



# THE FAWCETT FLYER

JANUARY/FEBRUARY 2021



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As many of the challenges of 2020 have carried over into this new year, the Australian Government has continued to prioritise the physical and economic health of all Australians. There are already positive signs that this year will provide a return to pre-COVID normal across a number of areas, and the Government is working to bring these to fruition.

An encouraging development to occur in the first two months of 2021 is the commencement of COVID-19 vaccinations in South Australia, and throughout the rest of the country. Our Government has invested more than \$3.3 billion in securing COVID-19 vaccines for all Australians – funding over 150 million vaccine doses in total across the 4 vaccine agreements secured.

Another promising outcome is the quadrilateral cooperation between Australia, India, Japan, and the United States, embodied in the ‘Quad’ which recently held a leader’s meeting attended by Prime Minister Morrison, Prime Minister Modi, Prime Minister Suga and President Biden respectively. This was the first time the four leaders had met.

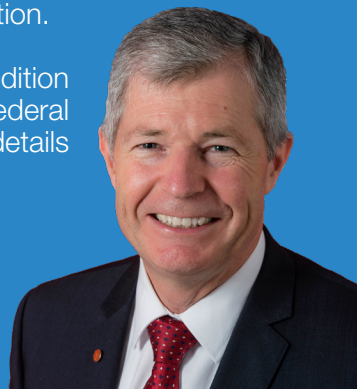
United in a shared vision for the free and open Indo-Pacific, these nations, through the Leaders Meeting, recommitted to promoting a free, open rules-based order, rooted in international law to advance security and prosperity and counter threats to both in the Indo-Pacific and globally. This shared commitment for the security, stability and prosperity of our region is good news for our nation and our pacific neighbours.

In preparation for the next federal election, congratulations to the preselected South Australian Liberal Senate candidates – incumbents Senator the Hon Simon Birmingham and Senator Andrew McLachlan, and new senate candidates Ms Kerryne Liddle and Dr Rachel Swift. They are all very capable, competent, and experienced individuals who will offer South Australians sound representation.

For more information on any matters in this edition of the Fawcett Flyer or other matters of a federal nature, please contact my office via the details available on the back cover.

Kind regards,

**SENATOR THE HON  
DAVID FAWCETT**





The Joint Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade (JSCFADT) recently completed the Inquiry into the implications of the COVID-19 pandemic for Australia’s foreign affairs, defence and trade, and I tabled the Committee’s report in my role as Chair in the Senate in late 2020.

The Committee’s report made 16 recommendations – each a constructive step our Government could take to improve our national resilience, as COVID-19 revealed weaknesses to critical national systems which are essential to Australia’s ability to function as a secure, prosperous, first world nation. In 2021, my attention turns to advocating for the implementation of these recommendations. In advocating for improvement to our national resilience, I was interviewed for the Australian Strategic

Policy Institute’s ‘Policy, Guns and Money’ Podcast to discuss JSCFADT’s recommendations. Speaking with Brendan Nicholson, I discussed how failure points must be identified and mitigated in our supply chains particularly when our nation’s critical systems could be detrimentally impacted, how a whole-of-government approach could assure greater success in identifying and mitigating these weaknesses, and how government procurement rules can change to support long term strengthening of our national resilience. To listen to ASPI’s podcast, click [here](#) or scan the following QR Code.



The Parliamentary Joint Committee for Intelligence and Security's work grew in January and February with the new Inquiry into extremist movements and radicalism in Australia referred by Minister Dutton, as well as the Inquiry into national security risks affecting the Australian higher education and research sector which was referred to the Committee late last year. Both these Inquiries are considering how their respective issue is a potential threat to our national security – foreign interference in Australia's tertiary institutions, and the influence of extremist and radical groups on Australia's social fabric.

For the Review into the Security Legislation Amendment (Critical Infrastructure) Bill 2020 and Statutory Review of the Security of Critical Infrastructure Act 2018, as well as the Review of the Intelligence Oversight and Other Legislation Amendment (Integrity Measures) Bill 2020, submissions for these Inquiries closed in February.

The proposed Security Legislation Amendment (Critical Infrastructure) Bill 2020, among other functions, introduces an enhanced regulatory framework which further refines what is currently legislated under the 2018 Bill. Recent incidents such as compromises of university networks and key corporate entities, and the impacts of COVID-19 illustrate

that threats to the operation of Australia's critical infrastructure assets continue to be significant - threats which range from natural hazards (including weather events) to human induced threats (including interference, cyber-attacks, and espionage).

Also currently being conducted by PJCS, submissions for the Surveillance Legislation Amendment (Identify and Disrupt) Bill 2020 review closed in February, and 21 submissions were made to the Committee from various stakeholders. Among other functions, this proposed Bill would introduce three new powers for the Australian Federal Police (AFP) and the Australian Criminal Intelligence Commission (ACIC) to combat serious online crime including data disruption warrants, network activity warrants, and account takeover warrants.

As Chair of the Senate Environment and Communications Legislation Committee (E&C), I led the inquiry into the Government's Recycling and Waste Reduction Bills 2020, which ended up being passed into law in December 2020.

The importance of reforms and supporting innovation in this sector were emphasised during a visit, in February, to the Solo Resource Recovery facility at North Plympton.

State Manager Adrian Rose (*pictured, page 2*) is an industry leader, committed to seeing a resource rather than waste.

In late February, the Online Safety Bill 2021 was referred to E&C. The Bill intends to create a modern, fit-for-purpose regulatory framework that builds on the strengths of the existing legislative scheme for online safety, including establishing the eSafety Commissioner and setting out the Commissioner's functions and powers.

## IN THE MEDIA

Work on the Main North Road, Kings and McIntyre Roads Intersection Upgrade in Adelaide's north east began in February, funded by a joint \$13 million Federal and State Liberal Governments investment.

I represented the Australian Government at the commencement of works (*pictured, right*) – joined by South Australian Minister for Infrastructure and Transport, Recreation, Sport and Racing, the Hon Corey Wingard MP and State Member for King, Paula Luethen MP.

Since elected in 2013, the Coalition has committed more than \$9.8 billion for roads and transport

E&C has also recently published reports on the National Collecting Institutions Legislation Amendment Bill 2020 and the Industrial Chemicals Environmental Management (Register) Bill 2020.

For more information on Inquiries before Parliamentary Committees, click [here](#) or scan the QR Code below.



infrastructure in SA.

For more information on this project, click [here](#) or scan the QR Code below.





## PM DELIVERS PRIORITIES IN 2021



In February, Prime Minister Scott Morrison laid out the Australian Government's top 5 priorities for 2021, in an address to the National Press Club:

1. Suppress the virus and deliver the vaccine;
2. Cement our economic recovery to create jobs;
3. Continue to guarantee the essential services Australians rely on;
4. Protect and secure Australia's interests in a challenging world; and
5. Care for our country.

Delivering on priority #1, over 100,000 Australians have now received their COVID-19 vaccination as of March 10th, and there are now 1.3 million doses of COVID-19 vaccines in Australia.

Prime Minister Scott Morrison is working collaboratively with National Cabinet to ensure COVID-19 measures and restrictions strike a balance between minimising community transmission, and maintaining fundamental freedoms.

Our economic recovery is well underway, and jobs are being created – affirming priority #2. Almost 800,000 jobs were created in the past 7 months – 90% of the jobs lost to COVID-19 had returned

by late 2020.

Business confidence in Australia is now at its highest level since February 2010. The OECD have revised forecasts for Australia's economy – expecting it to expand by 4.5% through 2021.



In line with priority #3, our Government is delivering record funding for South Australian public hospitals and schools in 2020/21 – as we have every year since elected in 2013. Record investments in Medicare and the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme, as Mental health and Aged Care are also receiving significant funding.

As the Indo-Pacific region experiences the most consequential strategic realignment in almost 80 years, the Australian Government is protecting Australia's interests within our region and throughout the world – in line with priority #5.

Our Government is delivering a record \$575 billion investment to defend Australians over the next decade. I will continue to advocate for constructive and appropriate improvements to ensure we also safeguard Australia's critical systems, supply chains and infrastructure.

In preserving Australia's natural beauty and the environment for future generations – another of the Liberal Party's core beliefs – and affirming priority #5, our Government is delivering the \$190 million Recycling Modernisation Fund (RMF) – enabling practical alternatives to shipping our waste overseas by investing in innovative technologies. Along with other initiatives, the RMF is expected to create more than 10,000 jobs across Australia and divert more than 10 million tonnes of landfill from being shipped overseas each year.

While our recovery is underway, there is still much to do. I look forward to working with my Senate and Parliamentary colleagues towards delivering these priorities and continuing our recovery from the challenges of 2020. For more on Prime Minister's priorities for 2021, click [here](#) or scan the QR Code below.



## SA BUSINESS IMPROVING HEALTH CARE FOR ADF



In late 2020, I joined Peter Rowland, Managing Director of Micro-X and Andy Keough, Managing Director of Saab Australia as they signed the \$1.4 million contract for Micro-X's X-Ray machines (*pictured*) to be included in the ADF's new deployable health facilities, built by Saab.

In September last year, Saab Australia announced a \$337 million contract with Defence Australia to develop and sustain deployable military and humanitarian hospitals for the Australian Defence Force. These facilities will now include Micro-X's Rover – full performance digital medical x-ray imager, light enough to be used in deployed medical facilities – specifically designed, in collaboration with Defence through the Innovation Hub program, for use in the Australian Army operational environment.

Based at Tonsley, Micro-X's world first technology will not only improve

health outcomes for our deployed military personnel, but also have an enormous economic benefit through job creation in manufacturing and research & development here in SA.

Headquartered in Mawson Lakes, Saab Australia – alongside Australian business partners Aspen Medical Australia and Broadspectrum – is creating more than 550 deployable health modules over the course of the 5-year contract to provide deployed troops with high-quality clinical care, wherever they are in the world. Saab confirmed that it is creating 50 new full-time positions through the contract, and expects to spend approximately \$240 million of the contract value in Australia. For more information on this development, click [here](#) or scan the QR Code below.





# ATTRACTING MORE GPs 8 TO REGIONAL SA



In February, I met with Federal Minister for Rural Health, Hon Mark Coulton MP and the SA Health Minister Hon Stephen Wade MLC (*pictured*). Health services for South Australians living in rural and regional areas was on the agenda.

Focussing on key areas for enhanced cooperation to improve health services for regional SA communities, we were looking at new approaches as well as building on existing programs such as the Remote Vocational Training Scheme (RVTS) which received Federal Government funding of \$6.5 million annually in both 2020 and 2021. In 2021, the Department of Health is providing an additional \$5 million for the RVTS Extended Targeted Recruitment Pilot, which funds salary incentives for up to 10 registrars.

While there's still more to be done to tackle Australia's rural GP shortage, our Government is working to support creative solutions to get GPs into our regions, including

various employment models, as well as fast-tracking the National Rural Generalist Pathway program through an investment of \$62 million in 2019/20 to better equip locally trained doctors to work in rural communities.

While Minister Coulton was in Adelaide, we also met with Professor Paul Worley, the inaugural National Rural Health Commissioner and Professor Lucie Walters, Director of The University of Adelaide Rural Clinical School to discuss better models of training for country GPs that would work in SA's unique demographic circumstances. Professor Worley and Professor Walters are both still practicing rural GPs here in South Australia.

For more information on the RVTS, click [here](#) or scan the QR Code below.



## NEW SPACE AGENCY HEAD ONBOARD



As a former experimental test pilot, I've been a strong advocate for the creation of the Australian Space Agency (ASA) and the development of space related industry in Australia, spanning payloads, space vehicles and launch capabilities.

In February, I welcomed the new head of the ASA, Enrico Palermo (*pictured, right*), and his Deputy, Anthony Murfett (*pictured, left*). Mr Palermo was appointed to this role in November 2020, and began in Adelaide in January.

Mr Palermo brings significant experience and knowledge with him to this role, including as General Manager of The Spaceship Company (TSC), a subsidiary of Virgin Galactic. Mr Palermo led TSC to become a successful spaceship manufacturer at the company's Mojave Air and Space Port in California, employing over 350 people.

Originally from Australia, Mr Palermo

studied mechanical engineering at The University of Western Australia, then studied at the International Space University in Strasbourg, France before becoming GM of TSC. Mr Palermo's background in engineering, commercialisation and innovation ensures he is well placed to support our space industry to take on the challenges and opportunities this sector faces.

In our meeting, we discussed a range of issues including the need to ensure the ASA becomes a regulator which empowers industry and works towards developing a sovereign space capability in Australia.

For more information on Mr Palermo's appointment, click [here](#) or scan the QR Code below.





As JSCFADT Chair, I was also pleased to have Her Excellency Ms Betty Pavelich, Ambassador of Croatia, and Her Excellency Mrs Marion Derckx, Ambassador for the Kingdom of the Netherlands at a meeting of the Committee in February, pictured with Deputy Chair of JSCFADT Meryl Swanson MP (*right*).



As JSCFADT Chair, I was pleased to have the new Ambassador of Japan His Excellency Mr Shingo Yamagami and Professor Akio Takahara meet with the Committee recently. The Australia-Japan relationship is one of our closest bilateral relationships in Asia and is fundamental to both countries' strategic and economic interests.



Congratulations to David George – City of Tea Tree Gully's 2021 Outstanding Citizen of the Year – pictured alongside his wife Margaret and Rev Mike Stevens (*left*). It was great to join the City of Tea Tree Gully at their citizenship ceremony (below) and to address the new Australian citizens on behalf of the Australian Government on such a significant day in their lives.



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Liberal Senator for South Australia

Chair of the Joint Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade

**Suite 4, 13/100 King William Street, Adelaide SA 5000**

**8205 1040**

**[senator.fawcett@aph.gov.au](mailto:senator.fawcett@aph.gov.au)**

**[senatorfawcett.com.au](http://senatorfawcett.com.au)**