



TASMANIAN Business



MAY 2022

Established 1981

REPORTER

TASMANIA'S LEADING BUSINESS PUBLICATION. CIRCULATION 12,000 QUARTERLY

A better way of working

Pages 8&9

State Budget warns of a rough ride – Pages 4-5



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MY SAY

Michael Bailey, TCCI CEO



Opportunity for a reset

THE Federal Election is an opportunity for the government and business community to reset.

Liberal Governments in Hobart and Canberra deserve to be congratulated for the way in which they have worked together to protect Tasmanians and Tasmanian businesses from the ravages of the Covid pandemic. There are many businesses in Tasmania that simply would not have survived without the support and assistance provided.

However, elections are an opportunity to look forward and the community has made it quite clear that they believe the Labor Party offers the best approach.

While the TCCI is an apolitical organisation that is here solely to represent the interests of the business community without fear or favour, we do look forward to working with the incoming Albanese Labor Government as they implement an ambitious agenda for Tasmania.

Their commitment to contribute to the upgrade of the Hobart Airport runway is a game-changer for

Tasmania. It has the potential to help turbo-charge freight logistics and exports, which will be a massive boost for primary producers. It will cement Tasmania as the Antarctic Gateway and help build defence industry capacity in the state.

It will have massive benefits for our tourism sector and could pave the way for direct flights to and from South East Asia and for existing international flights to New Zealand.

Labor is also going to support the hundreds of jobs at Nyrstar, invest in significant upgrades to irrigation and expand health services in the state.

At a national level, tackling cost of living issues is vital and improving productivity will help businesses.

It's an ambitious agenda and one that the business community supports. However you voted at the election, there's one thing that unites us: we all want the incoming Albanese Government to be the best possible government it can be for Tasmania.

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State bucks national trend

AMANDA LOVELL

TASMANIA has bucked the national voting trend at the recent Federal election with a swing towards the Liberal Party.

Liberals Gavin Pearce and Bridget Archer are both expected to be returned in Braddon and Bass, respectively.

In Lyons the Liberal's Susie Bower challenged incumbent Labor MP Brian Mitchell with the result expected to come down to preferences and postal votes.

In the south, independent Andrew Wilkie was comfortably returned in Clark while Labor's Julie Collins won her seat of Franklin.

In the senate the Jacquie Lambie Network's Tammy Tyrell was expected to oust sitting veteran Liberal Eric Abetz.

Liberals Jonno Duniam and Wendy Askew will both be returned along with Labor's Anne Urquhart and Helen Polley and the Green's Peter Whish-Wilson.

The Greens and the Jacqui Lambie Network are expected to hold the balance of power in the Federal Upper House.

Labor pledged during the election campaign to work closely with states, territories, industry groups and communities to end the uncertainty that surrounds when and the extent of support small businesses are able to access in a crisis.

The ALP also promised to ensure small businesses were paid on time to sustain growth across the economy with a mechanism to ensure payment within 30 days.

Other key Labor promises included:

- Maximising small business participation in Commonwealth procurement providing greater opportunities for business and Australian jobs.

- Provide an environment for businesses to thrive through Labor's Start-up Year initiative, Fee-Free TAFE to address skills shortages, and Cheaper Child Care to remove barriers to returning to work.

- Expanding full-fibre NBN access to 1.5 million premises. Under Labor, 90 per cent of Australians in the fixed line footprint — over 10 million premises — will have access to world-class gigabit speeds by 2025.

- Make unfair contract terms illegal so small businesses can negotiate fairer agreements with large partners.

- Drive a genuine collaboration with small businesses and government to reduce the time small businesses spend doing taxes, cut paperwork and target support.

- Reduce small business transaction costs at the point of payment with a clear timeline for implementing least cost routing or similar.

Dairy giant signs up to seaweed solution



Annandale Dairy owner Richard Gardner with Sea Forests Sam Elsom.

ONE of Tasmania's most innovative climate-change businesses continues to forge ahead with an alternative feed for cattle.

Sea Forest, based in Triabunna, was recently named the 2022 winner of Telstra's Best of Business Award, Embracing Innovation.

In selecting Sea Forest, the judges highlighted the business's world-class innovation in science, manufacturing and supply-chain management making direct and measurable impact on a globally significant problem — climate change.

It has also signed a deal with dairy giant Fonterra to expand farm trials of methane-reducing Asparagopsis seaweed.

Sea Forest has designed and manufactured a unique method to produce Asparagopsis seaweed for animal feed for milk, beef and wool producers.

The addition of this seaweed additive to animal feed reduces methane emissions from livestock by 98 per cent and enhances health and growth.

The facility grows the seaweed in land-based tanks and in the nearby bay depending on the lifecycle stage of the plant.

Fonterra General Manager of Sustainability APAC Jack Holden said the company's grass-fed farming model made Fonterra one of the most carbon efficient producers of dairy in the world.

"However, we have an aspiration to be net zero by 2050 and are investing in R&D and partnerships to help find a solution to reducing

methane emissions," Mr Holden said.

CSIRO research has shown Asparagopsis seaweed has the potential to reduce emissions by over 80 per cent in laboratory trials.

"As with all methane solutions we're trialling, what we need to find out is whether we can use this supplement in a way that is safe for cows, safe for consumers and to ensure that there is no impact on milk taste or quality," Mr Holden said.

"Over the past two years, 900 dairy cows on a farm in Australia have been fed small amounts of the seaweed supplement and the results have been promising at each stage.

"We are now expanding the trial across three additional farms, to test the supplement's application at a commercial-scale.

"If the trial proves successful, we have agreed with Sea Forest that Fonterra farmers will have first access to the commercial Asparagopsis solution."

Sea Forest Founder and CEO Sam Elsom said last year the company bought an additional 30ha farm as it dramatically increased its production of the seaweed supplement.

"Asparagopsis is a common seaweed native to the waters of Tasmania and New Zealand, and we're the first in the world to cultivate it at a commercial scale through both marine and land-based aquaculture," Mr Elsom said.

The business had so far harvested 100 kilograms and has plans to ramp up to more than 300 tonnes of the dried Asparagopsis annually.

State benefits in India deal

AMANDA LOVELL

A NEW free trade agreement with India is expected to pave the way for increased exports from Tasmania into one of the world's largest economies.

The biggest winners are expected to include wool, wine, cherries and rock lobsters.

The Australia-India Economic Cooperation and Trade Agreement will see tariffs eliminated on more than 85 per cent of Australian goods exports to India (valued at more than \$12.6 billion a year) rising to almost 91 per cent (valued at \$13.4 billion) over 10 years.

Australian households and businesses will also benefit, with 96 per cent of Indian goods entering Australia duty-free.

In 2020, India was Australia's seventh largest trading partner, with two-way trade valued at \$24.3 billion, and sixth largest goods and services export market, valued at \$16.9 billion.

Last year Tasmania exported \$6 million of wine and Tasmania was Australia's largest exporter to the world of cherries, highlighting the potential for the India deal.

Tariffs on fresh rock lobsters will be eliminated immediately while those applied to frozen rock lobster and Atlantic salmon will be phased out over seven years.

Karl Krause, president of the Tasmanian Rock Lobster Fisherman's Association said the industry had been trying to crack new markets following the collapse of its long-term China market.

"This latest announcement of a free trade deal with the Republic of India is simply outstanding news for us," Mr Krause said.

"Up until a few days ago there existed a huge 30 per cent tariff on our lobsters at the border into India.

"We could offer them product at say \$90 per kilogram but that meant they were really paying \$117 per kilogram due to the tariff."

Locally produced wool will also attract zero tariffs when exported to India.

Australia provides 57 percent of India's wool imports.

Nutrien Ag Solution's Tasmanian wool manager Stewart Raine said it was a great opportunity for Tasmanian wool growers to head to India on a trade mission to cement new markets and partnerships.

"India has long been an important customer for Australia's wool industry accounting for seven per cent of the annual clip," Mr Raine said.

Other key Tasmanian exports set to benefit include wine, sheep meat, cherries and tin ore.

State facing a rough Growth to slow as net debt balloons

AMANDA LOVELL

TASMANIA is headed for tougher economic times with growth slowing and net debt ballooning over the next four years.

New Treasurer Michael Ferguson has delivered his first State Budget promising to invest in the future and build on the gains made so far.

But the Government will have to balance an increasingly challenging fiscal environment as it works to deliver fully on its promises.

Tax reform hasn't been ruled out by the Treasurer but he did say there would be no wholesale privatisation of Government assets.

"There are no accidents in this budget, it is a very deliberate budget that invests in more public services, that helps us meet demand but is also responsible budget management," Mr Ferguson said.

"We are preparing for any changes in the broader landscape."

The Budget papers show net debt will double from this year to next to just under \$3 billion.

This figure skyrockets to more than \$5 billion by 2025-26 and the burden of servicing that debt will also cost the Government more.

There's no clear plan out of debt and Mr Ferguson says he's open minded.

"I am not playing a game of ruling things in or out, we will be prudent, sensible financial managers but pragmatic.

"We are well prepared, we have a plan and that plan is working."

At the same time Tasmania's economy is predicted to slow with this year's growth of 3.75 per cent reducing to 2.75 percent in the coming year.

Government spending will hover just above the \$8 billion mark for the foreseeable future as income levels also remain stable. It means the state's net operating result remains \$475 million in the red next financial year before returning to a modest surplus of \$19 million in 2023-24 and \$32.2 million the following year.

The State Government is gearing up for a fight over GST revenue which will reduce over the next four years. The Government's

relying on receiving no-worse-off guarantee payments of around \$247.2 million to boost its coffers although this relief is due to expire by 2026-27.

The Government is also likely to have to find extra dollars to fund a pay rise to public sector workers who are expected to demand more than the 2.5 percent allowed for in the budget.

"This is not a warning but a reality check that every one per cent above that will cost the budget a third of a billion dollars," Mr Ferguson said.

For 2022-23 Mr Ferguson has outlined an \$8.3 billion dollar budget which focuses spending on health, housing and infrastructure with schools, roads and protecting women and children at the centre. Health continues to swallow the lions' share of the budget now accounting for over a third of expenditure.

The Government has also moved to address concern over the rising cost of living providing \$305 million in concessions to help Tasmanians with the cost of their water and sewerage, electricity and council rates.

"The world is currently witnessing a volatile economic environment," Mr Ferguson said.

"The Government understands the pressure this places on household budgets."

Employment growth is forecast to moderate and grow by just 1.25 per cent in 2022-23 compared to this year's figure of 2.25 per cent. In the following three years it will stay around one per cent.

The unemployment rate will remain steady around 4.25 per cent over the next four years with 11,000 jobs to be created.

Major spending allocations include \$166 million for health services across the State, with \$50 million of that meeting demand for beds in public hospitals.

There's \$2.7 billion over the forward estimates for roads and bridges, including major projects like the Bridgewater Bridge as well as \$313.7 million for schools and skills.

Government businesses and entities are set to receive a more than \$730 million investment.



Labor slams Budget

REBECCA WHITE
Labor Leader

THE shock resignation of former Treasurer Peter Gutwein has exposed the lack of experience among those who remain in the Liberal Government to manage the budget.

This is demonstrated by the sea of red ink in Michael Ferguson's first Budget as Treasurer.

The Budget statements show ballooning debt, with no strategy to get it under control.

When the former Premier Peter Gutwein went to the polls a year early, he did so on the

basis of providing "stability" for Tasmania.

Of course, in the 12 months since then we've seen anything but, with the resignations of two other MPs and a third of the Cabinet gone.

In the midst of this chaos, with the Liberals focussed on their own internal divisions, they have taken their eye off managing the budget.

Meanwhile, as our population has declined two quarters in a row, the latest Business Outlook Report shows price pressures are "mounting fast" and rising living costs are placing pressure on the state's ability to attract workers.

ride



‘red ink’

While the cost of living soars and Tasmanians struggle to make ends meet, the knock-on effect to business is without question.

You can’t spend what you don’t have and people who can’t afford to house or feed their families can’t afford to support local businesses.

That’s why Michael Ferguson’s first State Budget is not good enough – particularly for a government whose record of failing to deliver is clear.

Deer, salmon initiatives

A TEN-year plan for the salmon industry and roll out of the Wild Fallow Deer Management Plan are among key initiatives for primary producers and the agriculture sector in this year’s State Budget.

It includes \$377,000 toward the development of a new 10-year Salmon Plan allowing industry and the community to identify new long-term actions that support a vision for a sustainable industry, which continues to support Tasmanian jobs, businesses and communities and \$400,000 for the Shell-MAP Industry Market Access Program to continue to enhance Tasmania’s reputation for quality seafood and create stronger regional economies.

The Government has also allocated \$1.9 million over four years to resource the implementation of the Wild Fallow Deer Management Plan, including support for existing deer farmers to market and showcase their products and \$535,000 from the Tasmanian Government for the National Water Grid Authority Science Program to support the Tasmanian Rural Water Use Strategy to encourage the environmentally conscious, sustainable use of water and promote new opportunities for innovation and growth.

Health goes digital

HEALTH delivery will be turned on its head with a new strategy to improve links between patients, doctors, community and allied health and public and private hospitals.

The Digital Health Strategy is a \$475 million project to be rolled out over the next 10 years.

About \$150 million will be spent in the next four years on developing a digital platform which all medical professionals can access to streamline services, speed up treatment delivery and overcome excessive or unnecessary procedures.

Premier and Health Minister Jeremy Rockliff said the project would mean health specialists could seamlessly communicate and share information.

“In the first four years of funding, we will procure and trial a new centralised and secure Electronic Medical Record system and launch a statewide patient record viewer that connects all public and private health and care providers,” Mr Rockliff said.

Family violence action

A FURTHER \$12.5 million will be spent on Tasmania’s Third Family and Sexual Violence Action Plan.

The funding is for the first year of the five year Action Plan and represents a 40 per cent increase on the annual investment

under the Government’s current Action Plan. One of the key priority actions in the new Action Plan will be a commitment of increased recurrent core funding for Tasmania’s nine specialist family and sexual violence services with five year contracts to provide greater certainty and increased operational capacity to respond to demand.

Services including Engender Equality, Huon Domestic Violence Service, RAIN, Safe Choices, Yemaya, the Sexual Assault Support Service, Laurel House, the Australian Childhood Foundation and the Family Violence Counselling and Support Service, will receive additional core funding, with a total of nearly \$75 million to be provided for these services over the next five years.

Trustee turnaround

MORE THAN \$4 million has been allocated in the budget to implement the recommendations from the Independent Review into the administrative and operational practices of the Public Trustee.

There’s also an additional \$4.3 million to deliver a new Community Service Obligation (CSO) for the Public Trustee. The review conducted last year raised a number of concerns around the operation of the Public Trustee and the way clients’ cases had been dealt with.

Attorney General Elise Archer said they were working to implement the report’s 28 recommendations.

This includes progressing a clear cultural and policy shift of the Public Trustee towards a human rights and supported decision-making approach and increasing and strengthening oversight of the Public Trustee, through a revised and updated Ministerial Charter that clarifies the Government’s policy expectations and service delivery requirements for the Public Trustee.

Ms Archer said the funds would also be used to support the Public Trustee to progress improvements to its internal operational and administrative practices, reflecting the clear shift in focus to an improved and revised client and customer-centric service delivery model.

Business advocate

SMALL businesses will benefit from ongoing investment in an incubator and accelerator program as well as advocacy.

The Government has provided \$2 million to support the creation of new businesses and the success of early stage businesses through the Business Incubator and Accelerator Pilot Program. The Budget includes \$50,000 for a Small Business Advocate to work with Business Tasmania on a future-facing customer service project designed to make it easier for small businesses to focus on their own work.

Throughout the pandemic Tasmanian

businesses received more than \$165 million in support.

Building skills

THE building and construction sector will receive a further \$1 million to attract more skilled workers to the sector which has struggled under the weight of growing demand and a shortage of materials.

The Government is also funding a \$9 million “High Vis Army” to support Tasmania’s peak industry associations to develop workforce capability through a range of training and skills initiatives.

The JobTrainer Fund which, in conjunction with the Federal Government, provides low or no fee training places for people looking to upskill or retrain will receive a further \$8 million.

The Government’s reforms to TasTAFE continue to be rolled out and while the bulk of funding was allocated in last year’s budget this year there is an extra \$7 million for teacher support services and \$5 million to complete the Water and Energy Trades Centre of Excellence.

Social housing spend

A RECORD \$538 million will be spent on social and affordable housing and homelessness initiatives in this year’s budget.

The Government plans to build 10,000 new homes in the next ten years including 1500 by June next year.

The plan also includes the establishment of a new Housing Authority which will be tasked with building and acquiring homes.

To further accelerate the availability of land supply for new housing the Budget provides for a doubling of the Residential Land Rebate from \$15 million to \$30 million.

More than 1062 lots statewide have been approved under the Headworks Holiday Program with another 116 being assessed.

The Budget also invests more than \$36 million per year in specialist homelessness services including shelters and crisis accommodation.

There’s \$9.25 million to expand the Private Rental Incentives program and additional funding into the HomeShare program.

Gender statement

THIS year’s State Budget is the first to include Gender Statement which highlights policies and actions around inclusion.

It includes \$800,000 for the Tasmanian Women’s Strategy and \$740,000 to develop a Women and Girls in Sport Strategy.

There are also funds to promote women’s leadership in hospitality and increased gender and cultural diversity in the resources sector.

The Budget has provided \$2.5 million for the operation of the soon to be completed Devonport Men’s Shelter.

Bowling for Business

THE Tasmanian economy is experiencing one of the strongest recoveries that we have ever seen, and this is expected to continue and drive further growth for the state.

Despite this optimism, many small and medium enterprises (SMEs) in Tasmania remain unable to secure the funding they need for growth. Judo Bank's SME Banking Insights Report released in September 2021, found that one in four SMEs were knocked back from accessing new funding.

The survey also found that one in five SMEs surveyed reported no interaction with their bank despite the pandemic lockdowns and, even when there was some contact, only 15 per cent described those interactions as high quality.

Judo Bank customer, Launceston Lanes, was one of those businesses caught in this cycle – unable to secure the funding they needed and the service they deserved to grow their business.

Launceston Lanes is a bowling alley and arcade game complex situated in the Launceston suburb of Kings Meadows. Terry Dutton and his wife Amanda have owned and run the business for almost 10 years. Having completed an extensive refurbishment of the bowling alley in recent years, Terry and Amanda were ready to grow their business and build on their vision of creating an entertainment precinct.

They approached their bank with their expansion plans, however, after a slow process, Launceston Lanes was unsuccessful and unable to get the support they needed to fund the growth of their business.

That's when Terry and Amanda approached Judo Bank. As a dedicated SME business bank bringing back the craft of relationship banking, a Judo Relationship Banker visited their business premises



LEFT: Launceston Lanes' entertainment precinct expansion made possible through Judo's relationship-led banking approach.

I feel privileged to join a company like Judo Bank, which has the same philosophy as me regarding SME banking and the importance of always putting the customer at the forefront.
CHRIS COOPER

in person to better understand Terry and Amanda's business, their vision and the opportunity.

Through this relationship-led approach, Judo's Relationship Banker quickly recognised the opportunity for Launceston Lanes and worked with them to provide an indicative approval for the finance they required to complete their expansion plans.

To learn more about Judo Bank and how we can support you, please visit our website judo.bank or contact 13 JUDO (13 58 36) and one of our Tassie-based Judo relationship bankers will be in touch with you.



BELOW: Judo Bank's dedicated relationship bankers in Tasmania: Peter Crowe and Chris Cooper.

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\$9m boost for High Vis Army

MASTER Builders and TasTAFE have joined forces to help support training and skills needed for the building and construction sector, signing a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to support growth and productivity in the sector through training.

The \$9 million 'High Vis Army' initiative seeks to support Tasmania's peak industry associations in developing workforce capability through various training and skills initiatives.

It has been identified that the building and construction workforce will have to grow by more than 25 per cent over the next four years to support planned projects.

Master Builders Tasmania CEO Matthew Pollock said the partnership would expand capacity in the VET training system so that more Tasmanians could skill up and take advantage of the construction boom.

"It will mean more well-paid and high-skilled jobs for Tasmanians while we build the new housing and infrastructure that will underpin our economic future," Mr Pollock said.

"This partnership builds on existing agreements between MBT and TasTAFE and will mean we can offer training courses that have not previously been offered in Tasmania.

"The building and construction sector has shouldered the responsibility of rebuilding economies following the impacts of the pandemic. But we need more people to build the pipeline of work ahead of us.

"We need to train an extra 6500 people between now and 2025 to deliver this pipeline of work. A stronger partnership between TasTAFE and industry through the High Vis Army program is here to do that."

The MOU includes delivering several courses in partnership, exploring new training opportunities and working to put new courses on scope.



Tim Polmear outside Waubs Harbour distillery.

Whisky by the sea

IF you could make whisky your way, using the best equipment in the perfect location, how would you do it?

That was the question Tim Polmear posed to his brother Rob around a fire with whisky in hand in early 2017.

Spring forward to today and Waubs Harbour Whisky has quietly emerged at Bicheno and its preview series of ports and bourbons have already sold out.

Established in an old oyster hatchery on the ocean's edge at Waubs Esplanade Bicheno, head distiller Rob Polmear first established

his reputation as a distiller at Lark and Overeem Whisky.

With brother Tim and sister-in-law Bec Polmear their focus on maritime Tasmanian single malt whisky is turning heads.

"An old oyster hatchery, right on the ocean's edge on the East Coast of Tasmania couldn't be any closer to the provenance we were after and immediately felt like home," they said.

The first release of Waubs Harbour Single Malt Whiskey continues to mature and is expected to be available to the public in early 2023.

Small business needs support

JANIE FINLAY
Shadow Minister for Small Business and Primary Industries

SMALL businesses are the heart of our communities, especially those delivering essential services to people living in rural and regional towns.

As a former small business owner myself, I understand the pressures that owners experience and have witnessed the devastating impacts the pandemic has had.

With small business making up more than 97 per cent of business in Tasmania, it is important that their needs are understood and then acted upon.

More than 40,900 businesses operate in Tasmania, with over half of these sole operators.

But these small businesses aren't just those in retail, hospitality and tourism. They are farmers, fishers and builders.

While we are emerging from Covid-19 and returning to some level of normality, many are still hurting.

The State government has been disingenuous with the grants that they have offered, with many sharing it was too much effort for too little support and did nothing to alleviate the pain.

It was only under relentless pressure from the Labor Party that the Government eventually lifted the grant amount, but even then they still didn't get it right.

The impact of the borders opening was not well considered by the Government and was poorly communicated to business operators.

As a result, businesses suffered with the unpredictable and inconsistent impacts of the pandemic.

It is not always about money. What Tasmania needs is a government that understands small business and offers support that actually makes a difference.



JANIE FINLAY MP

PUTTING SMALL BUSINESS FIRST

Email: janie.finlay@parliament.tas.gov.au

Authorised by Janie Finlay, Bass Labor MP, 253 Wellington Street, Launceston

Ram Savana has gone from picking fruit on his family farm in India in the school holidays to giving advice to some of Tasmania's most experienced and successful farmers. He spoke to **AMANDA LOVELL** about his new role.

WITH a degree in Biotech Ram Savana started his career working for a medical device company. But limited opportunities and a desire to secure permanent residency in Australia saw him head back to the land, starting out as a farm hand and winding up a business owner.

Within minutes of meeting Ram it becomes apparent why farmers are willing to open up their homes and businesses to him and lay their farm lives bare.

"As you know most farmers feel they can never clock off," he said, "their workloads are crushing and it's affecting both the farmers and their families."

It's no coincidence he named his business Enable Ag – his whole philosophy is to enable farmers to do more/the same but give themselves more free time.

Ram calls himself a "time freedom coach" a consultant who has built a business helping farmers find a work life balance and "let go" of some of the things they try to control.

"I'm finding those farmers who always believe in what they did, they're known for what they do and I am going to them and challenging them."

"Yep, you're doing fantastic on the farm, now let's talk about your work life balance."

He says the key to progress is having systems in place and being open minded.

"What you need help with is taking back your time, taking back control of your life."

"Sometimes it's using technology to do things for you, sometimes it's developing a system for things like when you return phone calls, do you have a messaging system and it is around forming new habits."

"Everybody gets different feelings around the process. Some people say it's like a whole weight has been lifted off their shoulders, for others it's being able to take a holiday or having their staff communicate with them better than they ever were before."

As a university student Ram used his position as a casual cleaner to access conferences and events to give him an edge in entering his chosen career path.

He handed out 350 business cards to anyone who was willing to take one. Two of those resulted in call backs and one of them ended in a job.

It was a start that catapulted the then biotech

student into a new life in his adopted country Australia. But it certainly didn't end where he thought.

"I could not get a white-collar job while I was studying at university. I was running out of money and my dad said 'look you need to start making money. I can't keep feeding you from here'," he said.

"While studying at university I had to take up a cleaner job at the Melbourne Convention and Exhibition Centre."

"I used this to get into events. I tried to talk to people and they were shooing me away, that's when I started using the business cards."

Eventually the chief executive of a start-up medical device company gave Ram a chance. He went from being a casual employee to a shareholder within three and a half years.

It was in this role that Ram says he developed his project management skills and had the first opportunity to apply his university studies to real life situations.

When the medical device company was sold Ram and his now wife Mrudula began to look for the next step.

As they were both looking for a permanent visa they had an opportunity to move to Tasmania in 2016 under state sponsorship, work for two years and then apply for permanent residency.

"To be honest we came with the intention that we would go back to the mainland," Ram said.

However Ram and Mrudula have spent the past five and half years building a life and a business.

"We bought a house last year, we settled, we made a decision, this is our home," Ram said.

"I think it's the community that brought us in here. It's a nice mix of Indian emotions plus Western privacy, a large country town."

Again on the hunt for work, Ram decided to take a job as a farmhand. While his wife was horrified, mostly by the smell and soil on Ram's work clothes, the young migrant from Indian farming stock saw it as an opportunity.

"Why not go back to the farming sector and see if I can take something from there and give it to my mum and dad, that was the intention."

It became much more as Ram not only worked as a farmhand at Cressy but slowly built trust with his employer, Tom Dowling, who then hired Ram as a consultant for half a day a week.

"We both were learning a lot from each other. He shared everything with me about the farm and we started to look at how things were working and where we could make changes."

"Tom was happy that my questioning quickly identified the challenges he and his business were facing at that stage."

"That's what it's about getting you to think and then finding the answers that work for the farmer."

It was this approach that led Ram to start his own business, Enable Ag in 2017.

His client list and sense of purpose have grown since then and he's added several awards to his resume including the 2022 Excellence in a Start-Up in the Business Excellence Awards and a state finalist in the 2022 Telstra Best of Business Awards.

Ram has spent some 4200 hours on Tasmanian farms and so far helped around 30 farm families. He now also has two employees working in overseas locations in the business.

He is energetic and passionate but also not afraid to turn away clients if they are not the right fit for each other.

"I'm not here to sell you anything unless you want to buy it and if you buy you need to stick to three promises. There's homework and you need to be committed to doing it."

"It's process driven and then each person will get from it what they need and it might vary."

Ram's own mum, who has been managing the family's 80 acre farm in India has also implemented the same procedures and had great success.

"In September 2019 my dad passed away. My mum didn't really know what was happening on the farm, so I got my dad's diaries and we used those to put together a farm calendar."

"Mum followed it for a bit and before long she was working out her own efficiencies and timings."

"So whatever I do here the systemising, the team culture is the same thing I have done for my mum."

"She was recognised on International Women's Day for the best organic farmer among women in a state with 70 million people."

"This is a very proud moment for me."

"At the end of the day what is success without being able to improve the lives of those you love."



better way of working



Ram Savana, who is showing farmers a new way to work, with his wife Mrudula.

Winemaker cooks up his new plan

MIKE KERR

JOHN Schuts watches as the lacquer is carefully applied to the new wood floor by a man wearing woollen booties, then turns back to the kitchen where the chef is wondering why the shelves are yet to be mounted. And the plate warmer hasn't appeared.

"Yes, he says, "there's still a good way to go."

Mr Schuts is referring to the Derwent Valley's newest restaurant, The Shed, nearing completion at a vineyard on the river's western edge just above the Bridgewater Bridge.

The once-shearing-shed-now-eatery is expected to open before the end of this month.

Normally, Schuts is the winemaker at Derwent Estate, a position he took up after stints at Capel Vale and Amberly Estate, both in West Australia, as well as Winemaking Tasmania.

But he's done with this year's harvest on the vineyard's 11ha of north-facing slopes, and picking is complete of Derwent's pinot gris, reisling, chardonnay and a sauvignon blanc, and its sole red, a pinot noir.



Almost ready John Schuts and front-of-house manager Jec Johnson outside the new restaurant.

The restaurant – building and fittings, stock and staff – needs his full attention to be up to speed.

The restaurant tables, rendered from the original wood beams of the shearing shed, sit quietly under canvas, waiting for the varnish to dry on the floor.

While Schuts is yet to finish the interviews,

he expects about six staff to run the finished restaurant. Front of house is Jec Johnson, while the chef is Andrew Russell, who was at Mona for some seven years.

The building was erected by locals after the 1967 bushfires took down the original. But Barry, currently wielding the lacquer broom, points out that the stonework in front of The

Shed is in fact laced with ancient fossils.

"Yes, the menu will complement our wine list, but more than that, we've taken a family friendly approach, with a grassed outdoors designed to occupy kids while their parents enjoy a glass," John says.

The Shed will seat between 40 and 60, and in function mode – for weddings, for instance – about 120.

Once operational, John will turn his focus to winemaking again.

His winemaking work will continue to attract a good deal of attention elsewhere in Australia. For the past 17 years, his chardonnay grapes have made their way into such premium wines as Penfolds Yattama – a mere \$200 a bottle when you can get it.

Meanwhile, he's got a plate warmer to track down. And some kitchen shelves.



There's nothing like owning a race horse.

I like the racing side because every week there's something to look forward to. You go to the races and it's very exciting if you've got a horse that can win a race . . . there's nothing like owning a race horse and the excitement of having a winner.

Graeme McCulloch
Trainer - Breeder

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Parliament passes container refund laws

THE Tasmanian Government is pushing ahead with the introduction of a container refund scheme for the state.

Both the Container Refund Scheme Bill 2021 and the Waste and Resource Recovery Bill 2021 have been passed by State Parliament.

The Waste and Resource Recovery Bill 2021 establishes a statewide waste levy designed to encourage the diversion of materials from landfill, and drive investment into alternatives to landfill.

The levy is expected to support the creation of up to 130 new full-time positions in the waste and resource recovery sector once the maximum levy rate is reached.

Tasmanians will receive a 10c refund for returning eligible drink containers to designated Refund Points around the state.

Library upgrade for rocks of ages

MINERAL Resources Tasmania has upgraded and expanded the Mornington Drill Core Library.

The \$2.7 million project ensures it can continue to provide high-quality analytical and testing facilities in Tasmania.

The core library now boasts much improved technical, testing and analytical capacity and enhanced front-end facilities to welcome visitors.

The core library already holds some 770km of drill core and 70,000 rock samples from across the state dating back to the late 19th century.

The samples not only provide a historical geological record but assist industry in deciding where to invest significant sums into mining and mineral operations.

Occupation licence

PUBLIC views have been sought on changes to Tasmania's licensing laws that are designed to ensure licensed professionals who reside interstate abide by the same rules as Tasmanian licence holders.

The Automatic Mutual Recognition (Consequential Amendments) Bill 2022 will make necessary amendments to Tasmanian licensing laws prior to the commencement of automatic mutual recognition in Tasmania from July 1, 2022.

These amendments apply to legislation regulating architects, building services providers, electricians, plumbers, gasfitters, security guards, property agents, conveyancers and motor vehicle traders.



Premier Jeremy Rockliff, left, and Treasurer Michael Ferguson, right, with Sanjeev Gupta at the Bell Bay facility.

Bell Bay's new deal

THERE IS optimism at the former TEMCO home at Bell Bay after the next chapter officially began with Liberty.

The official inauguration of Liberty Bell Bay sees the continued operation of the site and has secured the future of around 250 Tasmanian jobs at the site.

Premier Jeremy Rockliff said it was a clear vote of confidence in Tasmania's economic and renewable energy future.

"Liberty Bell Bay, formerly known as TEMCO, has been a major part of our local industry and economy for just shy of 60 years, and this latest chapter has already seen significant investment in the facility's future," Mr Rockliff said.

"The Tasmanian Government has played its part with stamp duty concessions, which has helped to secure these jobs while encouraging even more investment in this facility that will increase capacity."

GFG Alliance confirmed in August 2020 that it had bought the hydro energy-powered Tasmanian Electro Metallurgical Company (TEMCO) smelter in Bell Bay, near George Town.

Liberty Steel Group is part of the GFG Alliance family, which includes the Whyalla steelworks, SIMEC Mining, and InfraBuild in Australia.

GFG Alliance Executive Chairman, Sanjeev Gupta said the Bell Bay facility would be an important upstream addition that would strengthen its steel-making capability in Australia and globally.

"This acquisition will further enhance Liberty's drive to be self-sufficient and fully integrated across the supply chain, complementing our iron ore production in Whyalla, coking coal in Tahmoor and our Cultana Solar Farm to be built in Whyalla," Mr Gupta said.

Food price rises hit 10-year high

FOOD prices have hit the highest year-on-year rise in more than 10 years according to the latest quarterly Consumer Price Index data from the Australian Bureau of Statistics.

The data shows food price inflation accelerated in the quarter to March 2022 and predicts consumers should be bracing for further food price rises in coming months, as the impacts of higher transport costs, supply chain disruptions and other increased input costs make their way through the system.

Headline numbers for food prices in the March 2022 quarter CPI are a 4.3 per cent increase year-on-year and 2.8 per cent from the previous quarter.

Horticulture was a major contributor to the food inflation recorded, with vegetable (+6.6 per cent) and fruit (+4.9 per cent) prices higher year-on-year.

Higher cost of meat, seafood and dairy were also significant contributors to food price inflation in the quarter.

Grants on offer to join space race

A \$500,000 Tasmanian Space Technology Seed Fund has been launched to support eligible businesses in research and development projects that seek to extend, adapt or develop new products or services for the space economy.

The first round of the Tasmanian Space Technology Seed Fund will offer grants of between \$25,000 to \$100,000 on a co-contribution basis, encouraging business to be bold and engage in the growing space sector.

The global drive for space exploration is set to grow to \$12 billion and create 20,000 new jobs in Australia by 2030.

The first round of applications close on Tuesday, 31 May 2022, with further details at www.stategrowth.tas.gov.au

\$50m Nystar expansion to secure jobs

HOBART'S Nyrstar plant is set for an expansion with \$50 million pledged towards the project.

The State Government has committed \$20 million towards an expansion of the Nyrstar facility that will deliver a new Electrolysis Plant and a range of environmental and safety benefits.

This will be combined with \$50 million promised by Federal ALP and the Liberals during the election campaign.

The commitment is part of a \$400 million plan to secure the future of zinc production at the site.

The project is expected to secure the jobs of around 600 staff and contractors as well as support thousands more in the supply chain, and creating more during the construction phase.

Premier Jeremy Rockliff said a new Electrolysis Plant would address safety and environmental issues as well as improve production capacity – meaning more zinc could be produced for less power, resulting in increased production and energy efficiency.

"It will also allow Nyrstar to move forward with its plans for a new national battery recycling initiative across its Hobart and Port Pirie sites, with the new Electrolytic Plant able to

produce pure green zinc from the batteries – potentially saving up to 8000 tonnes of batteries each year from going into landfill," Mr Rockliff said.

Tasmanian Chamber of Commerce and Industry chief executive officer Michael Bailey said he was looking forward to seeing the re-development proceed.

"Major industrials such as Nyrstar are the backbone of the Tasmanian economy and it is heartening to see a desire by the company to upgrade its Hobart facilities," Mr Bailey said.

"It is obviously a shot in the arm to the Tasmanian economy."

NEWS

Motherhood has provided Stephanie Trethewey with a business venture and a new direction that is in stark contrast to her days as a television reporter. She spoke to **AMANDA LOVELL**

NOW a mother of two and successful entrepreneur, Stephanie Trethewey met third generation Tasmanian farmer Sam Trethewey when she interviewed him at an agricultural event in Rockhampton in 2013.

From that moment her days in television were numbered.

The couple spent two years planning their business Tas Ag Co before packing up their city life, leaving corporate jobs in Melbourne and heading to Tasmania with their six month old son Elliot in 2019.

"It's important to note that Sam and I started from scratch. We weren't handed a family farm when we moved here, we had nothing. So we had to raise capital and come up with innovative ways to get started," Steph said.

The couple currently run 1500 head of Wagyu cross cattle across three properties but have plans to expand beyond beef this year as they look to increase biodiversity both above and below the ground.

Mrs Trethewey described Tas Ag Co as a "consumer-facing regenerative beef brand that's on a mission to produce climate-positive food through our focus on rebuilding soil health, reintroducing biodiversity and restoring natural ecosystems."

Essentially it is focused on sustainability and a quality product. The couple recently acquired an abattoir at Sheffield in Tasmania's North West as part of a plan to take full control of their supply chain.

The new business, The Local Meat Co, is now operating and provides Tas Ag Co, as well as local farmers, butchers and food service, access to the processing facility which includes an upgraded boning room.

The Tretheweys are preparing to launch Tas Ag Co beef to the Melbourne market and also plan to add an egg operation to the mix in the near future.

Since moving to Tasmania, Mrs Trethewey has also launched Motherland, an organisation that's on a mission to eliminate the isolation faced by rural mums around Australia.

She was recently named the winner of the 2022 Tas AgriFutures Rural Women's Award for her work developing Motherland.

"Motherland, and Motherland Village in



Grazier and entrepreneur Stephanie Trethewey with children Elliot, 3, and Evie, 1½, and, inset, the family in

particular, Australia's first online rural mothers group program, fills a very real gap in our maternal health system in Australia, so I am not surprised that the response from rural women has been so positive," Mrs Trethewey said.

"Rural mums are some of the most under valued and under celebrated women in this country, and they are the backbone of country communities across Australia.

"The reality is postnatal support services are failing them and the social isolation many of them face is crippling and can have ripple effects that affect everything from their mental health and relationships, through to their employment opportunities and confidence both on farms and off."

The Motherland Podcast has been downloaded more than 330,000 times, and Motherland Village has connected more than

80 rural women from six different states and territories to their own personalised support group

Motherland recently secured its first hospital partnership with Katherine Hospital in the Northern Territory.

Katherine Hospital delivers about 300 babies every year and the partnership will ensure every rural mum who births at their facility will be connected to Motherland Village and given the opportunity to enroll if they wish.

"What this means is we are not sending rural mums back to the land without them knowing that they're not alone, and that there is a village available to them if they wish," Mrs Trethewey said.

"As Motherland grows, I would really love to see the state and federal governments throw their support behind the program by subsidising it to make it even more accessible for rural mums

around Australia." Over the next 12 months, Motherland will be focusing on growing its national hospital partnership model to inch closer to ensuring no rural mum in Australia is left behind.

This will include Motherland transitioning to a not-for-profit business structure which will enable it to seek greater support from government.

Mrs Trethewey said Tasmania was an exciting place to be an entrepreneur, especially in the food sector.

"We are blessed with some of the best land, best soils, and best produce in the country, so regardless of the fact Sam grew up here, I can't imagine picking anywhere else to do this," she said.

"We've met a lot of wonderful business people here who have been very supportive of what we're doing, and while sadly we've found tall poppy syndrome is rife at times, we are focused on the

illage



the Local Meat Co abattoir.

Lobbying system under review

THE Integrity Commission is seeking input into a review of Tasmania's lobbying system and how it might be improved.

Integrity Commission Chief Commissioner Greg Melick said they were interested in hearing about people's experiences of lobbying and their thoughts on Tasmania's current model of lobbying oversight.

"You may be a lobbyist or someone who has been lobbied, or have been affected by public decision-making that resulted from lobbying. We are hoping to hear from anyone who has an interest in this vital democratic process," Mr Melick said.

The existing lobbying oversight system for Tasmania was established in 2009.

Gutwein hailed as 'greatest treasurer'

THE BUSINESS community has hailed Peter Gutwein as the state's greatest Treasurer.

Mr Gutwein's decision to quit politics in early April came as a shock to many.

TCCI CEO Michael Bailey described Mr Gutwein as a trail-blazer.

"He's never done anything by halves," Mr Bailey said.

"Our economy is the envy of the nation, there are more people in work than ever before and he got the budget back in black so that when we were hit by Covid, we had the capacity to deal with it.

"I regard Peter as the best Treasurer Tasmania has ever had and I know many in the business community do too."



Amaze general manager Mathew Waller.

Picture: Richard Jupe

Amazing family lure

AFTER six years in the making Tasmania's newest attraction, an \$8.2 million redeveloped maze at Richmond, has opened.

Amaze Richmond opened at the start of the month and challenges visitors to solve 2.6km of traditional and timber mazes.

Amaze Richmond has focused on creating a challenging and traditional, family experience that will also highlight Tasmania's culinary offerings.

The company behind the attraction is the A-MAZE-ING Group with Dean Coleman (project management/design) and Wayne Upton (builder) at its helm.

"Our focus at Amaze is on entertainment for the entire family unit. We know that post-Covid, families are placing more

emphasis than ever on spending quality time together," Mr Coleman said.

"Combined with the Coal Valley's modern emphasis on niche agri-produce and fine wine production, it creates an environment that allows this project to blend with the region and the target tourism market."

Mr Upton said the pittosporum hedges had taken six years to grow to a level of two metres.

"We have used approximately 2500 plants in the hedge maze and surrounding site landscaping," Mr Upton said.

"By inserting gates in both the hedge and timber mazes we can regularly change up the experience for visitors with new maze challenges every month."

Airport upgrade a link to Asia

TASMANIAN producers are set to have direct freight access to vital Asian markets under a runaway upgrade promised by Federal Labor.

Shadow Minister for Infrastructure, Transport and Regional Development, Catherine King and Franklin MP Julie Collins made the \$60 million dollar funding pledge during the Federal election campaign.

Hobart Airport CEO Norris Carter said Tasmania was the only state not to have a Code E standard runway and the announcement effectively put Tasmania on the map in terms of direct, widebody air services to the rest of the world.

While the runway has been long enough for widebody aircraft, it has not been strong enough for sustained regular services, but

this undertaking will make this a thing of the past," Mr Carter said.

"KPMG figures show it will create some \$120 million in economic stimulus each year, through direct freight services to vital markets such as China, Hong Kong and Singapore as well as non-stop international passenger flights to Asia and beyond, Antarctic links and defence opportunities

The airport had been campaigning for the upgrade for several months.

The next phase of the upgrade would see the runway and taxiway strengthened, which would allow fully laden and fuelled long-haul aircraft to take off and land.

The ALP also pledged to invest an initial \$5 million to start the planning process for

Launceston Airport's proposed TRANSLink intermodal facility, a facility that is already home to over 70 businesses and needs road, rail, stormwater and gas development to support even more.

Labor's investment in TRANSLink will allow the Northern Midlands Council to secure long-term tenants for this site and do the design work needed for future investment.

The Albanese Labor Government is also expected to earmark a further \$30 million to deliver enabling infrastructure to the site once the planning work has been completed.

The two projects are predicted to support more than 1600 jobs as well as growing the states' economy by over \$150 million annually.

APPOINTMENTS

New director steps in at Biosecurity Tas

BIOSECURITY Tasmania has announced the appointment of Dr Ryan Wilkinson to the role of Director of Biosecurity Operations, following a national recruitment process.

Biosecurity Tasmania General Manager Rae Burrows said Dr Wilkinson brought a wealth of experience to the role.

“Dr Wilkinson comes to the role after three years as Industry Collaboration Manager for Biosecurity Tasmania, working with a broad range of key stakeholders in cooperative efforts to support and strengthen Tasmania’s biosecurity system,” said Ms Burrows said.

Dr Wilkinson grew up on his family’s mixed



Chris Adekunle

cropping farm in South Australia and obtained graduate and post-graduate qualifications in aquaculture and fish biology at Flinders University before moving to Tasmania in 2006.

Search for CEO at Port Arthur

A NATIONAL recruitment process has begun following the departure of the chief executive officer of the Port Arthur Historic Site Management Authority (PAHSMA), Johnathan Fisher.

Mr Fisher had been instrumental in steering the Authority as it worked to rebuild from the challenges of Covid, and was committed to the task of navigating the World Heritage values of the Port Arthur, Cascades Female Factory and Coal Mines historic sites.

Appointment of two magistrates

TWO new magistrates have been appointed to serve in the North and North-West of Tasmania.

Katie Edwards has been appointed to the vacant position based in Burnie and will commence in the role on June 27. She replaces former magistrate, Justice Tamara Jago

following her appointment to the Supreme Court of Tasmania last year.

Evan Hughes has been appointed to a new position that will work across Devonport and Launceston, commencing on July 11.

These appointments bring the number of permanent magistrates to 17, which is a record number for Tasmania.

Ms Edwards has been Crown Counsel with the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions since 2020. Mr Hughes is a former President of the Law Society of Tasmania.

Top achiever joins field researchers

AUSTRALIAN-based Field Applied Research (FAR) has announced the appointment of two new agricultural trials officers including Tasmanian Daniel Bosveld.

Daniel Bosveld has recently completed a Bachelor of Agricultural Science with First Class Honours at the University of Tasmania. He was also awarded the Neale Edwards Scholarship in Agricultural Science and Forestry and also the Tasmanian Beef Trust Scholarship.

Throughout his degree, Daniel developed some sound technological and data analysis skills and he has recently completed his honours project using GrassGro, a computer modelling tool that allowed him to model the effects of climate change on the productivity and profitability of pasture systems among a number of different climatic environments in Tasmanian farming regions.

Daniel will be based out of FAR Australia’s head office in Bannockburn. He will primarily work between the Victoria and Tasmania Crop Technology Centres while providing assistance nationwide where required.

Fresh focus on Waste Solutions

HARNESSING rapid advances in technology to capture value from the waste stream will be the focus of Southern Waste Solutions’ new Chief Executive Officer Chris Adekunle.

Mr Adekunle most recently worked as a Principal Advisor with Cleanaway Waste Management in Brisbane.

“Waste sits at the apex of many of today’s most important challenges including climate change, sustainability, and resource recovery,” Mr Adekunle said.

“As waste managers, we are in a position to provide solutions to those challenges, from renewable energy generation through to higher yield food production through composting.”

Mr Adekunle has previously held roles as Manager Waste and Resource Recovery Services at Brisbane City Council, Manager Waste and Environmental Health for

Port Hedland Council and Principal of Waste Solutions for Veolia in Sydney.

He was also a policy manager in waste and sustainability for the United Kingdom Government for many years while living in London.

Chris takes the reins from long-serving CEO, Christine Bell, who began with South-



Christine Bell

ern Waste Solutions as an Executive Director in 2000.

Mayor of Sorell and Copping Refuse Disposal Site Joint Authority Chair, Kerry Vincent, said Ms Bell had played a vital role in shaping the Tasmanian waste industry during her tenure with SWS.

“During her time as CEO, Christine turned the Copping site into Tasmania’s largest and most advanced waste management facility, with the ability to capture and flare gas to generate renewable energy,” Mr Vincent said.

MyState chief hands over chair

AFTER nine years at the helm, outgoing MyState Limited board chair Miles Hampton said he was very relaxed handing over the reins to new chair Vaughn Richtor, and recently appointed Managing Director and CEO Brett Morgan.

“In May 2021 we announced a major initiative to grow our banking and funds management businesses, and the experience that Vaughn and Brett bring is exactly what is needed to drive that growth,” Mr Hampton said.

“Renewal in key leadership roles is vital if organisations are to progress, and it’s the right time for me to retire. It has been both a privilege and honour to be Chairman at MyState.

Mr Hampton’s retirement signalled the end of a 16 year association with Tasmanian Perpetual Trustees (now TPT Wealth Ltd) and MyState Limited.

Vaughn Richtor, a non-executive director of MyState since 2019, has taken over as chair.

Born in India and raised in England, Mr Richtor has held CEO roles in Asia and was the foundation CEO of challenger bank ING

Direct Australia, building it to the fifth largest retail banking business in the country.

Farewell to National Trust stalwart

ONE of the co-founders of the National Trust of Australia (Tasmania) in 1960, Joan Green OAM has died.

Mrs Green was instrumental in establishing Franklin House and Clarendon House as an active member and volunteer of the National Trust for over 50 years, two of Tasmania’s most important and iconic historic properties.

This was in addition to her active contribution to a variety of organisations including The Australiana Fund (Tasmania), and more recently the Tasmanian Symphony Orchestra and the committee the Order of Australia Association Northern Region.

In 2014, Mrs Green was awarded an Order of Australia Medal (OAM) as well as being awarded the Launceston City Council Citizen of the Year Award.

Since 2017, the Green Family Award for Tasmanian History commemorates and celebrates the valued contribution Joan, and her late husband Dick, made to Tasmania.



Tracy Matthews

PFG director brings wealth of experience

TASMANIAN Advanced Manufacturer, PFG, has appointed experienced company director, Tracy Matthews as non-executive director.

The award-winning company, which is currently constructing vessels for Defence New Zealand and the Australian Maritime Safety Authority, is going through a sustained period of growth, leading the world in the application of High-Density Polyethylene for defence vessels.

Ms Matthews’s current and previous directorships and committee roles include Forico Pty Ltd, the Department of State Growth Audit and Risk Committee, the Public Trustee, Metro Tasmania, TasPlan Superannuation, Colony 47 Inc. and Housing Connect.

Electric buses take off on airport run

TASMANIA'S first two fully electric buses have hit the road as part of the SkyBus service connecting passengers between Hobart Airport and the city.

The new zero-emission vehicles offer visitors landing in Tasmania a 'green and clean' welcome and a smoother and quieter transport experience.

Hobart Airport spokesperson Gail Wilson said the organisation was thrilled to be part of the introduction of the battery electric bus (BEB) fleet.

"This is the start of an exciting new phase in passenger transport to and from our facility, so we congratulate SkyBus for undertaking this initiative," Ms Wilson said.

"Hobart airport is committed to reducing its carbon wherever possible and this activity helps us achieve this."

Replacing diesel vehicles and displacing carbon emissions, the electric buses will deliver environmental benefits and help to kick-start plans for transforming public transport for Tasmanians.



All aboard ... Liana Seadon and Daniel Head from SkyBus with the new electric bus at Hobart Airport.

The battery electric buses are among 70 that SkyBus operator Kinetic have in operation or coming into operation across Australia and New Zealand this year.

Kinetic also operates a government-contracted route and school services through Tas Redline and MerseyLink.

Metro Tasmania will conduct separate operational trials involving three battery electric buses in Launceston and three hydrogen fuel cell electric buses (FCEB) in Hobart, for up to three years.

The project is key to the Tasmanian Government's target of net-zero emissions

by 2030. The Tasmanian Government has allocated \$6 million for Metro to conduct the BEB trial, and approved up to \$12.3 million from the Tasmanian Renewable Hydrogen Industry Development Funding Program to progress recommendations from an Industry Activation Study, which includes the FCEB trial.

Metro has called for Expressions of Interest for the supply of the buses and associated recharging and refuelling equipment, and specialist maintenance services.

The Expressions of Interest period will close on May 30, 2022.

Potential suppliers are encouraged to review the Expressions of Interest documents on Metro's TenderLink web portal <https://illion.tenderlink.com/>

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The 2022-23 Budget will support further economic growth and more than 11,000 additional jobs over the Budget and Forward Estimates."

Jeremy Rockliff MP
Premier

"For nine consecutive quarters the Tasmanian economy has led the nation in the Commsec State of the State reports, holding the mantle of the best performing economy."

Having a strong economy is essential as it has allowed the Government to invest more into the things Tasmanians care about. The 2022-23 State Budget is about strengthening our future. It builds on the gains already made and focuses on delivering for all Tasmanians."

Michael Ferguson MP
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Why working capital is important

There is often a lot of confusion about the treatment of working capital when selling a business. **CHRIS MITCHELL** explains what it is all about.

WORKING capital features in business valuations, sale price allocation and sale adjustment calculations.

Most business owners and even some advisors don't understand how working capital can impact on the goodwill of a business and how it is accounted for in the context of a business sale. The consequences of not knowing can be dramatic, with owners giving away substantial value without even realising it.

Working capital is the name given to a group of current assets and liabilities required for the day to day trading operations of a business. They are constantly turning over, converting from one category to another, ultimately into cash, and vary from business to business. The asset side includes inventory, trade debtors, prepayments. On the liability

side they include trade creditors, accruals, employee entitlements, GST, & customer deposits.

Let's touch on how working capital features when valuing a business. Working capital is part of the business value or enterprise value. No credible business valuation can be performed without considering and including the working capital and understanding the cash cycle. Working capital assets and liabilities are considered components of the assets and liabilities required to generate the profit in a business.

Is it better to have more or less working capital?

The answer depends on and may differ according to the context, ie whether in relation to the ongoing operation of the business, or specifically in the context of a sale.

Well run businesses constantly strive to keep net working capital to a minimum, to make their money work harder for them and generally achieve a higher return on funds employed.

However, many more business owners don't worry about how much of their investment is tied up in working capital and it can often grow without anyone being sensitive to it. Most owners or managers operating a business will be striving to maximize profit, and driving sales and margins are a great way to do this. These drivers encourage holding adequate levels of stock and often buying in bulk at the best prices.

Also, giving customers some flexibility on trading terms often enhances sales and customer relationships, both conducive to

growth. Even paying creditors early or on time also allows a business to achieve higher standing with key suppliers, who may then look after the business ahead of others.

These factors tend to increase net working capital while driving profit up.

The dynamics of working capital change completely when the business owner changes from 'run the business' mode to 'sell the business' mode and someone explains how businesses are valued. Whereas working capital has not been necessarily as sensitive in a business, when the valuation focus arises, the amount of net working capital takes on a whole new level of sensitivity and owners realise how productive it can be to reduce their investment in net working capital.

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TASMANIAN BUDGET 2022-23

Strengthening our Future Delivering for all Tasmanians

JOB | INFRASTRUCTURE | COST OF LIVING | HEALTH | EDUCATION | HOUSING | YOUTH | ENERGY | CLIMATE

A strong economy allows us to deliver on the things Tasmanians care about:



Jobs

The 2022-23 Budget and Forward Estimates supports the creation of **more than 11,000** additional jobs.



Infrastructure

A record **\$5.6 billion** infrastructure spend to build better roads, hospitals, schools and community facilities.



Cost of living

\$305 million in Tasmanian Government concessions making essentials like water, electricity and rates more affordable.



Health

A massive **\$11.2 billion** health spend across the Budget and Forward Estimates equating to one third of the State's entire budget.



Housing

\$1.5 billion housing package that will lead to the construction of 10,000 social or affordable homes over the next 10 years.



Education

\$8.5 billion of expenditure on Education, Skills and Training over the 2022-23 Budget and Forward Estimates.

To find out what the 2022-23 Budget means for you, visit www.premier.tas.gov.au

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Export awards celebrate 60 years

APPLICATIONS are now open for the Tasmanian Export Awards 2022, as part of the 60th Australian Export Awards.

There are 13 national categories including Advanced Technologies; Agribusiness, Food and Beverages; Creative Industries; E-Commerce; Emerging Exporter; International Education and Training; International Health; Manufacturing and Advanced Materials; Professional Services; Regional Exporter; Resources and Energy; Small Business; and Sustainability.

Organisations can enter in more than one national category, but will only be eligible to win an award in one category.

The Tasmanian Export Awards will have three additional categories:

Tasmanian Young International Exporter of the Year – presented to an individual under the age of 35.

Tasmanian Women in International Trade
Tasmanian Defence Industries Exporter of the Year

All applications must be submitted by 5pm Friday, June 10. Apply online at www.exportawards.gov.au

An awards night gala dinner to celebrate export success will be held in Hobart on Friday, September 30. The black-tie event will bring together Tasmania's leading and emerging exporters, industry and Government for an evening of entertainment, networking and fine dining. The event will be hosted by the Premier

and Minister for Trade Jeremy Rockliff.

Winners of each national category will go on to compete in the Australian Export Awards 2022 against each state and territory winner of that category.

The national awards will be held in Canberra on Thursday,

November 24.

For organisations wishing to submit an application, I strongly encourage you to register and start your application early.

Advisory resources to assist in application writing are on both the Department of State Growth and Austrade websites.

For international trade and investment assistance contact the TCCI's TradeStart Adviser, Sally Chandler, at sally.chandler@tcci.com.au or phone 0408 888 311.



Small beginnings.



A tidal wave of freight is expected post-Covid.

Domestic shippers feel price rise sting

STARTING with good news, the Bass Strait carriers continue to provide excellent services across Bass Strait with little challenges reported for our domestic trades. That is it for the good news sorry; the rest requires a whisky in hand.

Domestic shippers would be beginning to feel the sting of pricing with fuel surcharges increasing as well as other costs coming online with wait times and other surcharges (Covid surcharges being the latest). At a recent conference in Sydney, Simon O'Hara (CEO of Road Freight NSW) pointed out that the transport and supply chain industry is experiencing significant challenges with significant price hikes in fuel additives, skills shortages and indeed a shortage of trucks (in his speech he reported that a truck ordered now would not arrive until 2024).

Tasmania, like the rest of the planet, are continuing to adjust to the pain in the international shipping world. Butterfly wing

events continue to affect us with the Covid shutdowns in Shanghai resulting in delays to orders and a disruption to the global shipping world that is significant. At last report there were 330 vessels off the ports of China awaiting operations with many shipping lines blank sailing these ports.

A tidal wave of freight is expected to come post Covid as back orders are pushed out quickly to make up shortfalls. The same speaker noted above stated that you do not have to be a genius to know that Australia is a flea in world trade and the space and equipment will favour that larger markets.

Tasmanian exports are struggling with high rates, lack of space and a shortage of suitable equipment. Many shipments are being cancelled or delayed and while we continue to hear good outcomes and results for our export sector, it has been far from easy to maintain markets and they should be congratulated for their dedication and commitment.

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Port of Burnie

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Dale's the big mover



HE might be Tasmania's first billionaire but the latest honour for businessman Dale Elphinstone is priceless.

As a major investor in the tungsten mine on King Island, Mr Elphinstone has had a 75-tonne excavator named after him.

Group 6 Metals is rolling out development infrastructure and construction of roads at its Dolphin Mine at Grassy.

G6M has also achieved the first concrete pour on its processing plant site and has completed the batch plant installation and concrete material preparation.

At Currie the machinery team now includes a 374 Cat, which is classed as a heavy duty, reinforced excavator, with an operating weight of 71,700kg.

It is this impressive machine that has been named "Dale" after Mr Elphinstone.

"The bigger the equipment, the more rock we can move to build the roads, which are the backbone of mining," G6M general manager Chas Murcott said.

"It is our intention to name our equipment in both recognition and appreciation of our benefactors, so this 75-tonne excavator will be named 'Dale' for Dale Elphinstone."

When G6M director Johann Jacobs told Mr Elphinstone the Dolphin Mine's Cat 374 would be named after him, he was both humbled and honoured.

"I've never had an excavator named after me before, so King Island gets another first," Mr Elphinstone said.

Trainee truck drivers Tikki Denby, left, Kath Hunter and Rowie Murcott and Cat 775 at Grassy, inset, Dale Elphinstone.

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THE CRAFT LIVES ON.



Orchard's global cider push bears fruit

JOSH HARRIS

SPREYTON Fresh's North-West Coast orchards are starting to bear fruit on the world's biggest markets.

The family-run orchard has grown from being a local supplier to homes, shops and schools around the North-West town to dealing with customers around the globe.

Their cherry orchards sit just over the hill, the sea of nets covering their 100ha of orchards which supply local and international markets, as well as finding their way into the ciders and juices.

Spreyton Fresh began orchard production four generations ago in 1908 with their first apple orchards in the Mersey Valley.

Spreyton would go on to produce apples for juicing across the state but, following a downturn in juice apple prices in 1997, the decision was made to begin juice production for themselves, providing an alternative marketing avenue.

Since then, Spreyton have established its product in supermarkets across Australia, the juice brand blazing a trail for their venture into their alcoholic range, Spreyton Cider, which started in 2012 and has been going from strength to strength.

The company decided to keep the entire cider production process in-house, starting with the construction of a cider making and bottling facility-cum-cellar door.

Michelle Distill is (at least) the fourth generation of her family to tend the Spreyton orchards, and currently is a director at Spreyton Fresh.

"The biggest distinction that we have is our process: we grow our fruit, we pick it, we turn it into juice, into cider and into vinegar on site, straight from the orchards,



Spreyton Fresh Director Michelle Distill.

right in front of our customers," Ms Distill said.

"It gives the tourist and visitors a perspective on our product and a bit of an idea on the history of the valley here, which is very apple-heavy."

"It's all been about value-adding our products since we started. If you aren't value-adding in agriculture, it becomes more and more difficult to grow, to keep things ticking over.

"Now we've now got a definite order headed for Japan, and there's interest coming in from Hong Kong and Vietnam, and we're beginning to look at how we expand our product line on to the mainland from next year onwards.

Ms Distill said the speed in which the cider venture of the company found its feet was hugely supported by the experienced

staff behind the operation.

Damien Viney, who is chief cider maker, said a lot of the unique flavours that come

into their juices and ciders were down to the local producers who grow for Spreyton Fresh.

"The majority of the apples that go in the cider are grown by us, but for the juice apples, we look to the growers within the region," he said.

"Our Sour Cherry ingredients come from our own cherries across the road, raspberries come from Costas and from Richard Clark down at Westerway Farms. It's all Tassie-based, which is great for everyone involved."

In their first year, Spreyton cider produced 30,000 litres, a number which grew to 150,000 by the end of 2021.

They're anticipating an output of 200,000-220,000 litres this year.

"The majority of our sales of our ciders still remain within Tassie, but right now we're getting the first consignment of sour cherry cider ready that's headed to Japan in the next couple of months, which feels really good," Mr Viney said.

Premier to head trade mission to New Zealand

A STATE Government-led trade mission to New Zealand later this year is aimed at providing economic opportunities in key areas.

New Zealand is one of Tasmania's most important trading partners, with annual exports already valued at about \$100 million.

The trade mission – Tasmania's first since Covid hit in early 2020 – will showcase everything the state has to offer and further grow the cooperative trading relationship with our neighbours across the Tasman.

The four-day trade mission from July 31 will be led by Premier Jeremy Rockliff and will

visit Auckland, Wellington and the Tasman Nelson region.

It will identify emerging opportunities for growth in a number of sectors, including food, agribusiness, energy, advanced manufacturing, defence and tourism.

State Growth Minister Roger Jaensch said: "There is no doubt that Tasmania has what the world wants, and this will further build closer trading ties with New Zealand, a move that will be bolstered by the recommencement of Hobart-Auckland direct flights in early July."

Businesses interested in participating are invited to register their interest at: New Zealand Trade Mission 2022 - Department of State Growth (smartygrants.com.au)

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TASMANIAN BUDGET

2022-23

Strengthening our Future Delivering for all Tasmanians

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There are 26,000 more people in employment since the majority Liberal Government came to office in 2014 and the unemployment rate has halved.

129.1% per cent

more job vacancies than before the pandemic began in 2020, presenting greater opportunities for Tasmanians to find a job.

"To invest in the areas that matter to Tasmanians requires a continued focus on keeping our economy strong."

Jeremy Rockliff MP
Premier



The 2022-23 State Budget supports the creation of more than 11,000 jobs across the forward estimates.

- **\$18 million** to provide low or no fee training places for job seekers.
- **\$7.9 million** to operate our four new Local Jobs Hubs in communities across Tasmania.
- **\$6.75 million** to continue the High VIS Army initiative and additional \$1 million for Skills Attraction.
- **\$7 million** to support additional TasTAFE students and teachers over four years on top of our \$100 million TasTAFE reform including and facility upgrades.
- **\$5 million additional** for the now \$26 million TasTAFE Water and Energy Trades Centre of Excellence.
- **Extension of the Payroll Tax Rebate Scheme** to 30 June 2024, to help more young Tasmanians by providing payroll tax relief to businesses who employ apprentices, trainees and youth employees.

To find out what the 2022-23 Budget means for you, visit www.premier.tas.gov.au



Move to boost youth skills

TASTAFE and Colony 47 have teamed up to help to train young job seekers for work in two of Tasmania's growth sectors.

TasTAFE is the training partner in Colony 47's Youth Employment Pathway Program, which includes skills 'taster' programs in civil construction, as well as transport and logistics.

Colony 47 has co-designed the pre-employment programs with employers and industry based on workforce needs, providing pathways and job opportunities for 15 to 24-year-old job seekers.

Participants receive practical training, assistance with employment skills and undertake a work placement.

Colony 47 Youth Solutions Manager Dianne Underwood said Colony 47 recognised that entry-level skill sets and pathways into growth sectors were crucial to support young job seekers in Tasmania.

"Employers have indicated that young people lack an understanding of industry and role requirements and that they want a partnership, not a transactional approach to recruiting and supporting young people," Ms Underwood said.

"The lack of available staff coming out of the Covid-19 pandemic has highlighted the need to focus on young people as the best available human resource.

"The Youth Employment Pathway Programs are designed for local young people. The program design combines industry-endorsed accredited and non-accredited training with targeted employability and work-readiness education that is flexible and adapted based on industry and employer input, while also addressing the unique needs of young job seekers."

Executive Director, Students and Education, Kerryn Meredith-Sotiris, said TasTAFE had worked with Colony 47 to



support the development and delivery of two tailored skills taster programs.

"The Civil Construction Skills Taster includes skill sets in first aid, manual handling, white card and traffic control," Ms Meredith-Sotiris said.

"The Transport and Logistics Skills Taster includes forklift high-risk work licence, manual handling and first aid.

"TasTAFE also developed and delivered a foundation skills workshop for the job seekers tailored to the respective industry areas."

Civil Contractors Federation CEO Rachael Matheson said the program was an invaluable tool in helping grow the workforce needed to build Tasmania's infrastructure pipeline.

"We look forward to seeing these participants out and about in the workforce in the coming years helping build Tasmania's future," she said.

"Throughout the month we had more than 5000 passengers on some days, compared to an average of 3000 people a day over the past few months. April 18 was our busiest day, with 5758 passengers.

"We're also already seeing strong passenger numbers for May, a month that is typically one of our lower travel months."

Mr O'Hare said the airport had added additional flights between Adelaide and Launceston, as well as increased the frequency of Brisbane and Sydney flights.

"We are also in the early planning and investigation stages of further infrastructure development."

Work underway on Burnie shiploader

FABRICATION of Tasmania's new mineral shiploader for the Port of Burnie has begun at Somerset with the project on track to be completed by mid-2023.

The project, awarded to Tasmanian firm COVA-Haywards, began immediately after the contract was awarded in August.

The new shiploader will double the loading speed of the existing equipment.

The Federal Government has provided \$64 million to the new shiploader, which will be a major bonus for the Tasmanian mining and mineral processing industries as the main export facility.

Key components for the shiploader are now being manufactured on the North-West Coast by a sub-contractor to COVA-Haywards.

TasRail is also well advanced with site preparation works at the Port of Burnie.

In the coming months, major fabrication of the shiploader structure and wharf conveyor units will start at Haywards' Western Junction site in Northern Tasmania.

About 140 jobs are linked to the design and construction of the new shiploader.

Alex Alex Burrridge gets hands-on experience on a forklift as part of one of the 'taster' programs.



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Numbers on up and up at Launceston Airport

MORE than 120,500 passengers passed through Launceston Airport in April, the highest number in more than two years, buoyed by the busy Easter and school holiday period.

Launceston Airport CEO Shane O'Hare said it represented 93 per cent of the 129,006 passengers processed in April 2019, a sign that air travel was recovering.

"Our Easter performance was well above what was forecast as people took advantage of the holiday period to travel to and around Tasmania," Mr O'Hare said.



Continued growth in agri-business

ROB DIXON

Partner Agri-Business Launceston

FORECASTS from many of the industry analysts suggest the Agri-Business sector will continue to strengthen in the 2021-22 year with National Gross Value of the sector tipped to be a record \$81b up by \$12b on last year.

The main driver continues to be favourable seasonal conditions, strong commodity prices and world events impacting on supply.

While the sector has seen challenges including labour shortage and rising input costs including fertiliser and fuel, the industry remains very positive contributing to strong forecasts.

This confidence continues to influence

investor consideration of agri-land as an investment option, contributing to the strong growth enjoyed by landowners particularly in Tasmania.

Median price

A recent report from RuralBank indicates the national median price/ hectare of Australia farmland has increased by 123% over the past eight years, with Tasmania recording the highest median price per hectare of land at \$14,730/Ha in 2021-22.

We have seen strong demand from many sectors, making it extremely competitive.

Local farmers are looking to expand operations which includes acquiring adjoining operations, however they are now competing

with corporates, family farmers, life-stylers who are also looking at the opportunities Tasmania presents.

Investment

The continual investment by Government in water development is providing the security for corporates to continue investment in the intensive agri-business of viticulture, berries, fruits and agri-tourism.

A recent offering of a property on the Richmond-Cambridge Road demonstrated the strong appetite for land for both corporates and individuals looking to transition from a more traditional farming enterprise to intensive agriculture with tourism opportunities.

Tasmania's median price per hectare of

around \$14,700/ha is reflective of the level of values applicable for our productive grazing land.

Plantations

What is important is the broad range in levels of values for the various sectors to provide this median price. Forestry and plantation transactions continue to be at values towards the bottom of the sectors while our prime cropping land of North West Tasmania, continues to be met with very strong demand.

Recent transactions of Tasmania's finest agricultural land with secure water are now at levels around \$50,000/Ha, with producers still seeing further opportunity of growth in this sector.

Property View



Infill residential development site in Brighton.

39A Andrew Street, Brighton TAS.

For Sale by Expressions of Interest closing
Thursday 9th June 2022 at 4pm (AEST).

Site Area: 12,410 sqm*	Zoning: General Residential	Scheme for 29 units and existing house
Proposed development can be staged*	Flat site in high growth suburb of Brighton	Can be sold subject to an approved DA

George Burbury **0408 333 523**
Scott Newton **0409 186 261**



*Approx *STCA

Outline indicative only

Desirable northern suburbs warehouse & office facility.

8 Mill Lane, Glenorchy TAS.

For Sale by Expressions of Interest closing
Thursday 16th June 2022 at 4pm (AEST).

Occupy or invest	Gross lettable area: 1,585 sqm*	Zoning: 'Light Industrial'
225 sqm* of office space	Land area: 1,444 sqm*	Proximity to northern suburbs & Hobart CBD

Tom Balcombe **0417 979 194**
Trevor Fox **0419 355 917**



*Approx

'Forest Hall' Historic home with lifestyle values.

5494 Bass Highway, Elizabeth Town TAS.

For Sale by offers over \$3.25 million

Site Area: 117.68 Ha*	2 Titles with mixed income	Grazing and plantation
'Forest Hall' Built circa 1825	Magnificent mountain views	

Mark Ranicar **0418 132 344**
Rob Dixon **0408 134 025**



AGRI BUSINESS



*Approx

Strategic land bank opportunity with potential holding income.

30-33 Harvest Lane, Old Beach TAS.

For Sale by Expressions of Interest closing
Thursday 2nd June 2022 at 4pm (AEST).

Site area: 49.24 ha* Zoned 'Rural'	Developing residential location	Commercial cherry orchard with potential holding income
Vacant possession	Increasing demand and growth in greater Hobart land	

Scott Newton **0409 186 261**
Trevor Fox **0419 355 917**
Richard Steedman **0408 559 046**



AGRI BUSINESS



*Approx

Outline indicative only.