor's lead and take action on phoenix activity.

Finally - after failing to [rule out the use of biometrics](#), after multiple court reports of [dodgy directors burning innocent people](#) and after billions of dollars drained from the tax system – the Coalition has finally decided to do something.

This should not have taken so long, especially as the Government was briefed on the issue three years ago.

According to research commissioned by the government, phoenixing costs the economy up to \$5.1 billion dollars a year. This means that almost \$7 billion may have been lost to illegal phoenix activity in the 16 months that have elapsed since Labor announced our phoenix policy.

Director identification numbers help prevent wrongdoing. How many people have had [multiple identities listed online](#) with the corporate watchdog? How many innocent people have lost [their jobs, their benefits and their reputation](#) as a result of Government inaction allowing dodgy directors to continue unabated?

Even a Coalition MP described the measure as ["so simple"](#) – so why has it taken more than a year to see any action?

Labor urges the Coalition to adopt the director identification number system with a 100 point check to ensure that no more dodgy directors get away with ruining the lives of hard working Australians.



TIME TO ACT ON MUTUALS REFORM – Leigh

Wednesday marked the 10th anniversary of Labor intervening in Australian mortgage market and minimising impact of Global Financial Crisis.

Labor has a strong history of making the rights calls for the economy and it's with this in mind that we renew our push for increased competition in the banking sector.

Scott Morrison said the Royal Commission was just a ["populist whinge"](#) and his new Assistant Treasurer says he won't take rigorous action despite conceding future banking scandals were ["inevitable"](#).

This chaotic Coalition won't give the banks real competition, but Labor will take action.

Labor will amend the Corporations Act to define mutual enterprises and implement reforms to facilitate new financial instruments for member-owned firms.

Labor has been [calling for these reforms for almost two years](#) because we know they'll promote ethical competition and productivity, as well as encouraging social investment and the well-being of workers and small businesses.

The Coalition agreed [12 months later](#) to adopt Labor's reforms – but we're yet to see any legislation.

It's time for the Government to do something popular and back Labor's plan properly. It's time they got on board and backed Australian families and family businesses.

NEW TREASURER FUELS CONFUSION OVER BUDGET RULES – Bowen

Well there's another new Liberal leadership team but it's the same old confusion and chaos when it comes to policy and Budget matters.

Just last week the new Treasurer Josh Frydenberg when asked whether the new spending for schools would be offset consistent with their own budget rules, he said *"we're not making cuts in our economy....what we are doing is growing our economy"*.

Under anyone's interpretation this was a clear backsliding from the Government's self-imposed budget rules which commit that *"new spending measures will be more than offset by reductions in spending elsewhere"*.

But now less than a week later both the Prime Minister and the Finance Minister are seemingly on a different script to the new Treasurer clearly committing to the current budget repair strategy and that all new spending will be fully offset.

FRAN KELLY: *Let me put it another way. As Treasurer you had a bit of golden rule that any new spending had to be offset with savings elsewhere in the Budget. Is Josh Frydenberg going to be operating under those rules?*

MORRISON: *Well they're the Budget rules.*

KELLY: *Still the Budget rules?*

MORRISON: *Yeah. [RN BREAKFAST WITH FRANK KELLY – 26 SEPTEMBER 2018]*

TOM CONNELL: *You did have previously this rule that any new spending would be offset by savings elsewhere. Is that concrete rule now gone?*

CORMANN: *No. I mean I don't know where all this speculation comes from. The rule remains precisely the same. [SKY NEWS FIRST EDITION – 26 SEPTEMBER 2018]*

The only thing that is clear is that the Government isn't clear about its own Budget strategy.

Who should we believe? If the new Treasurer is right, then the Government has just like in recent Budget updates completely abandoned offsetting new spending decisions. If the Prime Minister and Finance Minister are right, then we can expect more cuts to government services in the upcoming MYEFO.

Whatever the government says, we know it has given up on these budget rules, they are rules on paper only.

For years the government has committed to offsetting all new spending and banking any unanticipated uplift in tax receipts yet in the most recent Budget it dropped that, choosing unfunded income tax cuts over budget responsibility.

Yet the more desperate this government becomes, the more it thinks it's can walk both sides of the fence, on one hand committing to its own budget rules, and on the other relying on a *"stronger economy"* to support new spending.

With at least one budget update to come before an election, Labor will hold the government to account on these matters.

The global economy is in the midst of its strongest upswing in a decade, which means the Government should be “banking” extra unanticipated improvements to insure Australia against rising global risks.

Only yesterday the Bank for International Settlements confirmed once again that Australia has the second highest household debt in the developed world, household debt increased again last quarter and now stands at 122% of GDP.

Unlike the Government, Labor has made the tough calls such as reining in and reforming unsustainable tax concessions such as negative gearing and capital gains.

These decisions will help put the budget on a more structurally sound footing giving Australia an extra buffer in the event of a shock.

THE PROTECTION RACKET HAS GOT TO STOP – Clare O’Neil

The [ASIC report into compliance with breach reporting obligations](#) released today is yet another damning indictment on the big banks and the Liberal Government. The report reveals shocking, widespread non-compliance by banks with their legal obligations. It also reveals that Australians have been ripped off to the tune of \$500 million by illegal bank conduct since 2014.

Scott Morrison and the Liberals have refused to act on this issue despite a report in December 2017 recommending urgent changes to tighten up these laws. They have been sitting on the ASIC Enforcement Taskforce report for 9 months while these laws continue to be broken by banks.

This is shocking – but hardly surprising – from a Government that only cares about the top end of town.

Scott Morrison and the Liberals have done everything they possibly can to protect the big banks and cover up their misconduct.

The Liberals ran a protection racket for the big banks over 600 days. Prime Minister Scott Morrison voted against setting up a Royal Commission 26 times. And even when they knew about the awful misconduct in the banking sector, they spent a year trying to reward the big banks with a \$17 billion tax cut.

All the while, Australian families suffered at the hands of dodgy financial service providers.

Only Labor can be trusted to stand up for Aussie customers and businesses by cracking down on misconduct in the financial services sector.

FRYDENBERG IN FINAL BUDGET OUTCOME PRESENTATION DODGE – Bowen

Josh Frydenberg has without any explanation sneakily changed the way the Final Budget Outcome (FBO) numbers are presented to accentuate the size of Budget improvements in 2017-18.

For the first time, the FBO has been compared against the previous year’s Budget instead of against the most recent Budget figures.

This has led to the government exaggerating the Budget improvement by a staggering \$11 billion compared to the standard comparison against this year’s Budget forecast.

If standard practice was followed, the FBO for 2017-18 of \$10.1 billion would have been compared against this year’s Budget forecast for 2017-18 of \$18 billion, not the \$29 billion forecast in last year’s budget.

From Tuesday’s FBO document:

The 2017-18 underlying cash deficit was \$10.1 billion, an improvement of \$19.3 billion compared with the estimate at the time of the 2017-18 Budget.

https://www.budget.gov.au/2017-18/content/fbo/download/02_Part_1.pdf (see page 2)

From last year’s FBO document:

The 2016-17 underlying cash deficit was \$33.2 billion, an improvement of \$4.4 billion compared with the estimate at the time of the 2017-18 Budget.

<https://www.budget.gov.au/2016-17/content/fbo/download/02-Part-1.pdf> (see page 2)

For the year prior:

The 2015-16 underlying cash deficit was \$39.6 billion, an improvement of \$340 million compared with the estimate at the time of the 2016-17 Budget.

https://www.budget.gov.au/2015-16/content/fbo/download/01_part_1.pdf (see page 2)

Normally, the FBO is presented as a comparison as the final financial year underlying cash balance number compared to the forecast for the same year contained in the most recent Budget.

This is what has occurred in previous Coalition FBO documents as well as during the last time Labor was in office.

Josh Frydenberg should be spending more time in the current round of Expenditure Review Committee meetings working out how he’s going to pay for new spending commitments instead of working up a Budget presentation smoke and mirrors exercise.

2017-18 FINAL BUDGET OUTCOMES – Bowen/Chalmers

The 2017-18 Final Budget Outcome (FBO) shows the deficit came in almost four times worse than forecast in the Liberal Party’s first Budget.

This is after the Liberal Party’s massive cuts to schools, hospitals and the pension.

The Liberal Party has clearly given up on any sort of credible Budget repair strategy with the rookie Treasurer all but giving up on offsetting new spending and revenue measures.

Despite today’s Final Budget Outcome, we still have a Budget in substantially worse condition than that inherited by the Abbott-Turnbull Government:



- Net debt has doubled under the Liberals, having ballooned from \$175 billion in September 2013 to \$342 billion in the latest FBO figures
- Gross debt is at record highs, stuck above half-a-trillion dollars having grown by \$250 billion since September 2013

Clearly strong global economic conditions have seen revenue pick-up in the Budget bringing the 2017-18 deficit down from what was forecast in May.

Instead of banking the uptick in parameter improvements resulting from this major global upswing, the Liberal Party has decided to completely ignore their own fiscal rules.

As the global economy has strengthened, the Liberal Party's Budget discipline has weakened. We've seen this story before with the Howard-Costello Government baking in unaffordable, permanent income tax cuts and tax concessions and middle class welfare into the Budget, only for that to be unwound by successive governments as a temporary boom dried up.

We know the Liberal Party will move to bring back the big business tax cuts as soon the opportunity arises – that's exactly what senior economic ministers said after the company tax cuts were defeated in the Senate.

The Abbott-Turnbull-Morrison has given up on implementing structural Budget repair in a fair way and so it's only Labor is being upfront and honest with the Australian, putting forward tax reform proposals on negative gearing, capital gains tax and trusts.

Labor will deliver bigger cumulative surpluses over the forward estimates and will have a better plan to pay down debt putting the budget on a more structurally sound footing.



AGED CARE MINISTER'S HANDS-OFF APPROACH IS FAILING SENIORS – Julie Collins

The Minister for Aged Care must end his hands-off approach to the care of older Australians and take some responsibility for reports of neglect and abuse that have occurred under his watch.



When confronted with evidence of appalling neglect and abuse in care on Four Corners last night, the Minister refused to take any responsibility and could only say that an agency would deal with it.

“Well, when I have that reach my desk, or if it's been referred to the Quality Agency, the Quality Agency will deal with it.” [KEN WYATT, FOUR CORNERS, 24 SEPTEMBER 2018]

Why won't the Minister take responsibility for the critical failings that have been identified in Australia's aged care system?

A hands-off approach will not help older Australians get the high quality care we rightly expect they should receive.

Australians are appalled by the shocking stories we've seen and the crisis that exists in our nation's aged care system, particularly the standard of care being delivered in some residential aged care facilities.

It is clear the current regulatory framework that should be protecting older Australians in care is not working.

The current reporting of complaints in Australia's residential aged care facilities is overly complex and accessing information about specific complaints and accreditation failures is also difficult.

Just last week Labor reiterated our concerns that the Government's new Aged Care Quality and Safety Commissioner will not have strong enough powers to protect consumers.

The Government's legislative response was a missed opportunity to give the new Commission stronger powers given the level of public concern and we still don't know when this will pass the Parliament.

The response also comes too late – the report that recommended the new Commission was released almost a year ago.

It is critical to the future of the aged care sector that families can have faith and confidence their loved ones will be safe and receive a high level of care in residential facilities.

Scott Morrison and the Liberals must do better to ensure older Australians get the quality aged care services they need.

The Royal Commission cannot be an excuse to delay action and fail to fix the things we already know are

GOVT MUST COMMIT TO GREATER TRANSPARENCY IN AGED CARE SYSTEM – Julie Collins

The Liberal Government must respond to concerns about the lack of transparency regarding the handling of complaints in Australia's aged care system.

Australians are rightly appalled by the shocking stories we've seen and the crisis that exists in our nation's aged care system, particularly the standard of care being delivered in some residential aged care facilities.

Older Australians and their loved ones should be able to make informed choices about the future of their care.

Labor has repeatedly raised public concerns about the lack of transparency in the handling and reporting of complaints made against residential aged care facilities.

The current reporting of complaints in Australia's residential aged care facilities is overly complex and accessing information about specific complaints and accreditation failures is also difficult.

This is sadly consistent with the Abbott-Turnbull-Morrison Government's approach – it has refused to be open and honest about the true state of Australia's aged care system.

It is clear the current regulatory framework that should be protecting older Australians in care is not working.

Just last week Labor reiterated our concerns that the Government's new Aged Care Quality and Safety Commissioner does not have strong enough powers to protect consumers.

The Government's legislative response was a missed opportunity to give the new Commission stronger powers given the level of public concern.

The response also comes too late – the report that recommended the new Commission was released almost a year ago.

The Government must consider giving the new Commissioner greater arbitrary powers to resolve disputes between consumers and providers in the aged care system.

It is critical to the future of the aged care sector that families can have faith their loved ones will be safe and receive a high level of care in residential facilities.

Scott Morrison and the Liberals must do better to ensure older Australians get the quality aged care services they need.

DEMENTIA THE LEADING CAUSE OF DEATH FOR WOMEN IN AUSTRALIA – Julie Collins

Dementia remains the second leading cause of death for Australians, underscoring the urgent challenge of responding to this terminal condition.

ABS data released today confirms that 13,729 Australians lost their lives to dementia including 8,859 who were women. Sadly, for the second year running dementia is the leading cause of death for women.

In 2017 dementia was the underlying cause of death for more than 37 Australians every day.

Dementia is not a normal part of growing old – it is a serious and terminal illness that is impacting on and taking the lives of more and more Australians.

Labor reaffirms its commitment to fighting the insidious disease of dementia.

In the 2016 election, Labor made a commitment to raise awareness of the growing dementia crisis and building community capacity towards a dementia-friendly nation.

Last year, the Leader of the Opposition, Bill Shorten, also spoke at the University of Sydney about the challenges of dementia.

Labor knows this is an urgent issue.

We must continue to invest in research to find a cure and do more to make our communities liveable places for people with dementia.

It is time for a stronger public focus on dementia and greater leadership from the Federal Government to bring the community together to fight dementia.

People living with dementia and their families cannot afford to wait any longer – the economic and social cost are already too great and are increasing.



NDIS SHOULD BE ABOUT PEOPLE, NOT PROFITS – Cameron/Brown

Media reports of the National Disability Insurance Agency (NDIA) spending vast sums on consultants and outsourcing to for-profit multinationals are extremely concerning.

The National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) should be about delivering services and support for Australians with disability, not profits for consultants and multinationals. This cash splurge on consultants and outsourcing comes in the same week the Government revealed a \$2.5 billion underspend by the NDIS.

The Abbott-Turnbull-Morrison Government's Final Budget Outcome 2017-18 admitted this underspend was a result of delays in the rollout and the underutilisation of plans.

Many people with disability are simply not receiving the support they need.

Since 2014, the Abbott-Turnbull-Morrison Government has placed an arbitrary and ideologically-driven staff cap on the NDIA which has resulted in an inevitable reliance on expensive contract staff and outsourcing. People with disability, their families and advocates have long raised concerns about the staff cap.

Last year, the Productivity Commission recommended the staff cap be scrapped.

A Shorten Labor Government will lift the Abbott-Turnbull-Morrison Government's arbitrary NDIA staff cap and free the agency to put people at the heart of the NDIS, and deliver on its promise to Australians with disability.

The NDIS should be about people with disability, not profits.

GOVERNMENT'S NDIS UNDERSPEND NOTHING TO BE PROUD OF – Cameron

The Abbott/Turnbull/Morrison Government's National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) underspend of \$2.5 billion is not an achievement, but an admission that there are serious shortcomings in the Government's roll out of the NDIS.

The Government's own document – the [Final Budget Outcome 2017-18](#) – makes it clear that people are missing out because of delays and the underutilisation of their plans.

As a result, many Australians with disability are simply not receiving the support they need.

This is money that should be invested in services and support for Australians with disability, not used to prop up the Liberals' books.

It's nothing to be proud of.

240,500 Australians should have been benefiting from the NDIS by the end of 2017-18, but today the Government has conceded that number is currently closer to 200,000.

This is the equivalent of more than 40,000 people missing out.

The latest quarterly report also revealed almost half of all NDIS participants are using less than 50 per cent of their plan.

This government has no-one to blame but themselves for the roll-out problems in the NDIS.

They should have been focused on making sure the sector, workforce and community was prepared for the rollout, instead of wasting time treating people with disability like a political football.

The Liberals' ideological National Disability Insurance Agency staff cap has been holding the rollout back and compromising quality for years now.

The Productivity Commission recommended the staff cap should be scrapped, but the Government failed to act.



In contrast, Labor will abolish the arbitrary staff cap as a first step to getting the NDIS back on track and delivering on the promise that was made to Australians with disability, their families and carers.

EDUCATION

WHAT PEOPLE ARE SAYING ON MORRISON IGNORING PUBLIC SCHOOLKIDS - Plibersek

PARENTS

"Another punch in the gut for government schools." [Susie Boyd, President, P&C Federation]

"Support fair and equitable funding for ALL schools, parent choice is about what you can afford! #publiceducation is the pathway from poverty to prosperity." [Gayle Walters, Chair, P&Cs Queensland]

TEACHERS

"A cynical attempt by the Morrison government to buy votes at the next election at the expense of students in our public schools...we will escalate our campaign in 18 target seats, ensuring that parents across Australia know that it is the Morrison government which has abandoned public school students."

Australian Education Union

"This is an inequitable, unfair and corrupt funding model ... The Federal Government has ripped billions of dollars from our public schools. We want public school students to have smaller class sizes, more one-on-one support and additional teachers and support staff...this will reignite the funding wars...how can Scott Morrison think this latest funding model is fair to the majority of Australian children who attend public schools, given they won't receive a single dollar of additional funding?" [NSW Teachers' Federation]

"The commitment to the student resources standard will not be met. The model locks in hopelessly inadequate funding for students with disabilities whose learning needs are still not properly measured and resourced. The model means more students with disabilities getting less. This is a matter of national shame." [Independent Education Union]



PRINCIPALS

"The Federal Government claims to support needs-based funding yet it has just announced the biggest private school special funding deal we have seen." [NSW Secondary Principals' Council]

PUBLIC SCHOOLS

"Won't be signing any deal that doesn't treat every student and every school with fairness" [Rob Stokes, NSW Education Minister]

"We won't sign up to any agreement until this inequality is addressed. We want a fair deal and equality for all kids. This is one mess that is still far from fixed." [James Merlino, Victorian Education Minister]

"...fund all schools equitably...public schools deserve their fair share of any extra new Fed Govt funding."

[Grace Grace, Queensland Education Minister]

ACADEMICS

"School funding should have been sorted without the need for special deals..." [Peter Goss, Grattan Institute]

"Pathetic...there's nothing fair about it." [Professor Adrian Piccoli, Gonski Institute for Education]

HEALTH

O'DOWD FAILS GLADSTONE ON HEALTH – AGAIN - King/Zac Beers (Flynn Candidate)

Ken O'Dowd's inability to secure a Medicare MRI licence for Gladstone is the latest in his long line of failures when it comes to health.

Federal Shadow Health Minister Catherine King visited Gladstone today at the request of Labor Candidate for Flynn Zac Beers to discuss the region's health care challenges and Labor's commitments to health in Gladstone.

Despite the clear evidence that Gladstone needs a Medicare MRI licence – including a bipartisan Senate inquiry that recognised the region as an area of shortage – Gladstone was snubbed in the Liberals' announcement of new licences last weekend.

"The decision to award public MRI licences to the Gold Coast and Toowoomba, but not Gladstone, is yet another slap in the face for our region from a federal LNP Government that is so out of touch with us", said Mr Beers.

"The failure of Mr O'Dowd and the Morrison LNP Government to deliver Gladstone a new public MRI license will mean local residents continue to pay higher costs for crucial health care".

"Unfortunately, this failure is only one part of the LNP's attack on health care in Gladstone", said Ms King.

"As Treasurer, Scott Morrison cut almost \$1 million from Gladstone Hospital and over \$6 million from Central Queensland hospitals between 2017 and 2020 – and now he's seeking to lock in those cuts for another five years".

"If that wasn't bad enough, in one of his first acts as Prime Minister Mr Morrison has doubled down on his attack on Queensland hospitals, seeking to cut further funding for services that hospitals have already delivered".

In contrast, a Shorten Labor Government will deliver a Medicare MRI licence for Gladstone and more than reverse the Liberals' cuts to Gladstone Hospital as part of a new \$2.8 billion Better Hospitals Fund.

"It's now clear that only a vote for Labor at the next election will ensure locals can get Medicare-subsidised MRIs right here in Gladstone and no longer have to travel up to Rockhampton" said Mr Beers.

"Only Labor believes that your health care should be determined by your Medicare card, not your credit card".

AUSTRALIA'S SUICIDE RATE REQUIRES RENEWED ACTION – Julie Collins/Deborah O'Neill

According to ABS statistics [released today](#), 3,128 Australians died by suicide in 2017 – sadly an increase of 262 deaths from the previous year. This is 3,128 too many. These statistics are a stark reminder of the work that needs to be done to address this most serious national issue.

Labor has consistently called on the Liberal/National Government to adopt the National Mental Health Commission's target to reduce suicide by 50 per cent over 10 years.

We reiterate this call and reconfirm our commitment to this target.

A robust target, backed by real resources from all levels of government and an effective plan that supports long-term reform, must be implemented to drive change.

Wednesday's announcement from the Federal Minister for Health on suicide prevention while welcome is not new – it is simply extending a program that was due to run out at the end of June 2019.

That there is an average of more than 8 deaths by suicide in Australia each day is a tragedy.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples are still approximately twice as likely to die by suicide than non-Indigenous Australians.

In 2017, suicide was the leading cause of death among people 15 – 44 years of age and is now the second leading cause of death among those 45 – 54 years of age.

These statistics are heartbreaking and confronting. Behind every loss is a community dealing with grief.

Labor's thoughts are with those that have lost a loved one to suicide today and every day.

Labor knows there is more work to be done to improve the mental health of Australians and find ways to further reduce the thousands of lives lost to suicide each year.

The 12 suicide prevention trial sites that are currently being run across Australia, which was first proposed by Labor, will help policy makers gather critical data on what works.

There is no one solution that will prevent suicide. Labor is prepared to work with all levels of Government to focus on a holistic approach to mental health and suicide prevention.

It is only through working together that we will be able to finally reduce the impact of mental ill health and suicide in our society.

For 24/7 crisis support and suicide prevention services call [Lifeline](tel:131114) on 13 11 14. Other services include [Suicide Call Back Service](tel:1300659467): 1300 659 467, [Beyondblue](tel:1300224636): 1300 22 4636, [Kids Helpline](tel:1800551800): 1800 551 800, [MensLine Australia](tel:1300789978): 1300 789 978

NATIONAL WEEK OF DEAF PEOPLE – Zappia

Last Sunday marked the beginning of National Week of Deaf People, in which we celebrate their culture and contribution and also raise awareness about the issues that affect deaf people.

This year's theme is *'With Sign Language, Everyone is Included!'*



The feeling of isolation because of hearing loss is well understood by the one in six Australians with varying degrees of deafness.

Australian Hearing has been providing essential services to people with hearing loss since it was established in 1947.

Yet only last month, the Coalition Government failed to rule out privatising Australian Hearing in its response to the unanimous recommendations of a recent inquiry carried out by the Parliament's Standing Committee on Health, Aged Care and Sport.

Speculation about the future of Australian Hearing began in early 2014 when the Coalition's National Commission of Audit recommended a number of privatisations. Subsequently the 2014 Budget included a scoping study for privatisation of Australian Hearing and later considered a proposal from a consortium comprising of the Royal Institute for Deaf and Blind Children, Macquarie University and Cochlear Limited.

Submissions made to the inquiry were clear: Australian Hearing should remain a public service in government hands.

Whilst the privatisation issue was sidelined in the lead up to the 2016 election, the Government's response makes it clear that privatisation is still on the table.

With more than 150 permanent locations and 330 visiting sites around Australia, Australian Hearing is a trusted government agency delivering affordable hearing services and operates at no cost to government.

Labor has consistently opposed the privatisation of Australian Hearing.

This week with the spotlight on hearing the Morrison Government should rule out ever privatising Australian Hearing.

GOVERNMENT FINALLY FOLLOWS LABOR'S LEAD ON MRI'S – King

After five years of abject failure when it comes to the cost of medical scans, the Liberals have finally decided to follow Labor's lead and award more Medicare-subsidised MRI licences.

Labor welcomes the Government's move but we question Scott Morrison's motives and commitment to actually delivering.

When Labor was last in Government we awarded 238 MRI licences – delivering more affordable scans to hundreds of communities across the country.

In May this year, we promised a Shorten Labor Government would invest an extra \$80 million to deliver a further 20 licences in locations of pressing need.

By stark contrast to Labor's record, the Liberals awarded just five licences in their first five years in power – including two in marginal Liberal electorates during the 2016 campaign and one in WA as a result of a dodgy deal with One Nation. There was no opportunity for other communities to apply for a licence.

This was one of the most disgraceful health policy failures since the Liberals came to power – and that's saying something.

Scott Morrison spent three years as Treasurer trying to give big business an \$80 billion handout but did nothing to address this scandal and give Australians more affordable access to potentially life-saving scans.

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 – with many Australians travelling long distances or experiencing significant wait times to access an eligible machine.

Last year, Labor initiated a Senate inquiry into Medicare MRI licences, which highlighted the Government's failures.

The inquiry heard that the Liberal neglect in this area could have deadly consequences, with evidence that a lack of MRI licenses meant children were at risk of being overexposed to the radiation of CT scans. Children's Healthcare Australasia gave evidence that for every 1,000 CT scans a new case of cancer is created in an Australian child.

The Health Minister's own Department told the Committee that the last Labor Government ran such MRI licence rounds regularly – including in 2012, when Labor granted 225 full and partial MRI licences around Australia. Labor's investment meant that more communities could access early detection and diagnosis of disease.

The inquiry's top recommendation was for the Government to *"immediately implement an application process with clear, objective and transparent assessment criteria to permit hospitals and radiology practices to apply for licences for Magnetic Resonance Imaging machines"*. That was more than six months ago and the Liberals are only now moving. This shows they are not really committed to improving the health care of Australians.

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 Abbott-Turnbull-Morrison public hospital cuts and ensure our emergency departments and hospital wards have the doctors, nurses and hospital staff to keep up with record demand.

WORKERS

LABOR WILL TAKE ACTION ON GENDER PAY GAP TRANSPARENCY - Plibersek/O'Connor

For the first time Australian companies with more than 1,000 employees will have to publicly reveal how much they pay women compared to men, as part of Labor's plan to help narrow the gender pay gap.



The gender pay gap is stubbornly high. On average, women working full time still get paid almost 15 per cent less than men working full time. It is unacceptable this has barely changed over the last two decades.

The pay gap means, on average, a woman working full time earns around \$27,000 less every year. We must do better.

That's why a Shorten Labor Government will act to shine a light on the gender pay gap in Australian companies. We will:

- Legislate so companies with more than 1000 employees have to report their gender pay gap publicly;
- Change the Fair Work Act to prohibit pay secrecy clauses and give employees the right to disclose (or not disclose) their pay; and
- Require the Workplace Gender Equality Agency (WGEA) to publish a list that shows whether a company with more than 1,000 employees has undertaken a gender pay

gap audit and reported the result to its board. The WGEA pay audit tool helps identify the size and causes of gender pay gaps in a workplace.

It's time the Australian people knew which companies are closing their gender pay gap, and those that aren't.

Companies already report their gender pay data to the Workplace Gender Equality Agency. Labor will make it public. People will be able to search a gender pay equity portal to find out a company's overall pay gap, and the pay gaps for managerial and non-managerial staff.

Australia still allows pay secrecy clauses in employment contracts – banning workers from telling their colleagues what they get paid. Labor will get rid of them. We'll give workers the right to disclose their own pay – or not to, it should be their choice.

Pay discrimination is not okay, so companies certainly shouldn't be allowed to hide it. More transparency will also reward companies that are doing the right thing.

A Shorten Labor Government will also take the lead to address the gender pay gap in the Australian Public Service. All Australian government departments and agencies will have to conduct gender pay audits within the first year of a Labor Government.

Last year, WGEA boss Libby Lyons told a Senate Committee that the gender pay gap will "remain a persistent feature of the Australian economy for years to come" and that analysis shows *"Australia is 50 years away from closing the pay gap"*.

We can't wait that long. The gender pay gap won't fix itself.

Earlier this year Labor committed to set staged and progressive targets to close the gender pay gap, and to make an annual progress statement to Parliament.

To close the gender pay gap, Australia needs a Shorten Labor Government that will fight for pay equity for women.

Labor will lead a national push to close the gender pay gap. Labor will restore penalty rates. We will deliver a \$400 million package to help narrow the superannuation gap. And as we've announced today we will take action to improve pay transparency.

PENALTY RATES WILL BE RESTORED UNDER A SHORTEN LABOR GOVT- O'Connor

If elected a Shorten Labor Government will, in our first 100 days, restore penalty rates and legislate so they can never be cut again.

On this public holiday weekend people working in retail and hospitality have already had their public holiday and Sunday penalty rates cut. Sunday penalty rates will be cut again next year and the year after that.

Make no mistake, Scott Morrison and the Liberals support cuts to penalty rates. They voted 8 times to support cuts to penalty rates.

Penalty rates are not a luxury, they are what pay the bills and put food on the table.

When wages growth has hit record lows, there could not be a worse time to cut the wages of hard working Australians.

Australians deserve a fair day's pay for a fair day's work.

457-VISA RORTS CONTINUE ON QUEENSLAND SOLAR FARMS – Neumann/O'Connor/O'Toole

The out-of-touch Morrison Government must immediately explain what actions it is taking to ensure 457-style visa rorts are not undercutting local jobs, pay, and conditions on new solar farms across Queensland.

Reports unlicensed people on temporary work visas – including backpacker visas – are being used for electrical work are extremely concerning. Labor welcomes the Queensland Government's crackdown on solar projects across the State which has seen some thirty notices for breaches of safety and electrical laws.

The Department of Home Affairs claims there needs to be "a balance between supporting Australian businesses needing short-term highly specialised workers and not undermining the employment of Australians."

People on backpacker visas are not highly specialised workers and definitely should not be used to undertake work that should be completed by qualified professionals – regardless of the industry.

The out-of-touch LNP have also constantly fought against labour market testing which ensures Australian workers are given the first shot at local jobs before a temporary work visa is made available.

Labor has announced that in Government, we will establish the Australian Skills Authority – an independent, labour market testing body which will determine genuine skills needs and restrict temporary work visas to those jobs.

The Australian Skills Authority will also project Australia's future skills shortages to train local workers for those jobs. Labor believes there is no excuse for a skills shortage to last one day longer that it takes to train an Australian to do that job – especially if a particular industry is booming. It's clear only Labor has a plan to ensure local workers are given the first shot at local jobs, invest in skills and training, and crackdown on temporary work visa rorts.

It's now up to the Muppet Show of a Morrison Government to explain what they are doing to ensure 457-style visas aren't being rorted to bring in cheap overseas labour, rather than hiring local workers – especially if these rorts are putting the lives of workers at risk on Queensland solar farms.

PM'S PLATITUDES WON'T FIX LIBERALS TRADE SKILLS MESS – Cameron

Prime Minister Scott Morrison's lip service on skills shortages and trade training will not fix five years of Liberal neglect of the vocational education system. Under the Liberals:

- \$3 billion has been cut from vocational education
- there are 140,000 fewer apprentices
- TAFE enrolments have plummeted by 24.5 per cent
- Did nothing while thousands of students accrued bad debts
- \$24 million on failed Australian Apprenticeship Management System
- dodgy training providers have flourished

Monday's concession by Mr Morrison that vocational education has been *"an area of great disappointment over many years"* will come as no surprise to the thousands of people charged for courses they have not completed.

Shadow Minister for Skills, TAFE and Apprenticeships, Doug Cameron, said there is no use the Liberals complaining about a skills crisis they created.

"This Government has an appalling record on vocational education and they have now installed a failed minister, one with a huge cloud over her head due to her role in the AWU raids scandal," Senator Cameron said.

"The Government's crocodile tears over skills shortages are disingenuous as they have failed to address these issues over the past five years."

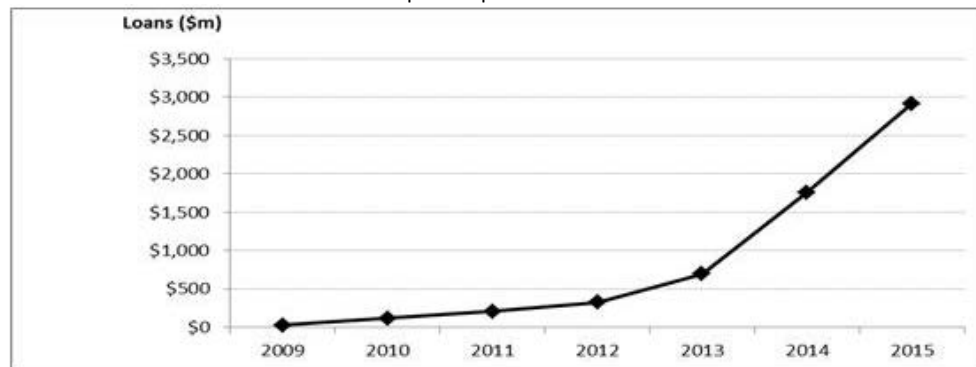
"If Senator Cash and the Coalition paid more attention to improving vocational education instead of attacking workers, their unions and each other, we would not be in this mess."

"The Coalition could not even build an effective apprenticeship management IT system, squandering \$24 million on the abandoned AAMS project."

Senator Cameron said the Liberals continued to pay millions of dollars to disgraced private providers like Careers Australia despite concerns being raised about the company years prior.

"They had the facts – they knew how many students were getting enrolled," Senator Cameron said.

From 2009, Labor provided VET FEE-HELP scheme loans of \$1.4 billion over five years, many going to TAFE students. When the Coalition was elected, VET FEE-HELP loans skyrocketed to \$1.8 billion in 2014 and a staggering \$3 billion in 2015, totally \$6 billion from 2014-2016, mainly to private providers.



Source: VET FEE-HELP data collection

If elected, a Labor government would, within the first 100 days, conduct a once in a generation inquiry into the post-secondary education system.

A Shorten Labor government will also provide \$100 million to the Building TAFE for the Future Fund to revitalise campuses across Australia and waive upfront fees for 100,000 TAFE students.

Labor will also ensure one in every 10 jobs on Commonwealth priority projects are filled by Australians apprentices.



RACE DISCRIMINATION COMMISSIONER CAN'T WAIT – Dreyfus

The government's failure to appoint a new Race Discrimination Commissioner is deeply concerning to Labor.

In April, the Attorney-General advertised for the position, with a promise for the appointment to begin from August. It's nearly October, and no announcement has been made.

This position is far too important to be left vacant. It cannot be allowed to become a victim of the current Liberal chaos as so many other important issues have.



The government has given no explanation for the delay.

If the delay is due to factional infighting over who the new Race Discrimination Commissioner should be, or whether the role should be changed entirely, then the government should own up to it. Why has Attorney-General Christian Porter failed to make an announcement? What is going on?

When you have a [Liberal Senator claiming](#) there is no racism in Australia, and thus no need for the position at all, there is serious reason to doubt that the government is doing the right thing behind the scenes.

Labor will not accept any downgrade of the position of the Race Discrimination Commissioner, whose role is currently legislated as part of the Racial Discrimination Act.

We would not be surprised if this government attempted to attack the role of the Race Discrimination Commissioner, given the Abbott-Turnbull-Morrison government's history of repeated attempts at destroying Section 18C of the Racial Discrimination Act.

We call on the government to act immediately, and announce a new Race Discrimination Commissioner without delay. This cannot wait any longer.

GOVERNANCE

CLAIMS OF LIBERALS' IMPROPER USE OF TAXPAYER MONEY – Watt

Scott Morrison's Special Minister for State Alex Hawke has questions to answer about allegations he spent \$500,000 procuring printing services from a Liberal party donor.

These are serious allegations about the improper use of taxpayer funds, and they need to be addressed.

Buzzfeed has published several articles alleging that Mr Hawke, Cabinet Minister Paul Fletcher, and Member for Berowa, Julian Leeser, have all used a company called Zion Graphics – which, according to the reports, is owned by the President of the Bella Vista branch of the Liberal Party and party donor Mr Rudy Limantono.

This report raises serious questions about whether the significant sum of taxpayer funds paid to Zion Graphics represents value for money – and if there is an improper sub-contracting arrangement in place.

Mr Hawke is the Special Minister of State – his responsibility for the integrity of the parliamentary work expenses system makes this situation even more serious.

Scott Morrison shouldn't protect his favourite numbers man from scrutiny in this situation – the public deserves answers and Mr Hawke needs to clearly address these allegations.

OPEN GOVERNMENT NATIONAL ACTION PLAN DOES NOT GO FAR ENOUGH – Dreyfus

The government's Second Open Government National Action Plan 2018-20, published today, has a gaping hole – there is no commitment to a National Integrity Commission.

While today's publication is welcome, the government has patted itself on the back for its progress on transparency measures. It has given itself a green tick, for "on track", on its pledge to strengthen Australia's anti-corruption framework. This is a joke.

Nearly eight months on from Bill Shorten's announcement of Australia's commitment to a National Integrity Commission to clean up federal politics and the public service, the government is yet to even produce an official response.

That's why Bill wrote to Scott Morrison last week, urging him to work together with Labor to make progress where his predecessor Malcolm Turnbull had failed.

The Civil Society Members of the Open Government Forum draw attention to this failure in the government's report, calling for a national integrity commission to be considered, as well as a First Nations Voice to Parliament. Both of these important ideas have been dismissed by the government.

In addition, the government's self-proclaimed progress on donations transparency is laughable. Nine months since the government pledged to ban foreign donations, it still has not taken action on legislation. The government also refuses to act on lowering the disclosure threshold for donations.

When it comes to transparency and accountability, the government has a long way to go.

CONSUMER AFFAIRS

FOOTY FANS WARNED AS GOVERNMENT DROPS THE BALL – Madeleine King

All footy fans need to be aware of potential ticket reselling rip-offs and scams, in the lead-up to the grand final weekend.

Recently a US tourist couple was refused admission to an AFL final in Perth, after paying an exorbitant \$350 for tickets worth \$118. And, as West Coast Eagles supporters in Perth make their way across the Nullarbor this weekend, punters should know that in Victoria it is illegal to sell or advertise for resale tickets for more than 10 per cent above face value.

This Government, and its sixth minister responsible for consumer affairs in five years, has well and truly dropped the ball.

Leadership chaos directly resulted in a key meeting of NZ and Australian consumer affairs ministers – who were to discuss ticket reselling and scams - being pushed back from 31 August until late October.

The Morrison Government's delays have left Australians exposed to risk when buying grand finals tickets. State Governments, like the Victorian Labor Government, have had to pick up the slack to protect consumers, but this piecemeal approach to ticket resale legislation is not a long-term solution.

The Government knows ticket scammers are a problem. Australian Consumer group CHOICE [released a report back in August 2017](#) indicating two-thirds of all consumers who searched for ticket sales online could not tell if they were purchasing from a legitimate distributor or an unreliable, untrustworthy third party outlet.

The Government's own inquiry in November 2017 reaffirmed CHOICE's findings of shady practices by resellers claiming to be authorised sellers, as well as evidence of ticket-buying bot software employed by ticket scalpers to infiltrate ticket selling systems and artificially inflated prices. Punters should be far more concerned about Jeremy McGovern's health than whether or not their tickets are legitimate this Saturday. Assistant Treasurer Stuart Robert needs to follow the lead of good Labor state governments and put an end to ticket scalping and shady reselling practices.

LOAN SHARKS RIPPING OFF 800,000 AUSTRALIAN FAMILIES – Madeleine King/Dick

Recent new data has shown that there are now 800,000 Australian households who have fallen victim to the pay day lending rip off.

This number has more than doubled in the past decade including 150,000 new households signing up for pay day loans in the last 18 months alone.

While the Morrison Government sits by and does nothing, these Australian families continue to be ripped off every day by the loan sharks in this out of control industry.

It's time to draw a line in the sand and end the pay day lending rip off.

These families who are struggling to get by with flat lining wages and insecure work are being forced into pay day loans with interest rates as high as 884%.

The government has known about this growing crisis for more than two years, but are so out of touch they refuse to do anything about it.

It has now been 1,147 days since the government announced a review into payday loans and rent-to-buy schemes in 2015, and despite repeated promises and supporting the 24 recommendations from the review, the government is yet to show any action to clamp down on the loan sharks.

With the government unwilling to tackle this crisis, earlier this year Labor introduced legislation to enact the 24 recommendations to stop the loan sharks preying on vulnerable Australians.

Not one government MP chose to speak on the motion and the merry-go-round of ministers responsible for the issue now sits with Queensland MP Stuart Robert who is the 4th minister to ignore this crisis in our communities.

Labor again calls on the government to bring forward this important piece of legislation to protect vulnerable Australian consumers.



LIES, SECRETS AND THE COALITION AGREEMENT – Fitzgibbon

Not only is the Coalition Agreement being kept secret from the Australian people, its contents now appear a matter of subterfuge.

Last week David Littleproud told ABC RN he "doesn't know what is in the Coalition Agreement". But now we learn that Michael McCormack misled the Nationals Party Room telling MPs an agriculture visa had been included in the Coalition Agreement. That's the same Michael McCormack who has consistently said the Coalition Agreement is "administrative only".

The Morrison Government must release the current Coalition Agreement and drop its efforts in the Courts to prevent the release of the previous two Agreements.

Nothing is more fundamental to our democracy than an agreement which allows a political party to form a government. The community is entitled to know what deals have been done.

MORRISON GOVERNMENT CONTINUES TO FAIL ON DELIVERING FHA – Fitzgibbon/Husic

As thousands of farmers struggle through harsh and relentless drought conditions, [news has emerged](#) we will be waiting until mid-way through next year until a report from a review into the effectiveness of the Farm Household Allowance (FHA) is finally delivered.

Labor has been alerting the Government to failings with the Farm Household Allowance since 2014 and joins the many farming families and support services concerned about the time it will take for recommendations to be handed down.

Critical questions on whether the support is reaching farmers in need, whether the scheme is fit for purpose or providing assistance to help farmers improve their long-term financial circumstance are all still unanswered.

All the while the Government has been steadfast in denying any problems with the FHA. In fact it's the reason Barnaby Joyce was driven to doctor his Hansard after [embellishing its effectiveness](#).

The challenging nature of the process to access FHA support payments has been well documented. The onerous and confusing paperwork has only caused more stress for farming families who are already undergoing enormous hardship.

Up to 20,000 farmers are potentially eligible for the FHA, yet just 2000 are receiving the support payment. That means very few farmers will be accessing the \$12,000 supplementary payment the Government most recently introduced as a measure to assist most in need as the drought lengthens.

Labor has been calling for the Government to ensure that assistance is getting to farmers as quickly as possible with support on hand from Centrelink officers when they need it.

The current drought has exposed the consequences of the Liberals' cuts to Centrelink, with so many eligible farmers missing out on the FHA. All we have seen from the Coalition Government is listening tours, talk fests and media opps when it comes to responding to drought.

Farmers deserve real and meaningful drought policy and effective support.

The Australian community deserves to know that taxpayers' money is being well spent and reaching those who need it the most.

This dysfunctional Government continues to fail our farmers and regional communities.

NATIONALS SELF INTEREST AHEAD OF NATIONAL INTEREST – Wong/Fitzgibbon/Neumann

[Revelations](#) the Deputy Prime Minister kept legitimate foreign policy concerns from his Party Room shows divisions in the Coalition are now threatening to undermine Australia's national interests.

Feeling vulnerable to a stalking Barnaby Joyce, Michael McCormack has put his own political interest ahead of the national interest.

The Deputy Prime Minister appears to have chosen not to share concerns about his proposed agriculture visa with his National Party colleagues. This is despite concerns the visa had the potential to undermine existing programs with Australia's Pacific neighbours.

Since 2012 the Seasonal Worker Program (SWP) has brought more than 25,000 workers from Pacific island countries and Timor-Leste to Australia for up to six months to pick fruit and vegetables.

Australia's relations with our Pacific neighbours are too important to be held hostage to splits, chaos and division within the Government or to be used to prop up the ailing leadership of Mr McCormack.

Instead of discussing these concerns with his colleagues, Mr McCormack chose to continue on with the [pretence](#) the visa proposal was on track in order to save his own bacon.

The Government has been talking up an “**agriculture visa**” for two years but there has been no progress in addressing critical workforce shortage issues in the agriculture sector. Nor is there any strategy to put more young Australians into workforce gaps.

This dysfunctional and divided Government continues to fail the agriculture sector.

FIRST PEOPLE

NEW PRIME MINISTER – SAME DISRESPECT AND LIES – Dodson/Snowdon/McCarthy

On Wednesday morning, Prime Minister Scott Morrison showed his true colours on constitutional recognition of First Nations people, by unambiguously rejecting a Voice to the Parliament.

Like his predecessors Tony Abbott and Malcolm Turnbull, Scott Morrison has turned his back on substantive recognition - and the Indigenous leadership who called for a Voice at Uluru.

His repeated claims that the Voice would be a ‘third chamber’ of the Parliament shows he just doesn't get it.

Astonishingly, he claimed that ‘all proposals will be treated with respect.’

That is, aside from proposals put forward by First Nations people themselves, contained in the Uluru Statement from the Heart – where First



Nations people called for a Voice TO the Parliament, and a Makarrata Commission to oversee truth telling and agreement making.

Labor is deeply disappointed in Prime Minister Scott Morrison's approach, but not surprised.

After all, this is the same government that repeatedly and disrespectfully dismisses and mischaracterises the aspirations of First Nations people.

And it is the same government that cut \$500 million from Indigenous Affairs in their first budget and forced the closure of remote communities in WA.

And in a further insult, Scott Morrison has appointed Tony Abbott as ‘special envoy’ on Indigenous Affairs, a decision widely criticised by First Nations leaders.

Only Labor is committed to meaningful recognition and reconciliation through a constitutionally enshrined Voice to Parliament and a national process of truth-telling and agreement-making.

Labor is determined to give First Nations people a say in the matters that affect

them. First Nations people don't need Tony Abbott's voice to parliament – they need their own.

CHILDCARE

LABOR WILL BAN FREE GIVEAWAYS FOR CHILD CARE ENROLMENTS – Rishworth

A Shorten Labor Government will ban child care and early education providers from offering inducements to boost their enrolment numbers, protecting parents from being lured into child care arrangements which may not suit their needs.

Recent reports have highlighted the alarming lengths which some child care and early learning centres are willing to go to in order to secure enrolments in their centres.

Some examples of the inducements being offered include holiday packages in resorts, cash refunds, and free iPads. Labor does not believe this in an appropriate use of taxpayer funds.

The Commonwealth Government is projected to spend \$7.9 billion on the Child Care Subsidy this year. This funding is to support families meet the costs of child care and early education – not for providers to give away in a mad scramble to increase enrolments.

For profit providers are making \$1 billion in profits from the system. This profit is underwritten by the taxpayers.

Enrolling inducements do not meet community expectations and undermines the value of quality in early learning centres.

That's why if elected, Labor will ban providers offering any goods, services or activity that is unrelated to the delivery of early childhood services being offered to incentivise parents and carers to enrol their child in a centre.

Centres will still be able to offer families refreshments when they hold orientation sessions and end of year celebrations – but the days of free iPads and free accommodation are over.

Under Labor's policy families and educators will be able to confidentially notify the Department of Education and Training of any incentives or behaviour which they suspect is an inappropriate inducement. Any provider found to be offering such inducements will have their licence to receive the Child Care Subsidy revoked.

Labor's policy to ban inducements will put the focus back on child care and early learning centres competing on the quality of early learning and care they provide our children.

Labor will always prioritise quality early education.

INFRASTRUCTURE

COALITION TOO INCOMPETENT TO DELIVER INFRASTRUCTURE PROMISES – Albanese

Scott Morrison must get to the bottom of the worsening infrastructure project delivery crisis within his Government that has seen it fail to deliver \$4.9 billion worth of promised infrastructure projects over the past five years.

The Final Budget Outcome document for the 2017-18 Budget, released yesterday, shows that over the year to June 30, the Government promised to invest \$7.9 billion on rail and road projects but in fact invested \$6.9 billion.

Over the Coalition's first five Budgets, the difference between what it promised and what it actually spent was \$4.9 billion. Projects promised but not delivered include general rail and road investment as well as literally hundreds of road safety projects under the Black Spot Program. The Bridges Renewal Program, created by this Government, is underspent by more than half, with \$290 million promised but \$135 million delivered. The 2017-18 result was no aberration. The Abbott-Turnbull-Morrison Government has failed to deliver infrastructure as promised in each of its four Budgets. This is nothing short of a crisis in project delivery. It is clear the Government's revolving-door parade of infrastructure Ministers, including Warren Truss, Jamie Briggs, Darren Chester, Barnaby Joyce, Paul Fletcher, Michael McCormack and Alan Tudge, have all lacked the competence to deliver their own promises. The Budget update follows recent news that earlier this year the Government approved more than \$7 billion for new projects around the nation, but decided not to commence or even announce them until the next election campaign. Instead of cynically holding back announcements for its political purposes, Mr Morrison must get on with the job of providing Australians with the railways and roads that he has promised and that they have paid for through their taxes. Investing in the right infrastructure projects creates jobs and economic activity in the short-term, while boosting productivity and economic growth over the long-term.

UNDERSPEND: PROGRAM BY PROGRAM

Program	Promised Investment*	Actual Investment^	Underspend	Underspend as a % of Promised Investment
Western Sydney Infrastructure Plan	\$1.56 billion	\$838 million	\$722 million	46 per cent
Major Road Projects	\$16.5 billion	\$13.7 billion	\$2.8 billion	17 per cent
Heavy Vehicle Safety Program	\$231 million	\$97 million	\$134 million	58 per cent
Northern Australia Roads	\$289 million	\$99 million	\$190 million	66 per cent
Bridges Renewal Program	\$290 million	\$135 million	\$155 million	53 per cent
Black Spot Program	\$305 million	\$205 million	\$100 million	33 per cent
Beefs Roads Program	\$81 million	\$6 million	\$75 million	93 per cent

* Source: Budget Paper No. 3: 2014-15 (p60); Budget Paper No. 3: 2015-16 (p51); Budget Paper No. 3: 2016-17 (p48); Budget Paper No. 3: 2017-18 (p46).

^ Source: Final Budget Outcome 2014-15 (p76); Final Budget Outcome 2015-16 (p73); Final Budget Outcome 2016-17 (p69); Final Budget Outcome 2017-18 (p69).

IMMIGRATION

LIBERALS' BREAK PROMISE ON TEMPORARY PARENT VISA – Neumann/Champion/Georganas

The divided, unstable, and illegitimate Liberal Government have broken their promise to Australia's multicultural and migrant communities by failing to deliver a new temporary sponsored parent visa.

The Liberals followed Labor's lead during the 2016 Federal election by announcing their commitment of enhanced visitor visas for sponsored parents – so that Australians could temporarily reunite with their loved ones.

It has been two years and three months since the Liberals made their promise and a new temporary sponsored parent visa still does not exist. The Government claims the creation of this visa is dependent on the passage of the Migration Amendment (Family Violence and Other Measures) Bill 2016 – important legislation which Labor supports, but the Liberals have failed to bring on for debate in the Senate since October 2017.

Not only have communities across Australia had to wait much longer than expected for a temporary sponsored parent visa, the Liberals have proposed conditions completely different to the commitment made during the election.

The Liberals said in 2016 that sponsors for this visa would have to pay a bond – before Scott Morrison announced as part of his 2017-18 Budget a non-refundable fee of up to \$20,000 if families chose the full 10 year visa option.

A new cap of 15,000 visas per year was also announced and that the new visa would be limited to one set of parents per household – forcing families to choose which parents or in-laws to reunite with.

Labor has written to the new Immigration Minister David Coleman demanding he explain why the Liberals have broken their promise to Australia's multicultural and migrant communities.

This Muppet Show of a Government are so focussed on themselves they have neglected multicultural and migrant communities across Australia – leaving parents apart from their children and some grandchildren having never met their grandparents.

It's time Australians had a government that cares about the same issues they care about – rather than the illegitimate Morrison Government and their broken promises.

FOREIGN AFFAIRS

RUSTON'S AID PROMISE MEANINGLESS WITHOUT RETURN TO INDEXATION – Wong

Assistant Minister for International Development and the Pacific, Anne Ruston, has added to the long list of meaningless aid funding promises by the Coalition by pledging there will be "no reduction in the investment and involvement of Australia in our aid budget".

In the 2013 election Tony Abbott promised to maintain aid funding, then cut \$11 billion over the next three years, driving aid funding down to our lowest level on record.

In 2016 then Foreign Minister Julie Bishop actually committed in writing to maintain aid funding in real terms, promising aid groups **“the aid programme will increase by the consumer price index from 2017 – 18, providing predictability to Australia’s aid partners.”**

In the very next Budget this promise was broken, with then Treasurer Scott Morrison cutting \$300 million by freezing the foreign aid indexation until the 2021-22 Budget.

And the very next Budget after that, he did it again, by extending that freeze until 2022-23.

The carefully chosen words by the Assistant Minister make no commitment to maintain aid funding in real terms, or to taking any steps to turn around our already embarrassingly low level of aid funding.

It confirms, yet again, how little the Pacific, and foreign aid, matters to the Morrison Government.

Australian development assistance spending is now at its lowest level in history - just 22 cents in every \$100 of our national income will be spent on foreign aid in 2018-19 and Scott Morrison’s own Budget Papers forecast it will fall even further to just 0.19 per cent of GNI over the forward estimates.

Labor has repeatedly urged the Government to return to a properly bipartisan approach to international development assistance.

Instead of continuing to prioritise massive tax cuts for big business, the Morrison Government must join Labor in committing to lifting Australia’s embarrassingly low level of international development assistance by guaranteeing they will, at the very least, recommence indexation of our international development budget.

ENVIRONMENT

GOVT IS TURNING ITS BACK ON THE WATER TRIGGER - Burke

Anyone who is concerned about water resources, whether it be from an environmental or an agricultural perspective, should be alarmed by the Government’s decision not to invoke the water trigger on a dam and pipeline associated with the Adani project. The dam and pipeline are only being built as part of the project to commence a large coal mine in the Galilee Basin.

If the coal mine were not going ahead the pipeline and dam would not be going ahead.

When Labor introduced the water trigger the language in the Act was clear. The test is whether or not the action involves a coal mine. Given that these actions would not be taking place at all were it not for the large coal mine, it simply doesn’t make sense for the Government to claim that these actions are not involved with the coal mine. They are being put in place by the coalmining company as part of the coal mining project. The water trigger was put into national environmental law because of the critical importance to environment and to agriculture of looking after Australia’s precious water resources.

If the Government thinks it can get away with a circuitous argument to dodge the full scrutiny of the Expert Scientific Committee then anyone who cares about water should be alarmed.

It may well be that the Expert Scientific Committee determines that these particular water actions are not in themselves a problem. But that should be advice from the experts not something that occurs on the whim of the new Environment Minister.



VETERANS

REPORT ECHOES LABOR’S CALL TO SUPPORT OUR MILITARY FAMILIES – Rishworth

The report by The Road Home acknowledges that our military families need greater emotional, social and organisational support when it comes to supporting our serving personnel.

Labor recognised that our families would benefit from greater support which is why we previously announced, that if elected we would develop a Family Engagement and Support Strategy to provide greater support to our military families.

Our military families are our ADF member’s pillar of support, they are there when no one else is- they are the unsung heroes of our defence forces.

Developing a family engagement and support strategy will enable us to identify where we can provide greater support to military families - those who matter most to our ADF personnel and veterans; their wives, husbands, sons and daughters.

The Road Home’s report for greater support to military families was also a key recommendation on the National Mental Health Commissions’ [review](#) into Services Available to Veterans and Current Serving Members of the Australian Defence Force in Relation to the Prevention of Self-harm and Suicide and echoes Labor’s policy to develop a strategy and provide greater support and resources to military families.

Labor’s commitment to develop a Family Engagement and Support Strategy in Government would be co-designed with defence and veteran families and communities, to focus on known stress points for families, including transition for Defence members into civilian life.

Our policy will give family members a voice and a seat at the table.

We know that families play an especially unique role within military life and service.

Military families themselves make many sacrifices and our ADF personnel and veterans look to them for support while in service, in transition and in civilian life.

When it comes to our current and ex-service defence personnel, Labor will always prioritise the critical role military families play and our commitment to developing a family strategy will ensure that they are not forgotten.



Hard to Swallow.

Stop NDIS funding cuts for swallowing therapy: *someone's everyday emergency.*

THE STORY

Ellen has a swallowing problem called dysphagia. This means she can be at risk of choking or even dying when she swallows.

Ellen's mum Margaret knows how much better it was for Ellen and the family when these specialist therapeutic supports were funded. Ellen needs these supports in her NDIS package but the NDIS won't fund them. This has left Ellen's mum, Margaret with no other option than to take the NDIS to court.

THE PROBLEM

There is a dangerous gap in funding for swallowing therapy.

The NDIS has the funds for the specialist swallowing therapy that Ellen needs. But the NDIS is now saying it is not responsible. The NDIS says the health system should fund swallowing therapy. The problem is that the health system does not have the skills to do so, nor does it have the funds – all the NSW disability funding went to the NDIS. The NDIS has got it wrong and this is dangerous for people with disability.

WHO SUFFERS

Many people find it hard to swallow as a result of their disability. This makes it difficult for them to get adequate nutrition and puts them at risk of pneumonia, choking and even death. If a person cannot safely eat a meal, then their whole life is disrupted.

Assessment of a swallowing problem and developing an eating and drinking plan is a team effort with input often required from a range of professionals. This must be funded by the NDIS. It is disability support.

YOU CAN HELP

We are asking new Australian Families and Social Services Minister Paul Fletcher to please *resolve this problem and confirm that the NDIS will fund this vital swallowing therapy.*

Please phone Minister Paul Fletcher on **02 6277 7560**

Please email Minister Paul Fletcher at paul.fletcher.MP@aph.gov.au

Please tell Minister Fletcher these NDIS funding cuts for swallowing therapy are putting people like Ellen at risk of choking and even death and ask him to confirm that the NDIS will fund this vital swallowing therapy.

MORE WAYS YOU CAN HELP

Sign our petition and ask your friends and family to sign.

Put up posters in your area to raise awareness. Order posters and leaflets by emailing us at advocacy@nswcid.org.au, or [download our poster now](#).

Cr Peter Cumming's ANNUAL



You are warmly invited to attend the Arana Hills ALP branch

TRIVIA NIGHT!



• Saturday Night, 13 October 2018

- Hills District Community Centre, Dawson Parade, Arana Hills (see map)
 - Doors open 6pm; **7pm start SHARP**; 9.30pm finish
 - Teams of 6-8 people invited
 - 6 rounds of 10 general knowledge questions plus 3 'Who Am I's'
- Great prizes; Pizza and nibbles provided (feel free to BYO food as well); All drinks on sale at the bar; Coffee & tea also complimentary

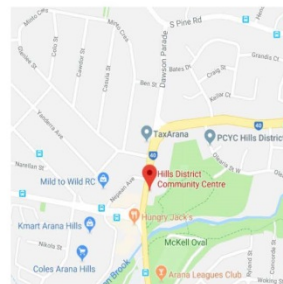


- **\$20 entry fee** per person or \$15 concession; Pay on the night OR transfer \$\$\$ to: **ALP State of Qld Arana Hills Branch BSB 06 4171 Account no. 009 000 44**

Donations also welcome if you can't attend ☺

To RSVP email amcmicking@bjepond.com or geoff96@tpg.com.au

Please provide details of the number in your team and whether you will pay in advance or on the night. For enquiries phone 0475 353 550.



ALL \$\$\$ PROCEEDS TO THE ARANA HILLS ALP TO HELP US CONTRIBUTE TO ALI FRANCE AND THE DICKSON ALP CAMPAIGN.



Current Senate Inquiries

Community Affairs Legislation Committee

- [Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission Bill 2018 and related Bill](#)
- [My Health Records Amendment \(Strengthening Privacy\) Bill 2018](#)
- [Social Security Legislation Amendment \(Community Development Program\) Bill 2018](#)
- [Social Services Legislation Amendment \(Maintaining Income Thresholds\) Bill 2018](#)
- [Social Services Legislation Amendment \(Encouraging Self-sufficiency for Newly Arrived Migrants\) Bill 2018](#)

Community Affairs References Committee

- [Support for Australia's thalidomide survivors](#)
- [My Health Record system](#)
- [Accessibility and quality of mental health services in rural and remote Australia](#)
- [Effectiveness of the Aged Care Quality Assessment and accreditation framework for protecting residents from abuse and poor practices, and ensuring proper clinical and medical care standards are maintained and practised](#)

Economics Legislation Committee

- **New** [Treasury Laws Amendment \(Design and Distribution Obligations and Product Intervention Powers\) Bill 2018](#)
- **New** [Treasury Laws Amendment \(Making Sure Foreign Investors Pay Their Fair Share of Tax in Australia and Other Measures\) Bill 2018](#); [Income Tax \(Managed Investment Trust Withholding Tax\) Amendment Bill 2018](#); [Income Tax Rates Amendment \(Sovereign Entities\) Bill 2018](#)

Economics References Committee

- [Financial and tax practices of for-profit aged care providers](#)
- [The Commitment to the Senate issued by the Business Council of Australia](#)
- [Regional Inequality in Australia](#)
- [Consumer protection in the banking, insurance and financial sector](#)
- [Non-conforming building products](#)

Education and Employment Legislation Committee

- [Fair Work Amendment \(Family and Domestic Violence Leave\) Bill 2018](#)

Education and Employment References Committee

- [The appropriateness and effectiveness of the objectives, design, implementation and evaluation of jobactive](#)
- [The exploitation of general and specialist cleaners working in retail chains for contracting or subcontracting cleaning companies](#)
- [The high rates of mental health conditions experienced by first responders, emergency service workers and volunteers](#)
- [The prevention, investigation and prosecution of industrial deaths in Australia](#)

Environment and Communications Legislation Committee

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

Environment and Communications References Committee

- **New** [Impact of feral deer, pigs and goats in Australia](#)
- [Gaming micro-transactions for chance-based items](#)
- [Australia's faunal extinction crisis](#)
- [Great Barrier Reef 2050 Partnership Program](#)
- [Australian content on broadcast, radio and streaming services](#)
- [Water use by the extractive industry](#)
- [Rehabilitation of mining and resources projects as it relates to Commonwealth responsibilities](#)

Finance and Public Administration Legislation Committee

- [Intelligence Services Amendment \(Enhanced Parliamentary Oversight of Intelligence Agencies\) Bill 2018](#)

Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade Legislation Committee

- [Defence Amendment \(Sovereign Naval Shipbuilding\) Bill 2018](#)

Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade References Committee

- [Use of the Quinoline anti-malarial drugs Mefloquine and Tafenoquine in the Australian Defence Force](#)
- [United Nations Sustainable Development Goals \(SDG\)](#)

Legal and Constitutional Affairs Legislation Committee

- **New** [Aviation Transport Security Amendment Bill 2018 \[Provisions\]](#)
- [Freedom of Information Legislation Amendment \(Improving Access and Transparency\) Bill 2018](#)
- [Federal Circuit and Family Court of Australia Bill 2018, Federal Circuit and Family Court of Australia \(Consequential Amendments and Transitional Provisions\) Bill 2018](#)
- [Customs Amendment \(Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership Implementation\) Bill 2018 \[Provisions\], Customs Tariff Amendment \(Comprehensive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Implementation\) Bill 2018 \[Provisions\]](#)
- [Freedom of Speech Legislation Amendment \(Censorship\) Bill 2018, Freedom of Speech Legislation Amendment \(Insult and Offend\) Bill 2018, Freedom of Speech Legislation Amendment \(Security\) Bill 2018](#)
- [Australian Citizenship Legislation Amendment \(Strengthening the Commitments for Australian Citizenship and Other Measures\) Bill 2018](#)
- [Judiciary Amendment \(Commonwealth Model Litigant Obligations\) Bill 2017](#)

Legal and Constitutional Affairs References Committee

- [The practice of dowry and the incidence of dowry abuse in Australia](#)

Red Tape Committee

- [The effect of red tape on private education](#)
- [policy and process to limit and reduce red tape](#)

Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport Legislation Committee

- [Performance of Airservices Australia](#)

Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport References Committee

- [Regulatory approaches to ensure the safety of pet food](#)
- [The need for regulation of mobility scooters, also known as motorised wheelchairs](#)
- [The operation, regulation and funding of air route service delivery to rural, regional and remote communities](#)
- [The integrity of the water market in the Murray-Darling Basin](#)

Select Committee into the obesity epidemic in Australia

- [Obesity Epidemic in Australia](#)

Select Committee on Charity Fundraising in the 21st Century

- [Charity Fundraising in the 21st Century](#)

Select Committee on Electric Vehicles

- [Electric Vehicles](#)

Select Committee on Stillbirth Research and Education

- [Stillbirth Research and Education](#)