



# THE FAWCETT FLYER

JULY 2019



With the 2019 federal election now behind us, the Government's attention is focussed on delivering on our commitments to South Australians and our nation as a whole.

In the three sitting weeks of July, the Government has made several changes to better the lives of Australians including tax relief, dropping the deeming rate to reflect interest rate decreases, and have overseen a raft of positive policy changes which came into effect on July 1.

It appears millions of Australians waited until the Government's tax relief package was passed into law before they submitted their tax returns to make the most of our federal budget measure and election commitment.

We have now delivered this tax relief of up to \$1,080 which will benefit more than 10 million low and middle income earning Australians, passing this Bill in the first week of Parliament's new term.

Successive Reserve Bank interest rate cuts left a financial gap for many older Australians who rely on pension payments to bridge the gap between their living expenses and the interest they receive from investments.

Minister for Social Services, Senator the Hon Anne Ruston made the decision to reduce the deeming rate which will see approximately 89,500 South Australians benefit.

With the changes, part pensioners can receive up \$1,053 extra annually per couple and up to \$804 annually for singles.

This means more money in the pockets of older Australians who have worked hard to build up their retirement savings.

July 1st – the beginning of the 2019/20 financial year – brought on a number of key Government policy changes including new pharmaceutical items added to the PBS, the beginning of a Default Market Offer (DMO) and Reference Price which will lead

to lower energy prices in South Australia, and an initiative which will create up to 20,800 new apprenticeships in South Australia.

I have been re-appointed as Chair of the Joint Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade and have also been appointed to Chair the Senate Standing Committee on Environment and Communications, as well as serving on the Intelligence

and Security Committee.

In this edition of the Fawcett Flyer, I have detailed some of the responsibilities of committees and summarised elements of the forward work program on *page 8*.

If you would like more information on any of these or another issue of a Federal nature, please let my office know.

## SENATOR DAVID FAWCETT



Building on the success of the previous funding, a Federal Liberal Government investment of \$2 million has been delivered to revitalise valuable River Torrens wetlands through the Environment Restoration Fund.

I joined the Minister for Environment, the Hon Sussan Ley MP and South Australian Member for Colton Matt Cowdrey MP at Breakout Creek Wetlands to make the formal announcement with local media (*pictured, below*).

A combined \$4 million investment with the South Australian Government's \$2 million funding commitment will improve the health of the river, protect native species and deliver benefits to the local community through healthier

recreational reserves.

Nationally, the Environment Restoration Fund will inject \$100 million into conservation projects.

Work will be overseen by the Adelaide and Mount Lofty Ranges Natural Resources Management Board, who have given their in-principle support to co-contribute up to \$2 million towards the project which forms stage 3 of the Breakout Creek concept plan.

More information on this funding is available [here](#) or via the QR Code below.



# SOUTH AUSTRALIAN SENATORS SWORN-IN

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On the 2nd of July 2019, the 46th Australian Parliament was officially opened.

A significant occasion to precede the official opening was the swearing-in of Australia's new Governor General (*pictured, below right*).

Sir Peter Cosgrove completed his service as Australia's 26th Governor-General and the reins were handed to His Excellency the Hon David Hurley, sworn in on 1st July. General (Rtd) Hurley has served the Australian people with distinction over many decades.

The former Governor of NSW, Chief of the Defence Force, and Royal Military College graduate, the Governor-General has proven to be a man of courage, integrity and

resolve balanced with humility.

More Liberal and National Party Senators in the chamber, including South Australia's Alex Antic, are a welcome addition and will allow a smoother passage of legislation as the Government only need to satisfy the requirements of 4 crossbenchers. The elected South Australian senators were sworn-in (*pictured, above*) on the first day of official proceedings.







## SMITH BROTHERS' VICKERS VIMY LARGER THAN LIFE

Marking the centenary of Sir Ross and Keith Smith's historic flight in 1919 from England to Australia, the South Australian Aviation museum brought the Vickers Vimy roaring back to life again this month by unveiling their new mural (*pictured, above*).

Using a Rolls-Royce engine, like one of the two fitted to the Smith Brothers' plane, and creative lighting, the team at the museum were able to bring the mural to life for the almost 200 guests there to celebrate the occasion.

The restored Vickers Vimy aircraft that Sir Ross and Keith flew 100 years ago will take pride of place in the new \$165 million Adelaide Airport terminal expansion, thanks

to the investment of \$4 million investment from the Federal Liberal and State Liberal Governments.

This historical event is a unique part of South Australia's history and I was pleased to give my support to obtaining the funds required to ensure the aircraft's relocation inside the new Adelaide Airport terminal.

You can find more information about this centenary and funding commitment in the June edition of the Fawcett Flyer [here](#), or using the QR Code below.



## STRENGTHENING OUR CLOSE BOND WITH PNG

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Our ongoing relationship with the neighbours to the north, Papua New Guinea (PNG), continues to be a vital bond for Australia in the Pacific. Stability and economic growth of nations such as PNG is crucial to our near region and it is in our nation's best interest to underpin our long term friendship with investment in their continued development.

PNG became an independent democratic state in 1975, formally seceding from Australia of which they were a territory since World War I and the end of German rule. Our nation will never forget the assistance that Papua New Guineans provided to our service personnel and our nation during World War II and the conflict of

Kokoda.

PNG plays a significant role in the Pacific region and our commitment to the relationship reaffirms this fact. This month, PNG's eighth and current Prime Minister the Hon James Marape visited our shores to reaffirm the close relationship our two nations enjoy (*pictured, above*).

Prime Minister Scott Morrison used the opportunity to announce a \$250m commitment to energy generation projects on PNG's largest electricity network, the Ramu grid, including construction of a new gas-powered plant. As of November 2018, only about 13% of Papua New Guineans have reliable access to electricity. Japan, New Zealand, the United States and

Australia have the goal of increasing this to 70% of the population as members of the Papua New Guinea Electrification Partnership. For greater development and access to essential services like healthcare, electricity access is a must.

While in Australia, Prime Ministers Morrison and Marape announced negotiations will begin on a new Comprehensive Strategic and Economic Partnership between the two countries. Australia's significant infrastructure investment program will continue with Lombrum Naval Base, a strategic site for PNG, Australian and American vessels, receiving an upgrade. Domestic security and policing is a priority concern in PNG and Australia will assist in this area with a \$135.9 million investment over the next three and a half years.

Australia's \$2 billion investment over the next 30 years in the Pacific Maritime Security Program is providing 21 patrol boats to our friends throughout the Pacific so they can better ensure their domestic, and the region's, maritime security. The very first of these 21 vessels was received by PNG earlier this year – the HMPNGS Ted Diro, named after first Commander of the Papua New Guinea Defence

Force following their independence in 1975.

Education remains an important indicator of a nation's development. PNG is one of the Pacific nations included in the Australia-Pacific Schools Partnerships program which has provided more than 9,300 tertiary students over the last decade from the Pacific with the opportunity to study either in Australia or elsewhere in the Pacific.

Building on this success, Australia will provide \$9.5 million over three years to a new PNGAus Partnership Secondary Schools Initiative, pairing Papua New Guinean and Australian secondary schools to build education and leadership skills and deepen interpersonal and institutional links.

These initiatives and funding commitments are just part of the ongoing Australia-Papua New Guinea connection. For more on Australia's relationship with PNG, click [here](#) use the QR Code below.





# NEW PARLIAMENT, NEW APPOINTMENTS

I have been re-appointed as the Chair of both the Joint Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade (JSCFADT) and also as Chair of the Senate Standing Committee on Environment and Communications, in addition to sitting as a member of the Parliamentary Joint Committee on Intelligence and Security (PJCIS).

A focus for the JSCFADT in the short term is to follow up the recent visit of PNG Prime Minister James Marape and Australia's commitment to assist with further development of the PNG Defence capability.

The Committee will engage with our counterpart oversight committee in the PNG Parliament in respect to the proposed engagement covering training and infrastructure investment such as the naval base at Lombrum, Manus Island.

The Attorney-General has referred an inquiry to the PJCIS to consider the impact of the exercise of law enforcement and intelligence powers on the freedom of the press.

Our focus will be to ensure the right balance is struck between a free

press and granting our national security agencies the power they need to conduct their business of keeping Australians safe.

The Senate Standing Committee on Environment and Communications currently has three inquiries for consideration, one of which is to examine the Murray-Darling Basin Commission of Inquiry Bill 2019.

This Greens bill seeks to establish a Royal Commission-like inquiry into the management of the Murray-Darling Basin water resources and related matters.



I spoke in the Senate Chamber this month on this proposition (*pictured, above*), and how I believe that the Murray Darling Basin Plan requires robust compliance checking and transparency but that from a South Australian perspective, we need

action rather than measures that would undermine the plan. With SA irrigators receiving 100% of allocations last year and expected to do so again in 2019, I noted during my speech:

“I come back to the point that the evidence that the plan, even in a time when there is great stress on the river, particularly in its northern regions—in South Australia, the state with most to lose if this plan collapses – has 100 per cent allocation for its irrigators because the plan is in place. By all means, we should continue to implement and improve, but we certainly won’t be supporting the waste of millions of dollars that would come from yet another inquiry into the Murray-Darling Basin Plan.”

I will provide you with updates on the inquiries before these Committees as they develop, in future editions of the Fawcett Flyer.

## OUT AND ABOUT



The Minister for Environment, the Hon Sussan Ley MP joined me and South Australian Member for Colton Matt Cowdrey at Breakout Creek Wetlands to announce \$2 million delivered to revitalise valuable River Torrens wetlands through the Environment Restoration Fund.



I joined staff and students at Calvary Lutheran College in Morphett Vale to open their refurbished learning areas. The upgrade was funded through a combination of a \$630,000 block grant from the Federal Government and funding from Lutheran Education.



Farmers and their communities across the country are again battling challenging circumstances through ongoing drought. I spoke to journalists in Canberra about the Federal Liberal Government's \$5 billion landmark Future Drought Fund and was pleased to see it pass the Parliament this month.



Little did I know that accepting an invitation to speak at the Mt Barker RSL annual luncheon on Sunday would lead to an impromptu reunion for my old unit ARDU (the RAAF Aircraft Research and Development Unit).

Lindsay Campbell (President of the Mt Barker RSL) served in ARDU as the Operations Officer when I was the Commanding Officer at RAAF Edinburgh while June Perry served at ARDU as her first WRAAF posting at Laverton Vic in 1957.



I visited Osborne Naval Shipyard last month, with Defence Minister Senator the Hon Linda Reynolds to observe the progress made on the Offshore Patrol Vessels and Hunter Class Frigate shipyards currently under construction. Our Government's \$200 billion Defence investment, which includes the \$90 billion Naval Shipbuilding Plan, is creating thousands of jobs in this precinct and will continue to create jobs over the next decade.

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