

# LETTER FROM MELBOURNE

A monthly public affairs bulletin, a simple précis, distilling and interpreting public policy and government decisions, which affect business opportunities in Victoria and Australia.

**Every month for twenty-two years.**



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**Hazelwood • Port of Melbourne Sale • Crime spike. • NO Congestion tax • Dog Corner  
Baa • Roos. Deer • ABCC Coding for Vic • Unions. Unions. Unions. Unions  
Planning. Some changes • Christmas Holiday (Watch this Space)**

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# LETTER FROM MELBOURNE

## ABOUT US

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Letter From Melbourne is a monthly public affairs bulletin, a simple précis, distilling and interpreting public policy and government decisions, which affect business opportunities in Victoria and Australia.

Written for the regular traveller, or people with meeting-filled days, it's more about business opportunities than politics.

Letter from Melbourne is independent. It's not party political or any other political. It does not have the imprimatur of government at any level. Letter from Melbourne developed a federal and national coverage. This spawned Letter from Canberra (www.letterfromcanberra.com.au) four years ago.

The only communication tool of its type, Letter from Melbourne keeps subscribers abreast of recent developments in the policy arena on a local, state and federal level.

Published by A.B Urquhart & Company Pty Ltd trading as Affairs of State.

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Edited words in this edition: 13099  
216 editions. 2.5 million words approx.

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## ABOUT THE EDITOR—ALISTAIR URQUHART, BA LLB

Alistair Urquhart graduated from the Australian National University in Canberra, in Law, History and Politics. He may even hold the record for miles rowed on Lake Burley Griffin.

He was admitted as a barrister and solicitor to the Supreme Court of Victoria, and remains a (non-practising) member of the Law Institute of Victoria. Previously, he graduated from high school in Bethesda, Maryland, and had many opportunities to become aware of the workings of Washington D.C.

For 30 years, he listened every Sunday evening to the late Alistair Cooke and his Letter from America. Alistair's early career was mostly in the coal industry, where he became involved with energy, environmental and water issues, and later in the SME finance sector.

He found time to be involved in a range of community activities where he came to understand some of the practical aspects of dealing with government and meeting people across the political spectrum. He now chairs a large disability employment service, including its British operations.



Editor having Coffee with an Intern and one of Melbourne's best Coffee makers and Spirits.

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Established in 1993, is an independent Australian public affairs firm with contemporary international connections. Affairs of State provides a matrix of professional tools to multinational businesses, professional and industry associations, government agencies, pressure groups, NGOs and community causes in Australia and abroad.

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**EDITORIAL: ENERGY**

Your Editor was at the Veterinarian with his two dogs on Saturday and had a wonderful chat about our friends as she looked into their ears and eyes and checked out other parts. What does a dog, one of my dogs, call me, I asked. She mused a little, and then said that veterinarian and famous Australian dog lover and philosopher Hugh Worth would probably say 'Daddie', if the dog is in town, and perhaps 'Partner' if the dogs were shearing sheep or chasing animals up in the hills.

Then one could think of the American President, who said that the more people that he met, the more he liked his dog. We all have our dog stories. Dogs are very important.

Parliamentarian **The Hon Steve Herbert**, Minister for Skills, Training and International Education and Corrections, recently had 'the Victorian taxpayer' (Editor does not like the way the media so often use that expression) pay for his two dogs to be taken by chauffer-driven car one hundred and twenty kilometres to his weekender/lodgings up in the Bush. Editor has over the years put dogs on planes, trains, cars, taxis, ferries and push bikes, so they can participate in normal or abnormal family activities. So he saw/sees absolutely nothing wrong with this. Some people need dogs as a part of their daily lives. And uniformed persons use dogs to very great positive advantage.

It is unclear how often the Herbert dogs took such a ride...but until we all might know that, it is a significantly a media fuss, with Opposition support. All wrapped up in Bureaucracy! The people so elected to The Parliament Building in Spring Street do often treat their position badly. On one occasion, the Editor was sitting in the public gallery and exchanged a few friendly words with a teacher from an outer suburban secondary school. The relationship having been so forged and the Parliamentarians revved up, up to perhaps Level 8

out of 10 on the noise calculator that some people carry around in their head, a student then asked Editor when the real Members of Parliament were coming into the Chamber because those present were obviously just comics. Two easy recent jokes. The preventing of Minister Jenning from sitting in the Parliament for six months, and until recently, the New Nationals MP Luke O'Sullivan.

The media have now hoped onto Herbert because he has travelled extensively around the world, at quite some expense, in his various Ministerial roles, including international education. AND he has taken staff with him. What a good idea. Ministers and parliamentarians should be exposed to experiences outside of Melbourne.

Moving along, INFRASTRUCTURE has and is becoming the big word again around Victoria and Australia... and beyond. Another word has more specifically risen to the top of the Tree in Victoria. ENERGY. Yes, a part of Infrastructure but we will miss it much more than roads and trains over the new years if we are not careful in this state. It has been crazy to decide to close down Hazelwood Power Station. Let the Editor say that he worked for many years in the coal industry and has followed coal and its competitors in great detail even since. Could be great opportunities for the Insurance Industry.

The 'Respectful relationships of Children' is also growing as a social industry. And will help to keep Australia divided. The 'Criminal spike' in Victoria is not related (yet?!), but is peaking featuring at the top of Victorian society's main issues. Dummy candidates in the recent municipal elections can show how little some people care about the wider community and are focusing on their own narrow foresight.

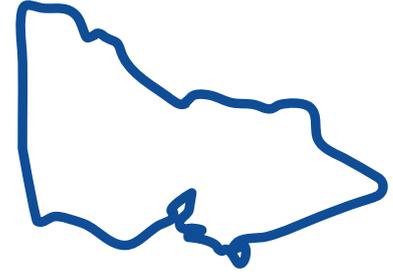
We cover the American Election Result in our Letter From Canberra.

Happy Reading.

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**STATE GOVERNMENT & POLITICS**

**Pay Restructured**

The number and income of 'state bureaucrats could increase significantly if the State Government fully embraces a pay plan. A Victorian Public Service report commissioned by Premier **Andrews** says big pay rises are needed to ensure the state remains an attractive option to the most talented bureaucrats. The government had already adopted one recommendation, to axe performance bonuses.

In September, it announced a 4 per cent pay rise of up to \$16,500 to buy out bonus-based contracts. 'The review found executive bonuses were ineffective in driving performance. That's why we're removing them and bring pay arrangements of senior public servants into line with other states,' spokeswoman **Lisa Maksimovic** said, according to the HERALD SUN.

**Electronic Voting**

Online voting would be switched on for Victorians who are away on Election Day under a plan being pitched by the **State Electoral Commission**. The proposal to introduce electronic voting – which could be extended to disable people and those with language difficulties – is being considered by a parliament inquiry. The Victorian Electoral Commission told a hearing that electronic voting should be introduced for some voters, according to the HERALD SUN.

**O'Sullivan At Last**

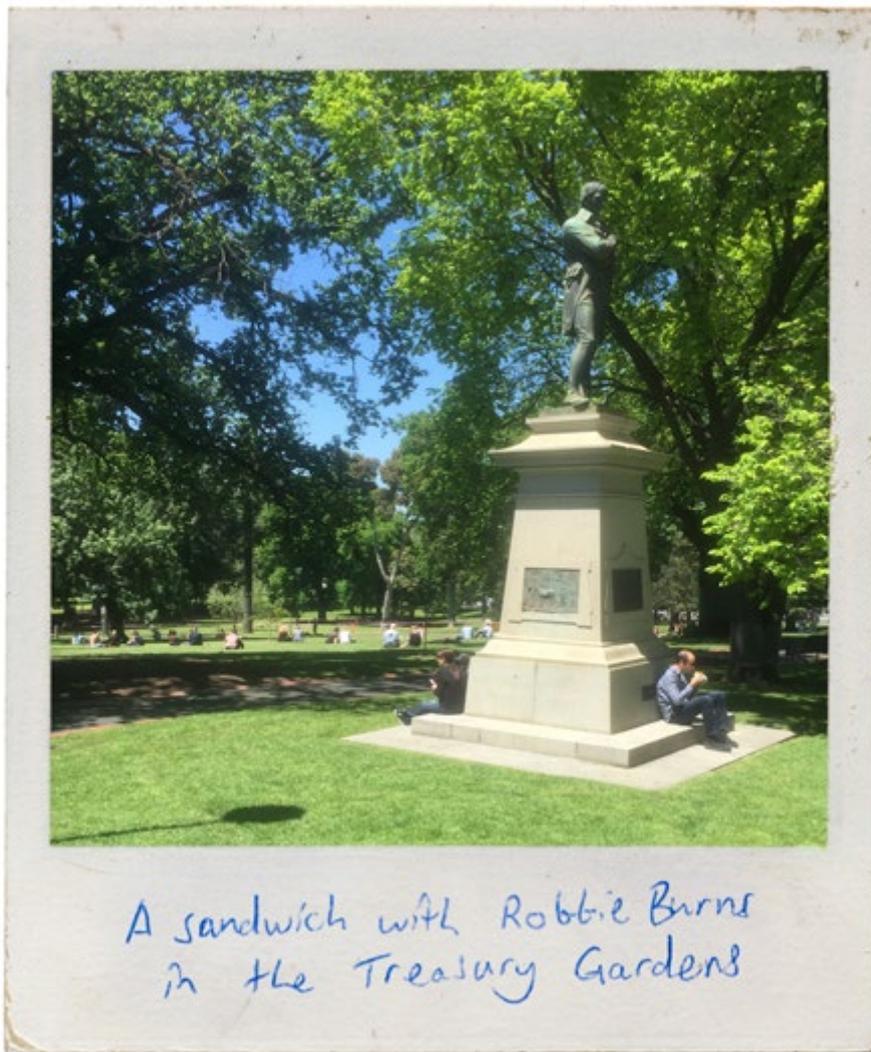
A new Nationals MP has taken his place in the Victorian parliament after a political tit-for-tat blocked him from the legislative council chamber for months. Northern Victorian MP **Luke O'Sullivan** can now enter the upper house (Legislative Council)

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after a joint sitting of parliament. The Andrews Government had previously denied Mr **O'Sullivan** the opportunity to join the chamber, arguing the issue should not be addressed until Labor's suspended upper house leader **Gavin Jennings** returned from a six-month suspension for refusing to table sensitive documents, reports the **HERALD SUN**. Your editor still does not understand the legal or constitutional or other basis of this.

#### Radical CBD Toll Proposed

A \$5 toll on motorists to enter the city and new tolls on existing freeways are detailed in a controversial blueprint from the Premier's new infrastructure body. A 30-year vision from infrastructure Victoria says a 'transport pricing scheme', which could include a CBD levy, would more to reduce congestion in Melbourne than any new road. One radical concept floated is a \$2 charge for motorists driving into inner suburbs and \$3 for driving into the CBD, as reported in the **HERALD SUN**.

#### Radical Toll Rejected

Premier **Andrews** has rejected a road toll plan even though his own infrastructure advisers say it is the best way to fix congestion. **Infrastructure Victoria**, which the government spent \$40 million setting up, says the state's roads are 'broken' and must be fixed with a radical system of tolling existing roads and charging motorists who drive into the CBD. But within nine hours of the draft 30-year blueprint's release, **Andrews** said the idea was 'at odds' with a 'longstanding position on not tolling existing roads'.

He did back the North East Link, to connect the M80 Ring Road with the Eastern Freeway, as a

priority, and talked up an eventual airport rail link. Infrastructure Victoria chief executive **Michel Masson** said he would continue to fight for a network-wide toll system, potentially including a \$5 levy for motorists driving into the CBD 'Very clearly, it has the most profound effect on fighting congestion' he said, as reported in the **HERALD SUN**.

#### Congestion Tax Dead on Arrival

Here's how important and contentious policies are considered these days. A government sets up an arm's-length body to make an exhaustive assessment of what the community will need to function successfully for the next 30 years or so. That body then puts together possible solutions. That is how a congestion tax put forward by **Infrastructure Victoria** in its 1000-page report died at birth.

The most effective way to reduce congestion in a sustainable way would be to change behaviour. Premier **Andrews** ruled out the congestion tax not long after Opposition Leader **Matthew Guy** described it as 'madness' and 'lazy', writes **Shaun Carney** in the **HERALD SUN**.

#### Tourism Plan Leak

A high-powered group of advisors set up by the **Andrews** government secretly reconsidered a rail link to Melbourne Airport as one of several 'strategic investments' to boost Victoria's tourism prospect. The documents' findings are among many discussed by the 12-member reference group, which also included Geelong Football Club chief executive **Brian Cook**, Melbourne Fashion Festival chair **Laura Anderson**, Asia Cup boss **Michael Brown** and TV presenter **Catriona Rowntree**.

The Group was set up to work on a new Victorian Visitor Economy Strategy, released in July. The leak is significant because it gives a glimpse of the kind of concerns raised behind closed doors, as reported in **THE AGE**.

#### Misconduct From Parks Head

The head of Parks Victoria has been forced to stand down over 'inappropriate behaviour' that the state's anti-corruption watchdog is to investigate. The Parks Victoria board forced **Bradley Fauteux's** hand after he has served less than a year in the job. The case is to be referred to the Independent Broad-based Anti-Corruption Commission. **Fauteux** began as chief executive in November 2015, having been managing director of Ontario Parks, **THE AGE** reports.

#### Conflict of Interest

The Victorian Ombudsman is concerned she cannot independently investigate government scandals while relying on the Premier's own department to fund her office. **Deborah Glass** last year was asked by state parliament to probe Labor's use of taxpayers' money before the 2014 election. But the **Andrews** government is arguing in the Supreme Court that she does not have the power to investigate the rorts-for-votes scandal, according to the **HERALD SUN**.

The state's economy is, by some measure, the strongest in the nation, and growing at its fastest pace for eight years. Since December 2014 (Labor's first full month in government), 114,000 jobs have been created, about 99,000 of them full-time. The state is about to become a giant construction

site. There are 35 level crossing-removal projects either completed, under construction or at the detailed planning stage, writes **Josh Gordon** in *THE AGE*. The editor is not an economist as yet but reckons this an over exaggeration.

### Coalition Environment Perspective

With two years until the next election, the record of the former government has left Team **Guy** with a credibility problem: the kind of problem where many voters simply don't believe the Coalition is serious enough when it comes to tackling their environmental concerns. Yes, it supports renewable energy, but it would rather lobby the Commonwealth for national consistency than support Labor's approach to go it alone with a state-based target.

And yes, the former Coalition government had a moratorium on fracking, but when you ask about future prospects for onshore gas, Liberal and National MPs are often caught with conflicting positions. As for other environmental commitments? The answer, so far, is 'wait and see'. Polls consistently show the environment is an important issue for many voters, but if **Guy** is serious about leading a 'modern party that reflects a contemporary Victoria', he'll need to convince the electorate that he genuinely gets it, writes **Farrah Tomazin** for *THE AGE*. Refer to Editorial

### Government in Bolt's Dog House

Victoria's Labor Government is pushing a new law that could end almost all breeding of dogs – not just by puppy farms but by hobby breeders of pedigrees. And the government has sold this on a lie – that its law will affect fewer than 90 of Victoria's 10,000 breeders. True figure: every single breeder will be affected. Worse, every dog and cat owner in the state could be in legal trouble if their pet simply gets pregnant.

Behind this policy car crash – a classic case of how finger-wagging governments get things wrong – is a noble aim. Some big commercial puppy farms have treated their dogs badly. RSPCA inspectors have rescued up to 100 dogs at a time from cowboy outfits that kept their dogs in miserable cages, with puppies not socialised, writes **Andrew Bolt** for the *HERALD SUN*.

### No Holidays on Sundays

Premier **Andrews** is preparing to reverse his stance on the Christmas Day public holiday. Christmas Day is not designated a public holiday this year, because it falls on a Sunday. This means workers are not entitled to public holiday rates, unlike workers in every other state and territory.

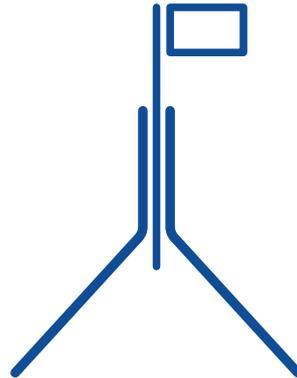
Any switch is likely to anger the Australian Industry Group, which said: 'The government has recognised that 'enough is enough' and we do not need additional public holidays.' If another public Holiday is introduced, Victoria will have 14 this year, the most of any state or territory, as reported in the *HERALD SUN*.

### Euthanasia For Victorians

Impassioned testimony by Victorian Coroner **John Olle** detailing the experience of terminally ill patients who killed themselves to end suffering has been marked as a turning point on which public perceptions of euthanasia charged, emboldening the push for reform. **Olle** addressed a Victorian parliamentary committee into end-of-life choices a year ago and was bought to tears while shedding light on the lonely deaths of several mostly elderly people.

'He often told his family he would rather do something to end it straightaway and that if he could no longer drive, he might as well be dead,' **Olle** said of a 90-year-old man who had cancer. 'He mentioned a nail gun. He was subsequently found dying with nail gun wounds to his head and to his chest. He died ultimately from injuries sustained from the nail gun'.

**Marshall Perron**, the man who as Northern Territory chief minister ushered in Australia's first euthanasia laws, said the harrowing testimony of **Olle** was 'almost certainly the turning point of the debate in Victoria'. Half of the Victorian cabinet said that they were in favour of euthanasia, with Health Minister **Jill Hennessy** declaring the government would decide on the issue by December, according to *THE AUSTRALIAN*.



### FEDERAL

#### Kennett Pulls No Shots

Former Victorian premier **Jeff Kennett** has unloaded on **Malcolm Turnbull's** leadership, describing him as a 'loner' who thinks he is 'brighter than the rest of us'. **Kennett** said he was yet to be convinced that **Turnbull** has the skills to be a 'good political leader'. **Kennett** who once described **Tony Abbott's** leadership as 'terminal' and called on him to be dumped 'as quickly as possible' – said **Turnbull** lacked an 'inspiring narrative' and won the leadership 'without a coherent economic plan', as per the *HERALD SUN*.

#### Fed Government (With) holding State Funding.

If you want to get a sense of what's wrong with infrastructure funding in this country, look no further than Victoria, where The Commonwealth seems to be using taxpayers' money for its own political interests. Even worse, now that Victoria has leased the port for a large \$9.7 billion, Treasurer

**Scott Morrison** is refusing to hand over the full \$1.46 billion Victoria says it is entitled to under the 15 per cent asset recycling scheme, suggesting the state is lucky to get the \$877 million he set aside in the budget, given it failed to reach an agreement by June 30, which was the cut-off date.

**Morrison** is now accusing Victoria of 'wilfully misunderstanding' the intention of the scheme, claiming the payment does not apply to the sale price but to an agreed 'apportionment of funds', writes **Josh Gordon** in *THE AGE*.

The Feds are now going to pay this money.

#### Questions over Western Distributor Project

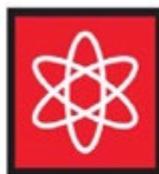
Federal infrastructure officials have raised concerns about the State Government's \$5.5 billion Western Distributor project, claiming the road won't improve traffic flow. The Department of Infrastructure and Regional Development has assessed the business case for the project – which will link the West Gate Freeway to CityLink – and said the road may not deal with congestion, according to the *HERALD SUN*.

#### ABCC Coding

There's plenty of things in the **Australian Building and Construction Commission** code that state Labor governments are going to hate, and not just because of the impact it will have on the ability of the brothers to get their way. We know that because back in **Bracks**-time, Victoria turned down money from then-Prime Minister **Howard** to rebuild the northern stand of the MCG because it came with the condition that we agree to his code – a milder code.

Obviously there is political danger for **Andrews** and his crew in refusing federal government money for projects, given how much they have carried on about Victoria getting stiffed by Canberra – assuming there is a big construction company prepared to be locked out of all federal work by ignoring the code – but there are dangers to the Federal Government as well.

Right now Victoria is expecting to get at least \$877 million from Canberra as a bribe for selling the Port of Melbourne. At the moment the two governments can't agree on what the money should go to. The coming of the code is going to make these negotiations a great deal more difficult. To say the least, writes **James Campbell** for the *HERALD SUN*.



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**AGRICULTURE**

**Farmers saying Baa**

All sheep and goats born in Victoria from January 2017 will be required to be fitted with a mandatory electronic ear e-tag to allow their location, movements and origins to be tracked and traced in the event of a meat health scare or deadly outbreak of foot and mouth disease. But the decision by Victoria Agriculture Minister **Jaala Pulford** has angered many sheep producers and woolgrowers – and other state governments – who claim the move is unnecessary, premature and costly.

**Pulford** said individual e-tags, which had been mandatory in cattle for decades, offered benefits such as greater traceability and information to help safeguard exports and food safety to key international trading partners, compared to the current mob-based visual tag system. The minister said farmers using the e-tags could also rapidly improve the productivity and genetic performance of their flocks, through better use of the stored data and records on every individual lamb or sheep, as reported *THE AUSTRALIAN*. Baaaa.



**EDUCATION**

**Respectful Relationships To Break Stereotypes**

Pictures of both boys and girls doing the dishes and kicking the footy, and examples of female firefighters and male receptionists, will be used in classrooms from prep in a push to smash gender stereotypes. The State Government has leased the new 'respectful relationships' education curriculum to be mandatory at all state schools

from 2017, one of the recommendations arising from the royal commission into family violence.

Preps will be taught basic names of their private parts to equip them to report any abuse, and students of all ages educated in challenging male-and female-based labels in the playground, classroom and workplace, reports the *HERALD SUN*. The editor wonders where the family fits in...

**Respectful Relationships Program Probe**

The Victorian Government's \$21.8million Respectful Relationships education program, which is part of its broader campaign to stamp out family violence, has copped criticism recently for failing to consider the multiple and complex drivers of family violence and overlooking the experience of male victims, reports *THE AUSTRALIAN*.

**Child Indoctrination Move**

Daniel Andrews' government is either so asinine that it is being led by the nose by the far-Left social engineers or it is consciously pursuing an agenda most Australians would recognise as harmful and sinister. Either way, it's time the Victoria community and the state's opposition declared: 'enough!' Imagine the uproar if preschoolers were indoctrinated with propaganda that set them on guard against their mothers, grandmothers, female teachers or other women.

That is precisely what the state's preschoolers will be subjected to in a new program – though it should surprise nobody that the 'villains' they will be warned against are men, according to *THE AUSTRALIAN*.

**Unisex Toilets at Schools to Prevent Bullying**

A radical proposal for Victorian schools to provide an equal number of unisex or non-gendered toilets to male and female toilets has been put forward by controversial Safe Schools co-founder **Roz Ward**. The plan has been presented to the Education Department along with an alternate proposal for all toilets to be self-contained unisex cubicles that open into an 'outside space' where teachers can monitor behaviour and prevent 'gender identity' bullying, as per the *HERALD SUN*.

**High School Zone Expanded**

One of Victoria's most prestigious state schools has slammed the **Andrews** government for tripling its enrolment boundaries to accommodate an inner-city student boom. Without warning, the **Andrews** government announced that it has tripled the enrolment zone of University High School to accommodate an inner-city student boom, as reported in *THE AGE*.

**New Inner-City Schools Planned**

The **Andrews** government hopes to alleviate stress on inner-city families by building four new inner-city schools. It announced that 'over the next few years' a primary school in Docklands, a primary and secondary school at Fishermans Bend and a new primary school in North Melbourne would be built to accommodate the student boom. The government will also buy a new site to expand the popular Albert Park College, as per *THE AGE*.

**No One Safe From Vocational Crackdown**

Former AFL chief **Andrew Demetriou's** Acquire Learning is the latest victim of a crackdown on vocational education funding after sacking up to 100 staff from its Melbourne headquarters, redundancies in the United Kingdom office and downsizing its Queensland operations, according to *THE AUSTRALIAN FINANCIAL REVIEW*.

**Expulsion Rate Begg Questioning**

A sharp rise in expulsions has promoted a state watchdog to investigate if schools are secretly pushing out students. The Victorian Ombudsman is investigating the causes of a 27 per cent rise in expulsions in a year. The Education Department's most recent figures show 201 Victorian students were expelled in 2015 up from 158 in 2014. There are concerns the number is even higher with the watchdog investigating 'informal expulsions' that are not included in official figures, *THE AGE* reports.

**State School Inconsistencies**

Three thousand dollars a student. That's how much some Victorian state schools are earning



**ENERGY**

**Times are a'Changin**

Victoria's electricity market sits on the cusp of fundamental structural change, with existential choices apparently looming on the future of the state's second-biggest power station and its biggest single power customers. The generator is an ageing, carbon-heavy monster called Hazelwood and the customer is the Portland aluminium smelter, which

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has been the subject of controversy and occasional community scorn through a lot of its 30-year life.

The coincidence of speculation over the fate of both these long-standing towers of Victoria's manufacturing estate is indicative and, quite probably, not unrelated, writes **Matthew Stevens** in THE AUSTRALIAN FINANCIAL REVIEW.

### Clean Coal Plans Fall Through

A \$90 million scheme to make Latrobe Valley brown coal cleaner and more profitable has all but failed, with two out of three projects shelved and tens of millions of dollars of public funding sitting idle. Announced in August 2012, the flagship state-federal fund, known as Advance Lignite Demonstration Program, was touted as a saviour for the Latrobe Valley, opening up new markets for the state's vast brown coal reserves.

But more than four years later, two of the big projects awarded funding have collapsed. A third has been granted a six-month extension to allow it to meet key environmental and planning deadlines, according to THE AGE.

### Power Storage Plans for Victoria

Victoria will prioritise batteries and other grid-stabilising technologies in its ambitious renewable energy rollout, the state's Energy Minister **Lily d'Ambrosio** says. The move is a response to the electricity network volatility that hit South Australia as the state's 40 per cent renewable energy share has forced it's the last coal-fired power station – Northern – our of service.

'Energy storage is one of those features that we'll be encouraging and looking for from proponents' Ms **d'Ambrosio** said. Victoria and Queensland have been slammed by **Turnbull** government ministers for following SA's renewables plunge with their ambitious 50 per cent targets by 2030, reports THE AUSTRALIAN.

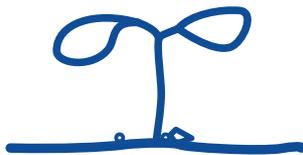
### Victoria to Learn From SA Failures

The global warming hysterics have been in desperate dishonest damage control. The most wind energy committed country, Denmark, only keeps the lights on – and the heaters heating in winter: remember how cold it got at Kevin Rudd's great Coppenfloppen conference in 2009? – by having long extension cords into Norway's hydro and Sweden and Germany's coal and nuclear. Indeed, SA is a mirror image: small enough, with a big enough neighbour that has real, reliable, power generation. At least, it does, for the moment, until Premier **Andrews** get his way, writes **Terry McCrann** in the HERALD SUN.

### Hazelwood Closure to See Energy Price Spike

Households should brace for steep rise in their power bills with Victorian wholesale electricity

prices tipped to jump by 18 per cent by the end of next year with the closure of Hazelwood power station. The sharp rise in wholesale prices could see household retail bills rise by up to 5 per cent – the first significant rise since the abolition of the carbon tax, according to the HERALD SUN.



## ENVIRONMENT & CONSERVATION

### Kangaroo Cull in Melbourne Outskirts

Greenvale residents have been left hopping mad after more than 100 kangaroos and their joeys were shot and killed in a large-scale cull. Melbourne Water had a permit from the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning to destroy 150 kangaroos at Greenvale Reservoir, and said 105 were 'controlled' as part of the program. **Graeme Linsell** and his partner, **Treycee Baker** were devastated by the decision, reports the HERALD SUN.

### Asbestos Dumping in Victoria's Parks

Victoria's parks and forests are becoming illegal dumping grounds for asbestos. Incident reports also show that asbestos, which can be lethal if the fibre is disturbed, has recently been exposed in buildings at popular destinations such as Wilsons Promontory, Gabo Island and Lighthouse and Churchill Island. 'Illegal dumping of asbestos is a growing problem... and it requires significant funding to remove it safely – funding we could use for so many other purposes' said **Chris Hardman**, the executive director of Parks Victoria's Melbourne region, according to THE AGE.

### Dog Corner

The key criticism of the RSPCA, Animals Australia, Dogs Victoria and the Minister for Agriculture is that, even if they don't mistreat animals, they cannot provide their dogs and puppies with the socialisation they need to be good family pets. Manager of Australia's largest dog breeder, **Matt Hams** says he is frustrated by this argument.

He has 25 staff on his book. Some of them, like 25-year-old **Bec McNamara**, are employed to socialise the dogs. She has a mild intellectual disability and spends two days a week at the farm playing with puppies and walking the older dogs. On weekdays, a roster of kids from the local schools also spend time playing with puppies.

RSPCA Victoria chief executive **Liz Walker** there are 30 ongoing investigations into intensive breeding operations. If the Victorian legislation becomes law, Banksia Park Puppies will move

across the NSW boarder to Finlay, where **Hams** has already bought a large property previously used as a boarding kennel. He will be sad to leave the farm established by his dad.

He is also worried about who will be left in Victoria to breed dogs. 'This bill and this law and its lack of consultation and research suggests that breeding a dog is something anybody can do and there is no skill or education that needs to come along with it. It is suggesting that all of Victoria's pets will be produced by amateurs. That to me is really worrying trend'.

**Doug Black**, an experienced vet and director of Central Animal Records, a national microchip registry, shares **Hams**' concerns. 'When you take a big operation like that out of the equation you are taking out a business that is supplying a huge chunk of the pups for sale in Victoria. The demand is not going to change overnight. People are still going to look for pups. The concern is that people will realise there is money in this caper and they will start breeding dogs'.

Dogs are big business in Australia. According to Pet Ownership in Australia 2016, a report to be published next month by Animal Medicines Australia, there are 4.8 million pet dogs in Australia in 3.6 million households. We spend an estimated \$2.2 billion on pet food each year and \$2.7 bn on vet bills. The pet food industry is dominated by Mars, a multinational confectionary company, with Nestle also a big player. According to a study commissioned by the RSPCA, about one-third of the dogs are bought at pet stores, THE AUSTRALIAN reports.

### Deer Problem Sees Spike in Hunting

A record 71,142 deer were shot and killed in Victoria last year, a jump of more than 14 per cent on the previous year and more evidence of the threat posed by deer to the environment, agriculture and even motorists. The 'deer harvest' for 2015, an estimate based on regular surveys of Victorian hunters, is almost double the number from as recently as 2009, a sign the widespread deer population is growing.

The report, obtained by THE AGE, comes as a push grows for wild-shot deer meat to be used commercially in pet food and human consumption. IT also comes as farmers hit out over the devastating damage deer are inflicting on their farms and their earnings.

### Fire Action Week 23-30 October

Message from the Premier.

This summer is forecast to be a dangerous fire season. Fire Action Week was the time for all Victorians to begin preparing. A one page amendment.

### Melbourne Zoo Loss

Melbourne Zoo's beloved Syrian brown bear, Honey, has died. This long-time crowd favourite was euthanized after complications with a 'malignant and invasive' tumour on her chest, the HERALD SUN reports.

## EVENTS

### What is an Event

Everyone loves an event. Hell, we're in the middle of the Spring Racing Carnival, so we have events coming out our ears. What's not to love? But I fear our love of events is getting out of hand. So much so, we appear to want to make everything an event – whether it be good or bad. Take the recent storm event to hit Victoria. Not storm, mind you, but storm event.

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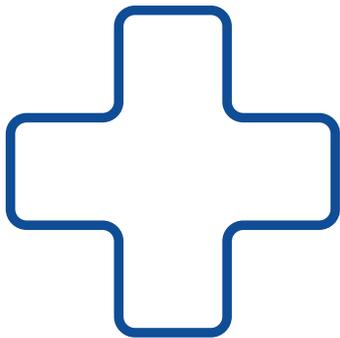


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A storm is, by its very nature, an event. We know what a storm is. It doesn't need a silly little word following it around. I blame the Bureau of Meteorology for this. A few years ago the bureau began to refer to rain events. I am waiting for the appearance of the bushfire event. Or what about the drought event? Surely they qualify. And why stop there? Writes **Ed Gannon** in the HERALD SUN.

**Top Dining Phenomenon Hits Melbourne**

The eyes of the planet's keenest diners will be on Melbourne next April when the influential World's 50 Best restaurants ceremony is held at the Royal Exhibition Building. On a Saturday in April, streamed live from theworlds50best.com, as per THE AGE.



**HEALTH**

**Ambo Brain Drain**

Paramedics are being forced overseas after being unable to find work at home, despite Ambulance Victoria's failure to meet response times. Ambulance Services Minister **Jill Hennessy** blamed the exodus of paramedics on a surplus of graduates. But ambulance union secretary **Steve McGhie** disagreed that the graduates were not needed. 'They could use the additional ambulance crews to respond to the demand, and have an immediate response rather than a delayed response, which would hopefully drive response times down,' Mr **McGhie** said, according to the HERALD SUN.

**Rotarians Doing Their Bit**

A statewide fundraiser has aimed to reduce the huge toll on the state by raising \$2 million for mental health research in a bid to stop people's suffering before it begins. Thousands of Rotarians rattled tins across train stations

and Bunnings sites for Lift the Lid, to raise 'as much as we can' for research to prevent mental illness, which impacts almost half of Australians in their lifetime, reports in the HERALD SUN.

**Anti-Vaxxer Trolls Exposed**

Victorian Health Minister **Jill Hennessy** has turned the tables on vile anti-vaccine campaigners who threaten and harass her. Ms **Hennessy** has shone a light on the practices of militant 'anti-vaxxer' trolls by releasing a swath of their abusive messages, which include calls for her execution and prayers that she fall ill with cancer.

On making their threats public in a remarkable heraldsun.com.au video, Ms **Hennessy** said Victorians should be aware of anti-vaccine proponents' true nature so as to be better able to balance their unfounded claims against science, according to the HERALD SUN.

**Interesting job**

The National Disability Insurance Agency is a Commonwealth statutory agency which was established under the National Disability Insurance Scheme Act 2013 and is subject to the Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013. Board Secretary, HAYS Executive.



**BUSINESS & INVESTMENT**

**Law Firm Invests in Future Businesses**

Major Australian law firm Corrs Chambers Westgarth is looking to build up its start-up clientele, signing a partnership deal with the Melbourne Accelerator Program, 'MAP'. The three-year-deal, which involves a six-figure investment from the firm, gives start-ups going through the accelerator

access to free legal advice, clinics and new technology the firm is developing to help companies produce customised legal documents quickly.



**INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS**

**Doyle Deal with Unions**

Liberal lord mayor **Robert Doyle** has struck a deal with some of the nation's toughest union bosses to stop a so-called 'green ban' derailing a \$250 million overhaul of Queen Victoria Market. The contentious proposal to give the 130-year-old market a facelift has become a key issue in the city council election battle, with critics claiming it would ruin the heritage 'vibe' of the site and leave stallholders with little certainty over leases.

Concern has been so palpable that union bosses have threatened to impose work bans similar to the green bans of the 1970s and '80s credited with saving heritage sites across Melbourne and Sydney, according to THE AGE.

**Social Media Push for Boycott**

A Facebook page set up to target businesses supporting Victoria's volunteer firefighters has been shut down. The page has been linked to the United Firefighters Union, but it denied any involvement in the social media campaign that pushed a boycott of local businesses. The page urged members of the public to boycott all businesses that supported Volunteer Fire Brigades Victoria, reports the HERALD SUN.

**Union Bully Inquiry**

Firefighters' union boss **Peter Marshall** has blasted claims that his members physically intimidated a young female Liberal volunteer on election day or delayed the opening of a regional fire station because career firefighters wanted their own door. A Senate inquiry probing the prolonged industrial dispute between the Victorian Country Fire Authority and the United Firefighters Union heard evidence that the UFU had engaged in 'pathetic' disputes to frustrate the CFA, fostering a lack of confidence among the volunteer majority.

Questioning **Marshall**, Liberal senator **Jane Hume** said a young girl volunteer at a booth in La Trobe, in Melbourne's eastern suburbs, was accosted by a man who declared himself to be a UFU member and he 'ran away' only when she stepped in and other Liberals began to film him. 'He was a thug, he was a bully', Senator **Hume** said, according to THE AUSTRALIAN.

Union members working on the Victorian Labor government's signature infrastructure project have secured lucrative pay ad conditions – including 14 per cent in pay rises, free holiday train travel for their families, extra annual leave and bonus pay for roster changes – under a deal that will fuel a feud over \$1.4 billion in federal funding.

The agreement between three unions and Metro Trains, which includes four weeks domestic violence leave and paid leave to participate in major sporting events, applies to 600 workers in the rail operator's infrastructure and asset management division who are critical to the state government's promise to spend \$6bn removing level crossings.

The deal struck on the eve of threatened industrial action, contains several more



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generous conditions than similar agreements in Sydney and Brisbane. **Scott Morrison** has accused Victoria of misunderstanding the federal asset recycling program following the state's \$9.7bn Port of Melbourne sale, the biggest privatisation since the power sale of the 1990s.

The bulk of the port money will flow to the \$6bn level crossing project. But Victoria has demanded the federal government hands over \$1.46bn, which is 15 per cent of the port sale price, to help fund the level crossing plans. Opposition leader **Matthew Guy** said the state had become unaffordable for infrastructure investment, reports THE AUSTRALIAN.



## JUSTICE & POLICE

### \$\$\$\$\$

The rollout of numberplate readers in police cars, together with the phasing out of registration stickers, has created a new cash cow for state governments, though most of them are reluctant to reveal just how much it's worth. NSW, which has the steepest fines in Australia has collected \$199 million from 316,000 fines imposed on unregistered and uninsured vehicles since January 2013, which is when the state stopped issuing registration stickers for cars, as reported in THE AUSTRALIAN.

### So Sad

Victoria has become the nation's murder capital after a crime surge that saw the number of murders increase by nearly a third in the past year, the first large jump in five years. There were 66 murders in Victoria last year. The state has been struggling with an escalation in gun violence in the past year, but Police Minister **Lisa Neville** said deaths from firearms had decreased in the most recent figures. **Andrews** told reporters the increased crime rate was a trend that began six years ago. He described the latest figures as a 'challenging set of criminal statistics', as reported in THE AGE.

### Vigilantes Hit Northwest Streets

Citizens patrolling streets in Melbourne's northwest believe they wouldn't be needed if there were enough police to fight crime. The Community Patrols, of around 35 people, respond to as many as a dozen calls a night from worried residents. Their area of operation spans Caroline Springs, Plumpton, Hillside, Taylors Heights.

But they say they are increasingly being called to suburbs further afield like Sydenham and Taylors Lakes. Volunteer Louie, who asked that his surname be withheld for safety reasons, said the Patrols has scaled back activity earlier this year, after they were criticised by Victoria Police and branded 'vigilantes'. But activity was now stepping up again. The Patrols typically respond to lower-level calls, such as reports of disturbances or of people acting suspiciously – incidents that police don't always attend, according to the HERALD SUN.

### Moomba Riot Justice

A rising sports star is expected to become the first teenage Moomba rioter to be sent to prison after going on to commit a spate of violent crimes. The Moomba thug was granted a deferral by the courts before going on the July 18 crime spree, which also involved a home invasion, carjacking and attempted carjacking, reports the HERALD SUN.

### Legal Aid is Crucial

Don't dismiss Legal Aid's vital role in society. Legal Aid is not an insult but a bedrock of society, bringing the protections of the law within the reach for all of us. It exists to serve the public, not the private, interest. An article in the *Herald Sun* by columnist **Tom Elliott** unfairly tarnished the work of legal aid as an 'insult' to ordinary Australians.

Citing only two cases among more than 38,000 we have taken on in the past year, **Elliott** gives a very skewed and inaccurate picture of the work that legal aid does, writes **Bevan Warner**, the managing director of Victorian Legal aid, for the HERALD SUN.

### Police in Need of a Change in Culture

Victoria Police is facing its 'biggest journey of cultural change' in decades as it attempts to stamp out entrenched sexism and predatory behaviour in its ranks, Chief Commissioner **Graham Ashton** says. Almost a year after a damning report revealed the high prevalence of discrimination and harassment in the force, sweeping reforms are being introduced to tackle the problem, including a workplace harm hotline for victims, 24/7 support services for officers and their families, and new training for managers and recruits.

And a new watchdog is being established within Victoria's equal opportunity commission to act as a liaison between police and the anti-discrimination agency, reports THE AGE.

### Police Suffering From 'Chronic Understaffing'

Victoria's crime wave is swamping short-staffed police who are regularly unavailable for an hour or more to answer calls, where lives could be at risk, senior officers say. An extra 3300 officers are needed by 2022, the police union says. An unprecedented Police Association of Victoria study surveyed 329 senior sergeants, who laid bare chronic understaffing they said sometimes left them unable to send officers to jobs at all, the HERALD SUN reports.

### All-Girl Gang Connection

Girls as young as 12 are being recruited by burgeoning all-female gangs, including a sister pack to the notorious Apex mob. And police fear their crimes are escalating: random attacks on victims at popular city nightspots are becoming more brazen and violent. The HERALD SUN has been told the 'Aces' or 'As' for short, is an all-girl gang that has linked itself to the violent Apex group. It is understood to be operating in the Dandenong area, where the Apex gang formed.

### Solution for Violent Youths

Victoria's most dangerous young criminals, including Apex gang members, would be housed in a new super security detention centre, under a radical new proposal. The plan, put forward by the Community and Public Sector Union, comes amid a surging population of underage offenders in Victoria facilities and fears staff are struggling to deal with increasingly violent youths, according to the HERALD SUN.

### Police Corruption

Two police officers could face criminal charges after an investigation by Victoria's anti-corruption body revealed serious police misconduct at Ballarat police station. Victoria Police has handed a brief of evidence to the Office of Public Prosecutions into allegations two officers kicked and stomped on an off-duty policewoman, **Yvonne Berry**, while she lay handcuffed, reports the HERALD SUN.



## LOCAL GOVERNMENT

### Doyle Re-election

Lord Mayor **Robert Doyle** has returned to Town Hall for the third time, and a Green surge has swept the inner suburbs. **Doyle**, 63, received more than 40 per cent of the vote. Four councillors were likely to be elected in Moreland, three in Port Phillip and three – possibly four – in Yarra. **Doyle** will be joined by team members Cr **Kevin Louey**, ALP strategist **Nicholas Reece** and lawyer **Tessa Sullivan**, as per the HERALD SUN.

### Preferences Threatened Doyle

Lord Mayor **Robert Doyle** warned that 'wacky' Greens could take Town Hall and threaten the city's economy. Stacked against the Lord Mayor is the reality that his key rivals have stitched up preference deals to shut him out amid support for the Greens among residents. Depending on how closely how-to-vote cards are followed, Cr **Doyle** could get a primary vote of up to 45 per cent but stall there as preferences flow to Greens candidate Dr **Olivia Ball**, who is tipped to come second on primaries, as reported in the HERALD SUN.

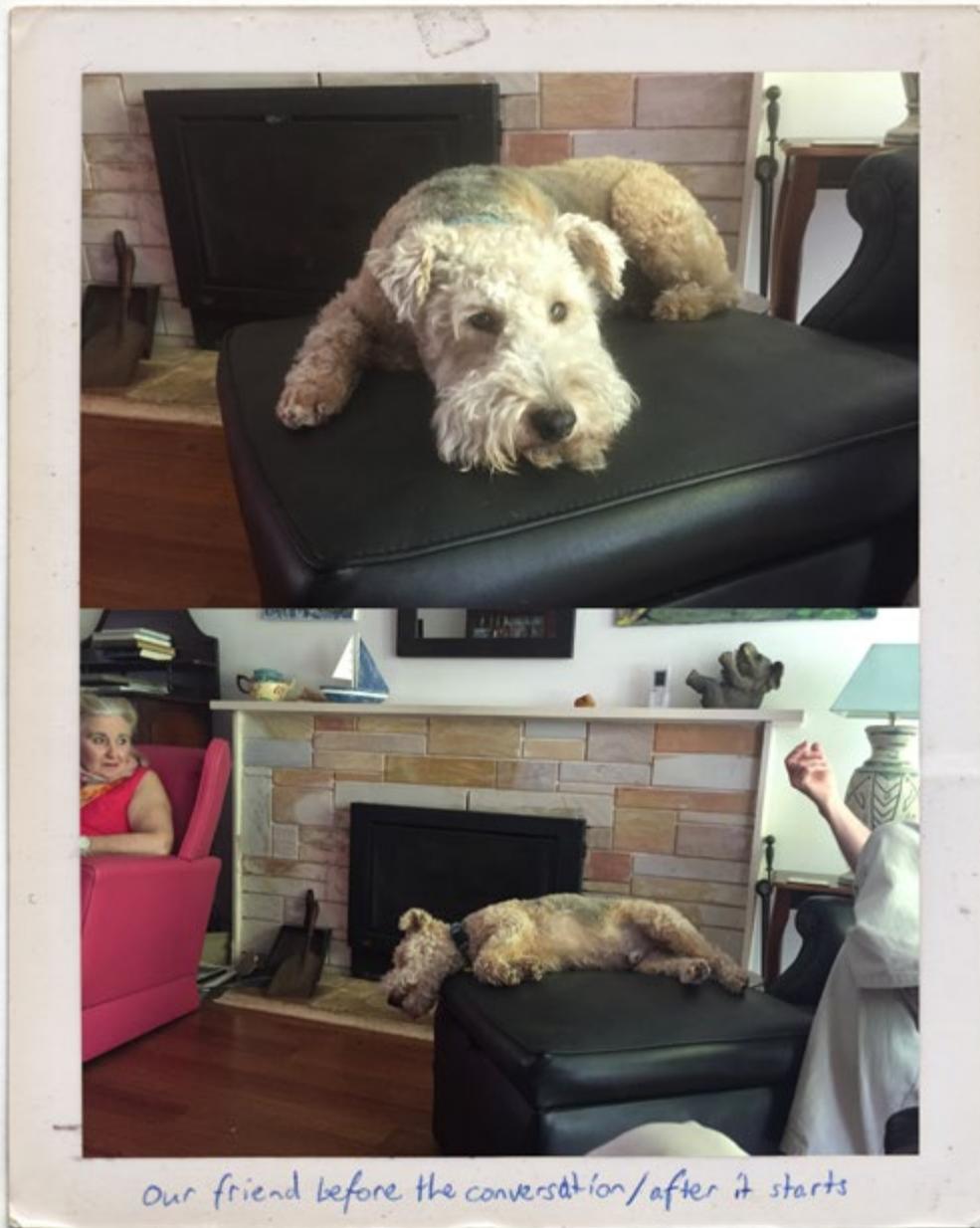
### Doyle's Plan For Melbourne

**Robert Doyle** has pledged 'smart growth' policies to ensure Melbourne stays liveable, with the city set to become the nation's biggest by 2035. But planning critics claimed skyscrapers were ruining the amenity of the inner city and warned the apartment bubble was set to burst. Cr **Doyle** said his team would champion good development as the city grows rapidly.

'We will create wide boulevards and streets, improve walking and cycling connectivity and embrace open data and smart city initiatives to manage the day-to-day operations of a major city seamlessly' he said, according to the HERALD SUN.

If we are to have the right to vote, our vote should mean something. The number of obvious dummy candidates in some councils has rightly been called a subversion of democracy. Flooding the ballot paper with names of people who have no intention of winning and are standing only to deliver their preferences to a genuine candidate is confusing for voters, a waste of time and arguably gives some an unfair advantage.

Similarly, those who take the election so lightly that the material they send out to voters is riddled with clumsy wording and spelling mistakes, and gives little idea of their views or values, need to examine their motives. Local government is



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periodically the subject of debate over whether the third tier of government is really necessary.

Those who argue for less local government, such as former Melbourne City Council chief executive **Elizabeth Proust**, make a strong case. There is obvious scope for councils to reduce duplication, improve efficiency and cut spending, and mergers could be part of this. Every one of Victoria's 79 councils is headed by a high-paid chief executive, who often enjoys annual pay rises of \$10,000.

Melbourne City Council has the highest paid CEO, earning at least \$460,000. As one Melbourne City councillor, **Stephen Mayne**, pointed out, you could hit a golf ball from the steps of Parliament into the neighbouring municipality, and we have the odd situation of each side of St Kilda Road being governed by a different council, as per *THE AGE*.

### Dummy Candidates Numbers Spike

Record numbers of candidates running for election at western suburbs council are largely the result of a proliferation of dummy candidates, the state Opposition, the Greens and those standing in the poll say. A dummy candidate is someone who stands for election with no intention of winning, but directs their preferences to another candidate.

There have been 95 nominations for Wyndham Council. At the last elections there were 46 candidates. It has emerged that the highest profile candidate, millionaire property and education entrepreneur **Intaj Khan**, has at least eight candidates preferencing him in a bid to ensure his re-election, reports *THE AGE*.



### MELBOURNE

#### Chapel Launch Sydney Ad Campaign

Struggling Sydney bars and pubs have reacted angrily to Chapel Street traders pitching the

area to Sydneysiders struggling to find entertainment under the state's lockout laws. The Chapel Street Precinct Association has plastered posters urging revellers to go to Melbourne so they can 'play 'til it's my bed time, not **Mark Baird** time' at 150 sites in Sydney, reports the *HERALD SUN*.

### More CCTV in the CBD

Lord Mayor **Doyle** is promising more security cameras in the city if he is re-elected, admitting that council had lost control of a popular street art precinct. Team **Doyle** pledged to install an extra six closed-circuit television cameras, at a cost of \$360,000. The first two are slated for the street art precinct of Hosier and Rutledge lanes.

### Council Confidence Low

Melbournians headed to the polls in one of the most dysfunctional rounds of local government elections since the **Kennett** government's reforms of the sector in 1994. The unedifying campaign has laid bare many of the problems plaguing local councils across Victoria. So low has public regard for local government fallen that seven inner-city councils last month proposed a public relations campaign to justify their existence and respond to 'commentary that seeks to undermine trust and confidence in local government'.

Voting in the chaotic elections marred by huge numbers of dummy candidates, rows over religion and candidates being investigated by police. The vote comes as former local government leader **Elizabeth Proust** renewed her call to drastically slash the number of councils running Melbourne's services, and merge them into a handful of municipalities.

And former Victorian premier **Jeff Kennett** also said that, because the **Andrews** government has not appetite for council amalgamations,

Melbourne's councils must become far more efficient. Melbourne City Council has the highest paid CEO, earning at least \$460,000, plus another 185 staff members earning more than \$139,000.

Many decisions are made by Victoria's councils in meetings closed to the public. Latrobe City Council is Victoria's most secretive, making almost half its decisions in closed meetings, according to *THE AGE*.

### Greens to Take CBD Cars Out

The speed limit in the city would be cut to 30km/h and driving would become niche transport under Green policies for the city council election. The Greens want fewer private car trips to and from town and would lobby the State Government to expand its off street-parking congestion tax. They would also fast-track the expansion of Melbourne's bicycle network, putting in full length of St Kilda Rd and Royal Parade, the *HERALD SUN* reports.

### Baths in Hot Water

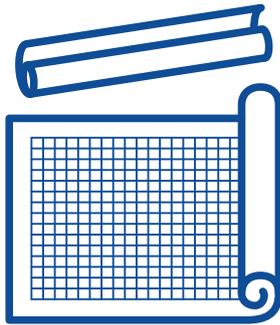
The heritage-listed City Baths faces losing millions of dollars in revenue over several years and possible structural damage during construction of the Melbourne Metro Rail Project. The council-owned pool and fitness centre faces massive disruption and may have to close temporarily

when construction on the cross-city rail tunnel starts next year, according to the HERALD SUN.

**Project Melbourne 4.0 to Ease Digital Disruption**

Since 2010, over the life of three successive governments, the Committee for Melbourne has been a vocal advocate for an independent Infrastructure Victoria. To help Melbourne better understand and prepare for the impact of digital disruption, the committee has embarked on a major strategic project, titled project Melbourne 4.0.

We will be drawing on our uniquely diverse membership from the world of business, research, artistic and civic institutions to get their insights about how digital disruption is shaping their business. We want to identify how greater Melbourne can create the right conditions for the city to successfully ride the wave of digital transformation of our economy, writes **Martine Letts** in the HERALD SUN.



**PLANNING**

**Peter Seamer Detailed Update**

We are very pleased to be able to release our 2016/17 work program, as approved by our Minister. The program involves a spread of diverse projects across Greenfields, Urban Renewal and Regional areas and at times involves the VPA leading a project and at other times advising and assisting Councils. The full list can be found at our website.

In our Urban Renewal Program we are carrying forward nine major projects. Our Regional Program had been expanded to reflect our move to the VPA and highlights include pour work on a Framework Plan for Bacchus Marsh, assisting with *Plan Bendigo* and key projects in Wodonga and Shepparton. Our Greenfields Program continues to roll out. While a number of PSPs have been approved in the past year, next year will see the completion of a greater number of projects.

This will include the Quarry Hills PSP, Melbourne Greenfields have a record uptake, Streamlining for Growth.

One of the really big changes we are only starting to address in our planning is new forms of transport and driverless cars. A new report from Australia's peak driverless vehicle organisation, ADVI, authored by VPA board member **Brain Haratsis**, argues a coordinated national framework is needed to mitigate the risks of rapid uncontrolled autonomous vehicle adoptions from 2020. Written by **Peter Seamer** Chief Executive Officer of the Victorian Planning Authority.

**Rialto Refurbishment**

Visitors to the Rialto Towers will feel like they're in an airport terminal under a \$200 million redevelopment of the city icon. As the building celebrates its 30th anniversary, the owner has unveiled plans for a transformation of the ground floor area along Collins St. Shops, cafes, restaurants, bars and offices will feature in the new precinct that will better integrate the 251m-high skyscraper with the street. Partner in the Rialto Joint Venture, Lorenz Grollo, said the refurbishment was responding to changing work patterns, according to the HERALD SUN.

**Pantscraper**

Cbus Property officially launched the development if a \$1.2billion mixed-use tower that combines office space, with a hotel and ritzy apartments. Its unique design, joining two towers with skybridge, resembles, in the eyes of many Melbournians, a pair of sky-high strides. It is the city's largest single project, as reported in THE AUSTRALIAN FINANCIAL REVIEW.

**Moonee Valley Makeover**

The razing, realigning and rebuilding of Moonee Valley will happen. The \$150 million project – combining a racetrack, apartments and a commercial precinct – will take 10 years to complete. The apartments, to be located on part of the 98 acres of freehold land, will house about 4,000 residents. Once the dust settles on the 100th Cox Plate in 2020, the bulldozers will arrive. Racing will return to the track in 2022, while the rebuilding continues, as per the HERALD SUN.

**Rate Increase to Fund Metro Tunnel**

Local households could face an extra \$435 rate charge each to help underwrite a proposed new \$19 billion train tunnel that would connect Clifton Hill with Newport, the state's key infrastructure adviser says. In a report conducted by Infrastructure Victoria found that the Melbourne Metro 2 project – the proposed train tunnel running from Clifton Hill to Newport via Parkville, Southern Cross Station and Fishermens Bend could add about \$20 billion to land values, reports THE AGE.

**Victoria: The Construction State**

Victoria has experienced a \$30 billion building boom as the State Government approves new projects for the city and suburbs. More than 70 per cent of construction value in 2015-16 was housing, including a 24 per cent jump in apartment work, to reach a record \$6 billion, Victorian Building Authority figures show.

As the state hurtles towards a population of 10 million by 2051, the government has given the green light to develop the Craigieburn North Employment Area. The 488ha site, bounded by Donnybrook Rd, it tipped to have 8000 jobs, including for residents of the emerging Kalkallo community and the Donnybrook development. Most of the land will be zoned industrial, with \$58 million to be raised from developers to pay for roads, bridges and green space, reports the HERALD SUN.

**Fishermans Bend Requires Clean-Up**

Contamination of the Fishermans Bend site is looming as a major worry for the commercial building sector, after the Victorian Government revealed its 'final version' for a revamped suburb on the CBD's southwest fringe. Property Council of Australia executive director **Sally Capp**, who was appointed in September to lead the Victorian chapter of the PCA, said the strategy did not discuss how the heavily industrialised site would be decontaminated.

Given decontamination programs can run into years before construction is allowed, the PCA is concerned the lack of a strategy for the clean-up would impede local development from planning to participate in the large project. Fishermans Bend is on the Yarra River, near Port Melbourne and opposite Coode Island, where in 1991 a massive explosion and fire at a chemical storage tan facility generated toxic plumes of smoke. It has been described as Melbourne's worst industrial disaster.

There were about 1000 different private owners of land at Fishermans Bend, PCA said. Ms **Capp** told *Commercial Property* the government could not take a piecemeal approach to the chemical clean-up before building began because contamination extended across the whole site through underground water tables, reports the HERALD SUN.

**Infrastructure Boom Needed for Growing Population**

Premier **Andrews** has been told to go 'back to the drawing board' on the design of his signature \$11 billion Melbourne Metro rail project, with the state's infrastructure adviser finding a \$10 billion 'Missing Link' road in the north-east and a \$5 billion rail line to Melbourne Airport are the top priorities for the state.

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The report by Infrastructure Victoria also said the controversial \$7 billion East West Link should 'remain on the agenda' but its not a 'top priority' for \$100 billion of infrastructure spending over the next 30 years, as Melbourne's growing population is forecast to hit 10 million by the 2050s.

The state's infrastructure adviser has also called for the introduction of nationwide congestion pricing for roads to ease gridlock, claiming that 20 per cent of car trips between 7am and 9am are not related to work or school and commuters could be convinced to delay their travel to switch to public transport.

**Corkman Pub Illegally Demoad**

There was no demolition permit allowing the destruction of the Corkman Irish Pub, nor was there a planning permit for a building to replace it. 'This is very, very serious matter – that building was protected by a heritage overlay,' said Cr Doyle. Hoarding has also been erected without permission on the footpath, he said, as reported in THE ACE.

**Infrastructure Victoria Independent Assessment**

Two core and overlapping aims drove the Andrews government's creation of planning powerhouse Infrastructure Victoria last year:

removing short-term politics from investment in public assets needed by our rapidly growing and ageing population; and independently assessing which taxpayer-funded projects would generate the greatest economic return. Both goals are reasonable, although removing politics from the investment of huge sums of public money is unrealistic, THE ACE reports.

**Congestion Cutters**

The North East Link, a train to Melbourne Airport and a massive expansion of the Regional Rail Link are seen by Infrastructure Victoria as the top projects to cut the congestion. The controversial East West Link may also be needed, after taxpayers lost \$1.2 billion when it was scrapped by Premier Andrews. He is now being urged to reserve land for its construction.

But Infrastructure Victoria says its radical plan for an overhauled transport pricing system 'could dwarf the effect of any single major transport project' because the state 'can no longer build our way out of congestion', according to the HERALD SUN.

**Academics Warn Premier**

The Andrews Government is not listening to residents and pushing ahead with major

project without proper planning, an academic has warned. RMIT urban policy expert Dr **Crystal Legacy** said the government had done 'a very poor job' of consulting with communities affected by projects such as Western Distributor and the sky rail on the Cranbourne-Pakenham line, as reported by the HERALD SUN.

**Apartments Continue to Spring Up in the Inner-City**

Fitzroy North's first high-rise building would involve 476 apartments on a sprawling warehouse site at 26 to 56 Queens Parade, with two terraced towers rising to 11 and 16 storeys. All the present buildings on the site would be demolished, except the art deco façade of the former K.G Luke metal products factory, which is today painted pink and considered to be of local historical significance, the HERALD SUN reports.

**Bushranger Refurb**

A few days away from the 138th anniversary of **Ned Kelly's** murdering of three policeman at Stringybark Creek comes startling news: the Victorian Government is to spend \$1 million refurbishing the house the bushranger was in at Beveridge, writes Dr **Doug Morrissey** for the HERALD SUN.



**SPORT**

**Melbourne Opened Up**

A new main entrance to Melbourne Park will move the focus of Australia's grand slam tournament towards the city. From 2017, Australian Open fans will cross from Birrarung Marr over the new Tanderrum Bridge to a revamped grand entrance of the tennis precinct. The Traditional main entrance via steps leading to Rod Laver Arena, will be off limits. Australia Open director **Craig Tiley** said the switch would 'turn the local entry from the river to the city', as reported in the HERALD SUN.

**Marathon Facts**

At first the Marathon was about 40km. Then at the 1908 Olympics in London, it was extended so as to finish in front of the royal box. That distance stuck and today's marathons are 42.195km. The world marathon record will probably fall below two hours at some point in the next generation. That person will be moving at 21km/h, or two minutes and 50 seconds per kilometre, writes **Andrew Leigh** in the HERALD SUN.

**Tales of Bureaucracy**

In September, hundred of Warrnambool-trained racehorses, including top trainer **Darren Weir's** 100 plus team, were evicted from Levys Beach, after the town council cited concerns from Aboriginal Victoria regarding culturally important sites. The industry's access to other local beaches is also threatened by fears of threats to wildlife and overcrowding. **Weir** said he would pull his horses from Warrnambool if Levys Beach ban was not lifted.

'If the dunes don't open, I will be moving. You would be wanting to get a guarantee by the new year'. **Weir** said he did not want to criticise any of the parties involved in the dispute,

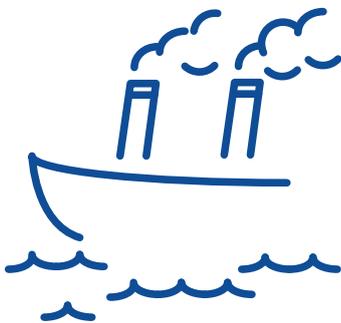
including councils, Aboriginal Victoria, and community groups. But a compromise that would allow horses access to dunes 'is not going to happen overnight'. Other trainers would also pack up and leave if the dunes remained off limits, he said, according to the *HERALD SUN*.

### **Etihad Overhaul After AFL Acquisition**

Etihad Stadium boss **Michael Green** has outlined his plans for the ground in the wake of the AFL's \$200 million purchase of the Docklands venue in September. He has vowed to dump darts after booze-fuelled mayhem at an event last year, deliver more major music acts and focus on footy, cricket and soccer. But he said the AFL had also given the green light for offbeat entertainment, such as the Australian Speedway Grand Prix, reports the *HERALD SUN*.

### **Melbourne**

The race that stops the nation has been run and won by **Almandin**. Success was enjoyed by connections, including trainer **Robert Hickmott**, jockey **Kerrin McEvoy** and owner **Lloyd Williams** (Fifth win).



## **TRANSPORT – PORTS**

### **Port of Melbourne Sold**

The new owners of the Port of Melbourne have promised to spend billions of dollars on upgrades after smashing expectations by paying \$9.7 billion for Australia's busiest port. The privatisation of the Port of Melbourne by the Victorian government has set a new high-water mark for infrastructure prices spurred on by investors chasing returns in the face of ultra-low interest rates.

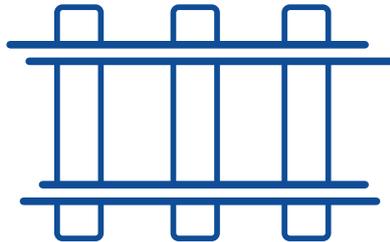
The sale also marked a key test for foreign investment rules as a Chinese sovereign wealth fund emerged as a 20 per cent owner of the winning consortium, which is evenly split between Queensland Investment Corp, the **Peter Costello**-chaired Future Fund and a Canadian and a US investor. This marks the biggest infrastructure transaction since the NSW government's \$10bn proposal to sell its power transmission network, Ausgrid, to a Chinese consortium was knocked back by **Scott Morrison** in August on national security grounds.

The Port of Melbourne deal was given the green light by the Foreign Investment Review Board in September. Victorian Premier Daniel Andrews said the Lonsdale consortium had been cleared by competition and foreign investment checks. Sources close to the transaction said the consortium, which also includes Canadian pension fund OMERS, narrowly outbid a rival offer led by IFM Investors, Macquarie Infrastructure and Dutch asset management business APG.

The sale price is believed to be about 25 times the port's earnings before interest tax, depreciation and amortisation. The multiple is in line with recent transactions, including the sale of Port Botany by the NSW government three years ago for \$4.86bn,

while the sale of Port of Newcastle for \$1.75bn represented 27 times earnings. Key to the Lonsdale consortium win was a plan to tip \$6bn into upgrading the facility over the life of the 50-year lease.

The Port of Melbourne now makes 13.3 per cent of the \$3bn-a-year Australian port industry, and is expected to grow at an above-average 8.5 per cent a year, according to IBISWorld research, as reported in *THE AUSTRALIAN*.



## **TRANSPORT – RAIL**

### **Rail Project Alters Route**

Tram tracks that run along Domain Road and Park Street in South Yarra will be taken out of service, perhaps permanently, when work starts on a new underground railway station at the corner of Domain and St Kilda roads. The move to permanently alter route 8, with trams to run direct along Toorak Road instead of past the gardens, marks a recent change in plans for the \$10.9 billion Melbourne Metro project. An environmental effects statement for the nine-kilometre rail tunnel, published in June, said diversions to route 8 while Domain station is built would be temporary.

But less than five months on, Public Transport Victoria is now considering re-routing route 8 along Toorak Road for good. It acknowledged the change would mean the loss of a direct tram link for the Domain shopping strip, and for residents of that pocket of South Yarra, but said the impacts were 'acceptable in the circumstances' as those people would still be within 400 metres of a tram route, as reported in *THE AGE*.

### **Double Downer on Investment**

Downer EDI is expected to invest about \$10 million of equity into Victoria's high-capacity Metro trains project after winning a \$2 billion contract as part of a consortium in early September. The consortium, which includes China's CRRC Changchun Railway Vehicles and the Plenary Group, is expected to sign final contracts by the end of the year.

CRRC will build and design the 65 train sets, which will have seven cars each and are expected to start operating in 2019, with the final trains delivered by 2026. The Chinese group has designed and built thousands of train sets, including for Hong Kong. Macquarie Research, which says the new Victorian contract is 'lower risk' for Downer than its previous troubled NSW Waratah trains contract (delivered 18 months late), has estimated that the maintenance portion is worth up to \$2 billion, reports *THE AUSTRALIAN FINANCIAL REVIEW*.

### **Metro and Yarra Trams Contract Renewal**

Metro Trains and Yarra Trams have been given the green light to run Melbourne's train and tram networks for another seven years provided they accept tougher performance targets. The state government has sought to address public dissatisfaction with the system's unreliability, by proposing more stringent punctuality targets that give greater weight to on-time running during peak times.

Yarra Trams must run 98 per cent of services each month, and has a punctuality target of 77

per cent, to avoid paying compensation. A tram is also considered late if it runs five minutes or more behind schedule. Station-skipping by Metro and 'short-shunting' by Yarra Trams, whereby passengers are forced to disembark prematurely so that the tram can be rerouted to go in the reverse direction, will also be targeted. The negotiation process is expected to take six to eight months before new contracts are awarded, as per *THE AGE*.

### **Freight Rail for Fishermans Bend**

Fishermans Bend could get its own sky rail – an elevated freight railway line through the planned environmentally sustainable new suburb to prevent it being overwhelmed by truck traffic to and from Melbourne's port. The **Andrews** government released an updated planning blueprint for Fishermans Bend, a sprawling industrial precinct south-west of the CBD that it wants to transform into a new mega-suburb for 80,000 residents and 60,000 workers.

It wants four in every five trips in the precinct to be made by public transport, cycling or walking, in a major break from car dependency. But the blueprint made only fleeting reference to one of the key transport links supporting the plan – a proposal to build a major freight rail connection through the heart of the new suburb, as per *THE AGE*.

### **Plans for Costal Railways Line**

A train tuck to Torquay that would cost up to \$500 million is being investigated by Victoria's infrastructure body. The line would run from the Geelong-Warrnambool track between Marshall and Waurn Ponds stations. Infrastructure Victoria, in its 30-year draft plan, recommended land for the rail corridor be reserved immediately and that construction begin in 15-30 years, reports the *HERALD SUN*.

### **VPT App Upgrade**

Passengers on trains, trams and busses in Melbourne will now have real-time travel information on their phones across all public transport. The updated Public Transport Victoria application – available on the Google Play and iTunes stores – will see real-time information for trains automatically appear in the menu. The information is now available for almost all metropolitan train stations. The technology has already been available for the city's trams and buses, and at a number of V/Line stations, reports the *HERALD SUN*.

### **Southern Cross Passenger Growth a Problem**

Southern Cross would be dramatically overhauled under a \$300 million plan to cope with an unprecedented surge in patronage that is threatening the station's ability to function. 10 years after the station formerly known as Spencer Street was rebuilt, *THE AGE* has revealed Southern Cross is now struggling to deal with passenger numbers. Growth has been so acute the station could soon rival Melbourne Airport as one of the state's busiest transport hubs, with long queues to access overloaded platforms and an overburdened coach terminal.

### **Public Transport Price Overhaul Needed**

Infrastructure Victoria is telling people one of the 'three most important actions for government to take in the short to medium term' is to create a new transport pricing scheme, the *HERALD SUN* reports.

### **New Train Deal Controversy**

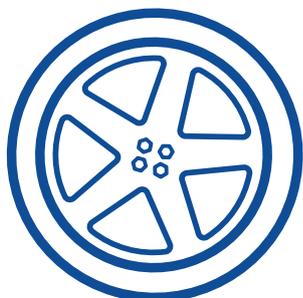
The **Andrew** Government announced the winning tender to build 65 new high-capacity trains in Melbourne's east had been granted to the

China-backed consortium Evolution Rail. The winning bid – which includes Chinese state-owned company CRRC – has promised 1100 local jobs will be created with a 60 per cent local build. **Andrews** hailed it as ‘trains for Victorians built by Victorians’.

But the **HERALD SUN** has learned the international consortium will import all of the carriage shells for the project. It is understood the rival Bombardier bid, which already makes trains in Dandenong, would have delivered 70 per cent local content. Australian Workers Union state secretary **Ben Davis** said CRRC had a record of ‘structural defects and of not honouring local content obligations’. ‘It’s a real shame that the business which has the highest local content didn’t get chosen’.

**Myki Contract Controversy**

The losing company in the building war for the new \$700 million myki contract has cried foul about the tender process. Cubic, which operates London’s Oyster system and Sydney’s Opal card, has written to Victoria’s Ombudsman and Auditor-General, alleging contract winner NTT Data tried to block access to crucial information. Cubic alleges it was unjustly treated and that NTT Data’s action was an attempt to stifle its bid to win the myki contract, according to **THE AGE**.



**TRANSPORT – ROAD**

**Spike in Road Toll**

Victoria’s road toll could exceed 300 for the first time in almost a decade. Remember 1034 back a couple of decades ago.

**Smart Roads**

Melbourne drivers will be able to breeze through a run of green lights in a congestion-busting Australia-first trial. New hi-tech ‘green wave’ traffic-signalling technology communicates road conditions to drivers via smartphone apps or GPS and, in the long term, by adaptive cruise control. Hoddle St, Punt Rd, the Nepean Highway, Dandenong Rd and Warrigal Rd are contenders for the 18-month trial of the technology. The testing will be done in varying speed zones and traffic conditions reports the **HERALD SUN**.

**Great Ocean Toll**

Former Geelong mayor **Keith Fagg** has raised the prospect of introducing a toll on the Great Ocean Road, to secure the valuable tourism asset for future generations. The coastal route has been ravaged by flooding and landslides over the past month, with speed restrictions in place in October, four weeks after a 50km stretch was first closed. Tourism leaders have led a call for massive investment in the Great Ocean Road, describing the road and associated facilities as substandard, as per the **HERALD SUN**.

**Lindsay not Consulted on Infrastructure**

Victorian trucking magnate **Lindsay Fox** has called for the completion of a Melbourne ring road and says not enough is being done to beat gridlock. ‘At Linfox, we do 260 million kilometres a year and are the largest payer of tolls in all of Australia – but no one from state or federal government, Labor or Liberal, spoke to us about the infrastructure of the country. It’s ludacris,’ said the 80-year-old tycoon as he marks his company’ 60 years in business, according to the **HERALD SUN**.

**Taxi Fares Take Off**

Taxi fares from Melbourne Airport will be more expensive from next month. The Essential Services Commission has ruled cabbies charged for using ranks and other facilities at the airport can pass on fee increases. Melbourne Airport has advised it will slap drivers with a \$3.58 charge from this month onwards – an 88c increase, as per the **HERALD SUN**.

**Trucks Banned From West Gate**

A total ban on the heaviest trucks crossing the West Gate Bridge has started, forcing more hulking B-doubles to mix with inner-city traffic. VicRoads has deemed Melbourne’s busiest bridge can no longer support the weight of 77.5-tonne container trucks while also carrying an average 200,000 vehicles, as reported in **THE AGE**.

**Another Road to the Airport a No-Go**

Another planned link to Melbourne Airport has failed to get off the ground. But this time it’s a road, not a railway line that has been put on hold by the **Andrews** government. Planning Minister **Richard Wynne** has blocked VicRoads plans for a new six-lane freeway to the airport from the north, and a bypass of the town of Bulla, because the roads would divide several rural properties and slice through a national reserve, according to **THE AGE**.

**Ring Road in Dire Need of Revamp**

A key Melbourne road project has been given high priority by the Federal Government’s infrastructure advisory board. Infrastructure Australia has announced a 14.3 km section of the M80 Ring Road urgently needs a \$713 million upgrade to cope with

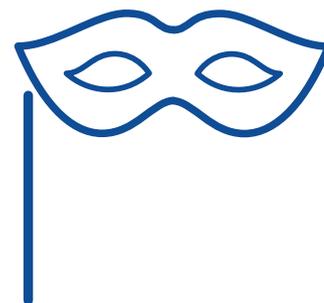
congestion. It would involve 2.4 km from Plenty Rd to Greensborough Highway, 7.9 k from Princess Freeway to Western Highway; and 41m from Sydney Rd to Edgars Rd, the **HERALD SUN** reports.



**WELFARE**

**East West Link Squatters**

Squatters have been ordered out of inner-city homes acquired for the dumped East West Link, amid claims of violence and drug and alcohol-fuelled ‘tirades’. The squatters could face legal action if they refuse to vacate almost a dozen homes in Collingwood, Parkville and Clifton Hill after being served with eviction notices, as reported in the **HERALD SUN**.



**SOCIETY**

**Victoria Population Boom**

Victoria’s population has officially sped past the six million mark, with migration being the key factor behind the growth. The state’s population grew by 1.9 per cent – or 114,900 people – in the year leading to March this year, according to the Australian Bureau of Statistics’.

“This is the fastest population growth for Victoria since 2009 and is well above Australia’s growth rate of 1.4 per cent,’ acting director of demography **Phil Browning** said. ‘New South Wales was the next fastest state, increasing

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by 1.4 per cent. Queensland and the Australian Capital Territory were not far behind, with both growing at 1.3 per cent', the HERALD SUN reports.

### Victoria's Tops Small Town List

A search for 50 hidden gems among Australia's small towns has uncovered 14 from Victoria. Halls Gap, Dookie and Avoca are on the list of the 'most irresistible, exotic, historic and postcard-worthy small towns in Australia'. Ballarat, Murchison on the Goulburn River, and Dinner Plain in the Alps were also considered winners, according to the HERALD SUN.

### Restaurant Empire Sold

The celebrity chef who has become synonymous with high-end cuisine in Melbourne, **Shannon Bennett**, has sold a majority of his hospitality empire to Singapore's wealthiest family, brothers **Robert** and **Phillip Ng**, for nearly \$15 million. In return, the *Masterchef* regular will act as the culinary brand ambassador for what is expected to be a substantial restaurant expansion into Asia and the United States, according to the HERALD SUN.



## VALE

### Another Tragedy at a Level Crossing

The car crushed by an express train at a Surrey Hills level crossing was not trying to evade boom gates and had its reverse lights on moments before it was hit, witnesses say. The two elderly women in the car, **Denise Dobbyn** and **Carmel Iseppi** were neighbours in a Camberwell retirement village. The women, aged 71 and 73, died when their small black Hyundai was hit by a train travelling at 80km/h at a Surrey Hills level crossing, as reported by the HERALD SUN.

**COLLINS**, Ray, Trade unionist, 9-3-1921 – 14-8-2016

**COSH**, Pat, Physiotherapist, 27-11-1923 – 14-5-2016

**HAYES**, Monica, Psychologist, community activists, 10-10-1952 – 26-10-2016

**LOOSLI**, Geoffrey, Naval officer, 21-2-1926 – 5-9-2016

**McCAUGHAN**, Bettine, Singer and teacher, 13-6-1926 – 15-8-2016

**McCREDIE**, John, Diplomat and bomber pilot during World War II, 13-8-1921 – 29-1-2016

**MOLLISON**, Bill, Ecologist, 4-5-1928 – 24-9-2016

**O'BRIAN**, Hugh, the actor rose to fame on television as the quick-drawing Wyatt Earp in the 1950s, has died aged 91.

**PALMER**, Arnold, Champion golfer. 10-9-1929 – 25-9-2016.

**PERES**, Shimon, one of the last surviving pillars of Israel's founding generation died aged 93.

**SIDDONS**, John, Manufacturer and politician, 5-10-1927 – 22-9-2016

**THOMAS**, Katherine, Statistician and researcher, 27-2-1923 – 7-9-2016

**THIELEMANS**, Jean 'Toots', the Belgian Musician who turned the lowly harmonica into a virtuoso jazz instrument during an illustrious career in which he performed with legends such as Charlie Parker. 94. Thielemans, who made his mark with solo performances in movies and by playing the theme song for TV's *Sesame Street*, died in his sleep in a Belgian Hospital, the HERALD SUN reports.

**WALKER**, Max, the cricket legend, television personality and best selling author, aged 68 of melanoma.

**AH MOUY**, Vernon Meigh, aged 92; **ALEXANDER (nee Davidson)**, Fleur; **ALSTERGREN**, Janet; **ADDISON**, Margaret Isabel (Peg); **BARDIN**, Rodney; **BEARE**, Lynette Barbara; **BELL**, Joan (Jacka); **BIEDUKIEWICZ**, Jozef; **BILLMAN**, R.L (Bob); **BLAKE**, Dr Douglas Harold; **BLAZE**, Dorrit Pearline; **BOURKE (nee O'Hare)**, Kathryn (Kate) Lindsay; **BOYCE**, Malcolm Herbert; **BOYLE**, Tom, Past District Governor; **BOX**, Anthony (Tony); **BRADY**, Terry; **BUCKNELL**, Geoff (Donald Geoffrey), aged 73; **CAMPAIN**, Alan James; **CAMERON**, John R.A;

**CAREW**, John Patrick, aged 86; **CHAMPION de CRESPIGNY**, Phillip Humphrey Hunter; **CHARLWOOD**, Phillip Royle; **CLUNIE**, Gordon; **COMBES**, Rosamonde Catherine; **COWEN**, Edward Robert Vail; **CREWETHER**, Peter William; **CRISP**, Sally Gillian (Momo); **CROWLEY**, Lawrence John (Larry) Grp Capt. (ret.); **CUNNINGHAM**, Angie; **DANBY**, Owen Wootton; **DE LISLE**, Jennie; **DUGGAN**, Betty; **DUKE**, Ken; **DALMAU**, Dr Mary Clare; **DE BRETTARGH (nee Hodgkinson)**, Robyn Lavinia Mary;

**DERBYSHIRE**, Robert Bruce; **DOCKING**, Dorothy Ledger; **DOUGHTY**, Leslie; **ENGLISH (nee Armstrong)**, Carolyn Jane; **ENGLISH**,

Russell Andrew, aged 75; **FALKENSTEIN**, Anne; **FEARN-WANNAN (nee Margetts)**, Betty; **FITZGERALD (nee Stead)**, Elaine Maude; **GARING**, Edwin (Ed) Alexander; **GEER**, Keith, aged 101; **GEHRIG**, Angela; **GEHRKE**, Walpurgis Alexa; **GOLDBERG**, Graham; **GORDON**, Gil The Historic Touring Car Association of Victoria; **GOOLD**, Barry Martin; **HANNA**, Alameih, aged 86;

**HALLEBONE**, Timothy Richard; **HALLENSTEIN**, May Goulston; **HEDBERG**, Ruth C.H.N.; **HENDERSON**, Peter AC, former Secretary of the Department of Foreign Affairs; **HOARE**, Lehone Lucas 'Frosty'; **HOLLOWAY**, Peter John; **HOMLES**, Donald Stanley; **HUXLEY**, Dane; **INCH**, John (Jack); **ISAACSON**, Anne; **JONES**, George Samuel; **JONES**, Dr. Michael; **KNIGHT**, Raymond James; **KEANE**, Francis (Frank) James, aged 75; **KENT**, James (Jim) Frederick; **KORNAN**, Dr Paul Jacob;

**LANDARY**, Betty; **LLOYD-SMITH (nee Howieson)**, Glory Margaret; **MACKAY**, John Richard (Jack) AM, Associate Professor; **MARTIN**, Geoffrey Arthur; **McCAHON**, Rev. John G.; **McDONELL**, Captain Ralph, of the Alma Doepel Supporters Club; **McMILLIAN**, Mars; **MOLYNEUX (nee Mason)**, Susan; **MORRIS**, David Jones; **MURRAY**, Dale Phillip; **MURRAY**, John; **OGILVIE**, William (Bill);

**PAICE (nee Johnston)**, Irene (Midge); **PENBERTHY**, Melissa Joan; **PHILPOTT (nee Duncan)**, Sherli Varley aged 93; **SITT**, Alexander AM; **REID**, Dennis; **RICHARDS**, David Michael; **RICHARDS**, Samuel Carl (Carl), aged 48; **ROBINSON**, Dr Gavin; **RUNGE**, Arthur; **RYMER**, Dr John Vanston, aged 93; **WALKER**, Alisdair Archibald; **WATKIN**, Thomas Arthur; **WATMUFF**, Dr Jonathan Hugh; **WILLIS**, Dr Quentin Frederick, aged 80; **WRIGGLESWORTH (nee Stewart)**, Gwentyth Betty;



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