



# THE FAWCETT FLYER

February / March 2018



The year started strongly for the Government, with national employment figures showing that our policies to support small business encouraged the creation of over 403,000 jobs in 2017, over  $\frac{3}{4}$  of which were full time. For me the year started with simultaneous work on 4 separate national security bills dealing with issues such as foreign espionage & interference and the protection of critical infrastructure.

The sad developments around Barnaby Joyce and his personal circumstances were a tragedy for his family and a significant distraction for the Government. In time, I'm confident that the Government will regain the confidence of the Australian people by continuing to demonstrate that the fundamentals of national security and economic growth are in good hands, despite the media focus of the past few weeks.

In South Australia, I've continued my work with rural health, running a number of public forums and professional round-table meetings in conjunction with my federal and state colleagues and local candidates. From Mt Gambier with Tony Pasin and Craig Marsh, to Murray Bridge with Adrian Pederick, Ceduna with Rowan Ramsey and Peter Treloar and in Peterborough we've heard a consistent message that the Weatherill Labor approach of reducing services and control in regional areas is hurting communities. You'll find more information on these visits and my work in the community from page 7.

As Chair of the Foreign Affairs Defence and Trade Committee, I've been working with sub-committee Chairs to establish their inquiry program for the year.

The Trade sub-committee has just commenced an inquiry into non-tariff

barriers and measures that Australian agencies and industry bodies can take to optimise the benefit achieved from free trade agreements.

The Defence sub-committee continues with its inquiry into a more sustained, bi-partisan approach to strategic defence planning while the Foreign Affairs sub-committee is examining Australia's relationship with the Pacific. Rising tensions in the South China Sea and the increasing attempts by other nations to bolster their influence amongst our Pacific neighbours is a strategic risk to maintaining a near region that is stable and growing in prosperity under a rules-based order.

Australia has continued to prove that it is a dependable regional neighbour with Defence deployments in support of disaster relief in both Tonga and PNG over recent weeks. I've also been working with the Department of Foreign

Affairs to facilitate the deployment on a RAAF C17 of an unmanned aerial surveillance capability developed by an Australian company that achieved a world first in conducting detailed damage assessment across Tonga. Funding for this surveillance was provided by the World Bank.

As always, feel free to contact me if you would like further information on any issue covered in the Fawcett Flyer or if you would like me to address your branch, SEC or FEC.

## SENATOR DAVID FAWCETT





## STRENGTHENING THE RANKS OF THE COALITION

The Liberal party room has had some new additions in the past few weeks with the arrival of Senators Jim Molan and Lucy Gichuhi. Senator Molan, a former Major General in the Australian Army fills the place of Nationals Senator Fiona Nash, while Lucy Gichuhi steps into the Liberal team after sitting on the cross bench.

As a former Army officer, I was honoured to escort Senator Molan into the Senate chamber to be sworn in. I warmly welcome Senators Molan and Gichuhi, as well as Richard Colbeck who takes the place of former Senate President Stephen Parry. The vacancy caused by the departure of former Senator Brandis will soon be filled by the Queensland Liberal National Party.

With the full complement returned, the Government can now press ahead with our legislative agenda, turning especially to better protecting our nation from foreign espionage and influence.

# IN THE MEDIA

I made the case for the Government's Defence Exports Strategy on Sky News with David Speers, highlighting that the nature and size of Australia's domestic defence purchasing was not of a scale or consistency to sustain a large scale industry and the associated jobs.

Key elements of Australia's defence industry need to export in order to be sustainable, so that they can deliver advanced capability to Defence and sustain jobs.

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Government procurement wasn't often enough or big enough to actually sustain our industry base, therefore we had to develop exports in certain areas to sustain the industry base that we need.

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You can watch my interview here: <https://youtu.be/CthcxQ7NzoQ>



# DEFENCE EXPORTS STRATEGY

Having been a longstanding advocate for industry to be treated as a fundamental input to defence capability, I am pleased that the Government has recently announced an ambitious plan to boost Australian defence exports and drive industry, investment and job creation through the Defence Export Strategy.

In 2015, I chaired the Defence Subcommittee of the Joint Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade, which recommended as part of the 2015 'Principles and practice – Australian defence industry and exports' inquiry, that support for defence exports should be viewed as a core defence responsibility. Australia's ability to manufacture defence materiel would then be viewed in the same way as training, personnel, doctrine, and facilities.

The Committee also investigated barriers and impediments to growing Australia's Defence exports, and recommended that the Government develop a defence exports strategy.

The Government's Defence Export Strategy includes a number of new initiatives and investments, including:

- A new Australian Defence Export Office
- A new Australian Defence Export Advocate
- A \$3.8 billion Defence Export Facility
- \$20 million per year to implement the Defence Export Strategy and support defence industry exports.

This substantial improvement to the way Defence operates in conjunction with industry is a great example of successful policy outcomes arising from the thorough investigative process that Parliament's committee system provides.

# PROTECTING OUR NATIONAL SECURITY

Recent developments around the world have demonstrated that Australia cannot afford to be blasé when it comes to foreign interference and espionage.

The circumstances surrounding the exit of former Senator Sam Dastyari make it clear that Australia is a target of foreign powers who are attempting to undermine our democratic institutions.

In order to combat these attempts, the Turnbull Government is introducing historic legislative reforms targeting foreign interference and espionage. These reforms are as a result of the comprehensive review undertaken by former Attorney General George Brandis.

As it stands, our existing espionage offences are narrow and difficult to prosecute. The new legislation will criminalise covertly acting on

behalf of, or cooperating with, a foreign power, against the national interest. A separate bill dealing with political transparency will require those acting on behalf of a foreign entity to influence our political processes to publicly declare that fact.

This is in addition to banning foreign political donations.

Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull has tasked the PJCIS with investigating and reporting on the proposed legislation to ensure that it is able to effectively deter and punish these activities.

As a member of this committee I see achieving the balance between giving agencies the powers they need and preserving the freedoms of our liberal democracy as being an important element of our work.

I will keep you updated as these enquiries progress.



## MEETING THE HEALTH NEEDS OF RURAL COMMUNITIES

Bridging the gap of health inequality between the city and regions is one of my key policy priorities. As part of my ongoing advocacy in this area, I recently hosted Minister Ken Wyatt, and Stephen Wade MLC, the state Shadow Minister for Health and Wellbeing on a tour of regional health facilities in South Australia.

As part of this tour, we visited facilities in Ceduna and Peterborough to discuss aged care and indigenous health issues in the region with local MPs Rowan Ramsey and Peter Treloar.

This follows on from my previous meeting with Zell Dodd, the CEO of the

Ceduna Koonibba Aboriginal Health Service, where we discussed Federal support for regional indigenous health services, including workforce shortages, training needs and mental health services.

I was pleased to see Minister Wyatt officially launch the Ceduna Connected Beginnings program which is to be run by the Ceduna Koonibba Aboriginal Health Service. The first five years of life is a critical time that helps shape every child's future and is fundamental to Closing the Gap in health equality. Connected Beginnings links health care and early childhood education; providing health checks to women, babies and children

up to school age.

Earlier in February, I convened several roundtables and a community forum with Tony Pasin MP and Craig Marsh, the Liberal Candidate for Mount Gambier.

I was pleased to introduce the new National Rural Health Commissioner, Prof Paul Worley to leading advocates from the Limestone Coast region. Paul has been a rural GP in South Australia and has a detailed understanding of the issues caused by our demography.

As I have highlighted in previous editions of the *Fawcett Flyer*, our population density in regional SA compounds service delivery problems. Even our largest regional centres often cannot meet the critical mass needed to accommodate some full-time specialist services, so our regional patients are heavily dependent on visiting clinicians or travelling to Adelaide to access health services.

Representatives from the

Royal Australian College of General Practitioners and the Australian College of Rural and Remote Medicine recently met with Professor Worley and agreed to work together to lead the development of a national framework for rural generalism.

This framework would ensure that medical professionals in rural areas are able to perform as GPs, specialists, and emergency doctors to better serve the needs of their community.

I am encouraged by the positive response to Federal initiatives such as the focus on creating rural generalist pathways and the warm reception for Prof Worley.

At a state level, I am also confident that a Marshall Liberal Government will address rural workforce shortages and training pathways for rural generalists through the rural policy platform announced by my colleague Stephen Wade MLC.



## ON THE CAMPAIGN TRAIL

The mood amongst voters has shifted considerably over the past few weeks as we approach the state election on March 17. Voters were disenchanted with both major parties and leaning towards Xenophon when I visited the seat of Narrunga on the Yorke Peninsula to help Fraser Ellis on his campaign some weeks ago. Joined by Rowan Ramsey MP, Terry Stephens MLC, and Nicola Centofanti, we hit the streets of Moonta to talk directly to residents.

There was a noticeable change when I held a listening post at Woodcroft Shopping Village in my paired electorate of Kingston to discuss matters of importance like high energy prices. Voters on the ground there had warmed to the State Liberals' strong plan for real change. Hurtle Vale candidate Aaron Duff, joined me on the day as he continues his campaign against Labor and SA-Best. Many residents were happy to see Aaron at their local shopping centre after previously meeting him on their doorstep and at various other community events.

The prevailing mood had further shifted at my aged care forum at the Modbury Bowling Club in the Federal seat of Makin. It was immediately apparent that voters are ready for change and increasingly open to electing a Marshall

Liberal Government. I was pleased to have state candidates Dr Richard Harvey, Paula Leuthen, and Luigi Mesisca join us at the forum and be warmly welcomed by members of their community.

Aged care is a rapidly expanding sector, and the safety, welfare and quality of care for our senior Australians is a high priority for the government as we invest a record \$100 billion over the next 5 years.

Given the electoral environment we must not only focus on winning seats from Labor, but also sure up our own seats from the Xenophon threat. Speaking to locals at Adrian Pederick's fundraiser at Wellington Lodge it was clear that Adrian is seen as a hard-working local member and a strong advocate for primary producers.

I have also recently met with Brianna Casey, Foodbank Australia's CEO and Greg Pattinson, Foodbank SA's CEO to discuss food security concerns. The Australian Government estimates that food loss and food waste costs the Australian economy \$20 billion per year. Foodbank provides support to vulnerable people through a number of food distribution points throughout SA.



WITH MINISTER WYATT AND MAKIN FEC PRESIDENT GRAHAM REYNOLDS AT MY MAKIN AGED CARE FORUM.



Deputy Government Whip In The Senate

Chair, Joint Standing Committee On Foreign Affairs, Defence And Trade

Parliamentary Joint Committee On Intelligence And Security

Joint Standing Committee On Treaties

Senate Standing Committees On Foreign Affairs, Defence And Trade

Senate Standing Committees On Legal And Constitutional Affairs

Senate Standing Committee On Appropriations, Staffing And Security

Senate Standing Committee For Selection Of Bills

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