



THE FAWCETT FLYER

SEPTEMBER 2019



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The US-AUS alliance has been in the spotlight this month with Prime Minister Scott Morrison's acceptance of an invitation from US President Donald Trump for a state visit including meetings and functions at the White House.

In the 100 years since American and Australian soldiers fought side-by-side at the Battle of Hamel, our two nations have been inextricably linked through the shared belief in freedom, security and human flourishing. The strong relationship we share was demonstrated through President Trump's comments at the official welcome:

"Today we celebrate the long, cherished and unwavering friendship between the United States and Australia... Today, we vow to carry on the righteous legacy of our exceptional alliance."

Australians can be proud that across governments of both political persuasions on both sides of the alliance, our nations have played a key role over the last century in defending prosperity, and fostering security and stability around the globe.

Consultation has recently closed on the draft Religious Discrimination

Amendment Bill, released by the Attorney-General's Department.

While I believe the draft legislation still has some areas that can be strengthened, the Bill is a significant step forward from the exemptions-based approach which has been embedded in Australia's other discrimination laws. The legislation has been drafted as a positive shield to protect religious individuals and communities, not as a sword to wield.

This month's Fawcett Flyer includes the launch of a new sailing initiative for ADF veterans (pg. 3), the long term plan for Australia's health care system (pg. 5), a summary of Australia's relationship with our neighbours Samoa (pg. 6), and more.

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

**SENATOR
DAVID
FAWCETT**





It was my pleasure to represent the Minister for Education, the Hon Dan Tehan MP, at the opening of the newly constructed outdoor learning area at Temple Christian College recently (*pictured, above*).

This new covered outdoor facility will benefit not just the students enrolled in the school this year, but a generation of future students in the local community.

The new facility at Temple Christian College was supported by a \$405,000 funding contribution from the Federal Government.

This year under the Capital Grants Program, the Federal Liberal Government has committed \$11.2 million for 14 school projects across South Australia.

A key priority of our Government

is providing Australian children with the best education possible, and we have demonstrated this by increasing funding for education every single year since forming government in 2013.

This annual increase over the last six years represents an increase in funding of greater than 60% per student since 2013.

The Capital Grants Program is a \$703 million commitment which provides funding for non-government schools to improve their capital infrastructure.

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



ADF VETERANS SETTING A NEW COURSE



I recently joined with the Premier, Steven Marshall, in launching a new veterans' rehabilitation program called "Setting a New Course" (*pictured, above*).

This program is designed to assist current and former Australian Defence Force personnel move beyond injuries sustained during their service by participating in the sport of sailing.

As a former test pilot with over 20 years of military experience, I am familiar with the experience of many veterans who have been impacted by their service.

Having been involved in sailing since my teenage years, I have an appreciation for the benefits of the mindfulness and team building experienced through operating a sailing vessel.

It has been rewarding to work

with South Australia's ex-service organisation The Road Home and the Cruising Yacht Club of South Australia to deliver this pilot program which offers an initial intake of five South Australian veterans.

The course is possible because of sponsorship by defence industry firms, Northrop Grumman Raytheon Australia and Saab Australia, as well as sailing apparel producer Musto.

Sailing offers the small-team environment coupled with both the intellectual and physical challenges which will be familiar to veterans, and pairs it with benefits of being outdoors.

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



PLANNING AUSTRALIA'S 4 LONG TERM HEALTH

Health is a fundamental consideration for all Australians, who rightly want their government to be continuously striving to improve our health network.

While our system is not without its weaknesses, its standard as 2nd in the world for overall quality and 1st for clinical outcomes is a solid foundation upon which to build.

In August, Health Minister Greg Hunt unveiled the Government's \$104 billion Long Term National Health Plan to deliver a number of core improvements to the national healthcare system.

The Plan is supported by four key pillars: guaranteeing Medicare and improving access to medicines, improving hospitals, prioritising mental health and investing in medical research.

The Plan will deliver a number of targeted programs across Australia.

This includes the National Children's Mental Health Strategy, which provides a framework for preventing mental illness and ensuring that neuropsychiatric conditions are

diagnosed and treated early to prevent lifelong disability.

A 10 year plan will also be rolled out to build a broader network of adult mental health centres to provide varied or intensive support and reduce the stigma traditionally associate with mental illness.

The Indigenous Preventative Health Plan will focus on increasing critical health checks to end preventable blindness by 2025 and decrease widespread conditions such as heart disease.

Important hospital reforms for both private and public hospitals, plus over 65 health programmes to support cancer patients and research are also among the key policies.

The delivery of Australia's Long Term National Health Plan is a significant step forward for Australia's healthcare system. For more on the Plan, click [here](#) or use the QR Code below.



SPRING BRINGS HEALTH PROGRESS

September brought about a number of important health announcements.

The new SAiGEN biomedical research and cancer institute, as the result of a Federal Government investment of \$80 million, will open in Adelaide to provide new and more effective approaches to diagnosing and treating cancer.

In addition to the new SAiGEN facility, \$19 million in research funding was committed for 16 medical research projects grants in South Australia. One of which will see \$2 million invested in a University of Adelaide project using early pregnancy screening tools to identify factors causing life-threatening complications in pregnancy.

Figures from the Department of Health reveal that GP bulk billing rates under Medicare hit a record high of 86.2% for the 2018/19 financial year. This means that more Australians are accessing health care without out-of-pocket expense.

The NDIS also passed a significant milestone in September with

30,000 South Australians now benefitting from their NDIA assessed support plans. It is great to see that predominately those on plans believe they have received appropriate support with 85% of South Australian participants saying they had a good or very good planning experience.

This month, \$27 million was invested to provide affordable access to three new medicine listings on the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme.

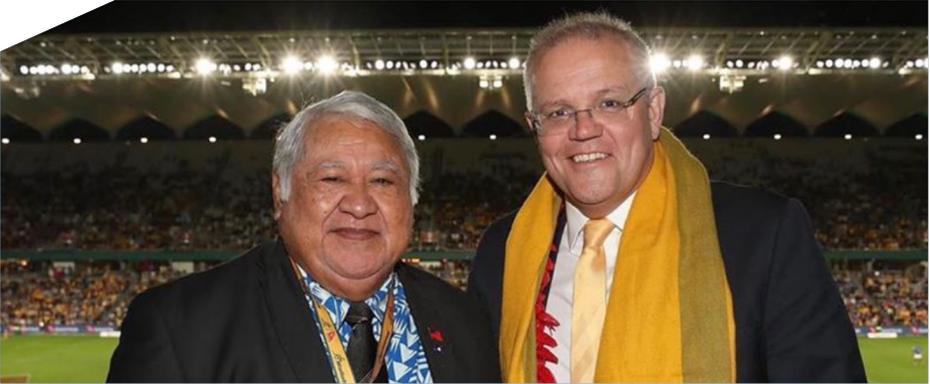
These three new medicines include those prescribed to Australians who are living with complications following stroke, those fighting cancer, and to support the enhanced response to syphilis diagnoses.

Also announced this month, the Government will establish an expert National Taskforce and commission a National Action Plan to improve the diagnosis, treatment and understanding of blood cancers.

The Leukaemia Foundation will support the development of the Action Plan, made possible by the Federal Government's \$150,000 funding commitment.

DEVELOPING AUSTRALIA'S SAMOA CONNECTION

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Known for producing significant Rugby talent, Samoa is one of our Pacific Island neighbours – a group of nine small islands, located northwest of Fiji and Tonga. Despite boasting a population of just 192,000 people, Samoa is the fifth most populated Pacific Island nation behind Papua New Guinea, Fiji, The Solomon Islands and Vanuatu.

The close relationship between Australia and Samoa is best demonstrated by the statistic that there are 75,000 current Australian residents with Samoan ancestry. With such a significant community of ancestral Samoans living in Australia, the bond between our two nations is apparent.

The tourism industry is an important facet of Samoa's economy and Australians contribute significantly

to its success, with over 33,000 Australians having visited Samoa in 2017.

Our trade relationship with Samoa is vital to the island nation as we ranked at number 4 and 5 on their most significant export and import partners in 2018, respectively. In 2018, the trade between our two countries totalled a combined \$43 million, and Australia was the recipient of one in every 10 products that Samoa exported from its shores.

As part of this year's Pacific Islands Forum in Tuvalu, Samoan Prime Minister Mr Tuilaepa Aiono Sailele Malielegaoi (pictured) welcomed the Australian Government's \$500 million investment to assist Pacific Island nations to mitigate damage which occurs due to

natural disasters and deal with the environmental effects of a shifting climate.

Australia provided \$35.5 million in aid last financial year to Samoa. Funded through Australia's aid budget, the Direct Aid Program is available to Samoan citizens – a small grants program equipped to work with local communities, in developing countries, on projects that reduce poverty and achieve sustainable development.

Australia's Seasonal Worker Programme is a success among the Samoan people. The Program allows Pacific islanders the opportunity to work as short term employees in rural and regional areas to support Australian businesses to meet their seasonal harvest needs. Between 2012 and 2017, 818 Samoans participated in the Programme.

Australia contributes significantly to security and stability throughout the Pacific, and our support to Samoa in development of their first National Security Policy in 2018 makes up part of this contribution. Australia also signed a Partnership for Security with Samoa in 2010. Samoa recently took delivery of a Pacific Patrol Vessel, thanks to the

Australian Government's \$2 billion investment in the Pacific Maritime Security Program.

Last month, the Nafanua II Guardian Class Patrol vessel was presented to Samoan dignitaries to support security operations throughout the Pacific. 21 larger and more capable Guardian-class Patrol vessels are being gifted to 12 Pacific Island countries from now until 2023 to replace the aging current Patrol boats.

The role and presence of the Australian Defence Force throughout the Pacific has been felt as we aid Pacific nations in coordinating their response to illegal maritime activity. In addition to our ADF co-operation with Samoa, the Royal Australian Navy contributes full-time maritime surveillance and technical advisers to provide support for the Pacific Patrol Vessel and develop indigenous maritime surveillance and response capabilities.

For a summary of Australia's assistance provided to Samoa, click [here](#) or use the QR Code below.



Throughout September, there was an abundance of Committee related activity.

The Parliamentary Joint Committee on Intelligence and Security held two public hearings on 19 and 20 September relating to the ongoing freedom of the press inquiry. The committee heard from a number of witnesses, including representatives from the Department of Defence, Department of Home Affairs, the Law Council of Australia and Australian National University, who provided a broad range of views to assist with their inquiry.

Giving the Committee time to consider these testimonies, the reporting date for this inquiry is now 28 November 2019. The committee is also continuing our review of the Australian Citizenship Amendment (Citizenship Cessation) Bill 2019. Written submissions can be made until Monday 14 October 2019.

In September, I travelled to Taiwan with a parliamentary delegation from Australia to discuss trade opportunities. I also had the privilege of meeting with incoming parliamentary delegations from France, Japan and Samoa, in addition to the UK Secretary of

Trade, Elizabeth Truss MP. The importance of the UK-Australia relationship was discussed and Ms Truss noted negotiations with Australia were a high priority.

In my role as Chair of the Senate Standing Legislation Committee on Environment and Communications, there is a full agenda. Between the Legislation and Reference Committees, there are currently 7 inquiries in various stages of progress. The inquiries into Press Freedom, the Coal-Fired Power Funding Prohibition Bill 2017, and the Competition and Consumer Amendment (Prevention of Exploitation of Indigenous Cultural Expressions) Bill 2019 all have separate public hearings coming up in November.

Two new inquiries, into packaging and plastics as well as the seismic testing impact on the marine environment, have been referred to the Committee this month. To track any inquiries before committees, click [here](#) or use the QR Code below.



9 OUT AND ABOUT



In Canberra, I met with UK Secretary of State for International Trade The Hon Liz Truss MP to discuss opportunities for enhanced economic and security relations between Australia and the UK post-Brexit. Ms Truss noted that a UK-Aus trade deal was “one of our absolute priorities”.



Launching “Setting a New Course” - a new veterans’ rehabilitation program utilising the the mindfulness and team building experienced through operating a sailing vessel (*more on pg. 3*).



Privileged to speak at Temple Christian College’s annual Thanksgiving Chapel, which included the official opening of their new Covered Outdoor Learning Area, partially funded by a Federal Government grant (*more on pg. 2*).



General Zubair Mahmood Hayat, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee in the Pakistan Defence Force, and I met recently in Canberra.

Our close engagement with Pakistan supports ADF operations in Afghanistan and promotes regional security.



With Minister for Industry, Science and Technology, Karen Andrews MP and Member for Boothby, Nicolle Flint MP at the 8th Annual Space Forum and 19th Australian Space Research Conference in Adelaide. The SA Space sector has boomed over the last two years, rising from just 8 businesses to now 34.



I met with the newly appointed Chief of Naval Staff for the Republic of India, Admiral Singh in Sydney. Australia has a strong bilateral relationship with India across many facets of our society and this meeting provided a good opportunity to discuss further opportunities for enhancing the security cooperation that underpins the stability of the rules based order in the Indo-Pacific region.



While on the Yorke Peninsula for Yorke Peninsula Field Days, it was good to meet up with Grain Producers SA CEO, Caroline Rhodes. It was also good to get direct feedback from grain growers and pastoralists on the current conditions and outlook. Many were positive about the \$25 million investment to repair the SA Dog Fence - \$10 million each from the Federal and State governments.

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