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GREEK TRIBUNE

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AUSTRALIAN NEWS

Australia put on La Niña watch by BoM as Pacific sea-surface temperatures cool

Australia is on La Niña watch, with a 50 per cent chance of the climate pattern forming later this year, according to the Bureau of Meteorology.

Although sea surface temperatures in the Pacific have been cooling since December, it has emerged that unprecedented global sea-surface temperatures, recorded over the 12-months from April 2023 to April 2024, may affect typical climate predictions.

The US National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

estimates a 69 per cent chance of a La Niña weather pattern developing between July and September.

Current forecasts suggest above-average rainfall for parts of eastern Australia, West Australia and South Australia from June to August, with warmer temperatures likely nationwide.

In addition, the Bureau said the potential development of a positive Indian Ocean Dipole phase, another climate driver impacting Australia, is now less certain.

\$5,000 to victims, to escape violent relationships

The Australian government has announced it is providing just short of one billion dollars over five years to permanently establish a Leaving Violence Program, to support victims of intimate partner violence.

As part of the program, eligible victim-survivors of domestic violence, regardless of visa status or gender, will receive up to five thousand dollars in financial support, to help leave violent relationships.

Of that amount, 1500 dollars would be provided as a cash payment,

with 3500 dollars made available via pre-paid cards for goods and services.

The program aims to address the financial insecurity associated with leaving a violent relationship, and can be accessed by those who have left or plan to leave a violent relationship.

The payments will be administered by a contracted service provider and build on a previous pilot program trialled by the government.

The Leaving Violence Program will be available for applications from July 2025.

Almost 30% more women killed last year

Almost 30% spike in number of Australian women killed by intimate partner last year, data shows.

The Australian Institute of Criminology has reported an almost 30 per cent increase in the rate of women killed by intimate partners in Australia during 2022-2023.

Thirty-four women were killed by a current or previous intimate partner, up from 26 in 2021-2022.

Despite this recent increase, the rate remains the third-lowest since records began in 1989-1990.

Overall, 60 women were killed by men in 2022-2023, while four men were killed by intimate partners.

First Nations people face a higher risk of death or injury, by an intimate partner, with a victimisation rate around seven times higher than non-Indigenous people.

GREEK COMMUNITY TRIBUNE

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Budget aimed at cost of living

Treasurer Jim Chalmers has described helping Australians with the cost-of-living crisis as the government's "number one priority".

Amid persistent inflation and a slowing economy, it's no surprise that the issue was top of the government's federal budget agenda — so much so it was in the title: Cost-of-living help and a future made in Australia — with \$7.8 billion earmarked for relief on top of the already announced changes to the stage 3 tax cuts.

"It's a responsible budget that helps people under pressure today and invests in the promise and potential of the more prosperous future we can make together," Mr Chalmers said as he handed down his third budget.

So what exactly is in the budget to help Australians feeling the pinch? Here's a super quick guide to the cost-of-living relief.

We already knew this was

coming, but the reworked stage 3 tax cuts are the centrepiece of the government's relief measures.

Everyone who earns more than the \$18,200 tax-free threshold per year will get a tax cut, which means more than 13.6 million Australians will be better off.

For the 8.2 million taxpayers who earn between \$45,000 and \$135,000 a year, this means tax relief of between \$804 and \$3,729 come July.

Power bill rebates are coming

Every household will receive a \$300 rebate on their electricity bills throughout the year from July 1 and 1 million small businesses will get a rebate of \$325.

In practical terms, this means Australians who pay their electricity bills quarterly will see a \$75 discount on each of their bills over the coming financial year, at a cost to the budget of \$3.5 bil-

lion.

The credits will be delivered in the same way as the relief announced in last year's budget, in which \$500 was paid out but only to certain eligible groups, like pensioners and households receiving government support.

The government expects the rebate to directly reduce headline inflation, rather than adding to the pressures.

Rent assistance is going up

In good news for nearly 1 million low-income households receiving the Commonwealth Rent Assistance payment, the maximum rate is set to increase for the second year running by a further 10 per cent.

Medicine will be cheaper

Medicines listed on the scheme will be capped at a maximum cost of \$31.60 and no concession card holder — who make up six-out-of-10 prescriptions on the PBS — will pay more than \$7.70 for



Federal Treasurer Jim Chalmers

their medication until 2030.

Extra support for pensioners

The government also said, it will adjust the income test, in order to help around 876,000 income support recipients - including around 450,000 age pensioners — who rely on income from their investments as well as government payments to "manage cost of living pressures".

Wine industry fights for more Government funds

Wine industry representatives say they will fight for financial assistance after this week's federal budget left them disappointed.

An oversupply of red wine and changing drinking habits among consumers has led to grape growers receiving historically low prices for their fruit and pulling out their vines while wine companies explore mergers.

The fallout from the crisis is being felt acutely in South Australia's Riverland, Australia's largest wine producing region, where Maria Sialas is among several contractors assessing the viability of their businesses.

Ms Sialas, from Renmark, who has been in the industry for almost 20 years, says the flow-on effects are plain to see.

"We can already see it here



Growers Sam and Maria Sialas are concerned about their future

— no-one has money to spend, no-one goes out to restaurants, no-one is buying tractors," she said on the ABC Radio.

Ms Sialas said she had reduced the number of harvesters used for contracting and had been chasing late pay-

ments from growers months after harvest.

Australian Grape and Wine requested an \$86-million recovery package from the federal government in the latest budget, but no sector-specific funding was included in the

announcement last week.

The package included support for vineyard owners to rip out vines and plant other crops, assistance to develop export opportunities and a domestic marketing campaign.

Federal Liberal Member for Barker Tony Pasin said the federal government needed to do more to address the crisis.

"There was very little in the budget for the Riverland, but the most pressing is obviously the situation of the wine industry," he said.

In a statement a government spokesperson said that the budget included several measures to assist the industry, including \$2m to re-establish commercial connections in China and \$487.9m for AusTrade's export market development grant program.

Public meeting called by Community members

By Kostas Karamarkos
(Journalist - Melbourne)

A public meeting has been called, by members of the Greek Orthodox Community of Melbourne and Victoria (GOCMV), in order to discuss the Constitutional reform of the organisation. The meeting is to take place on Sunday, 2 June 2024, at 2:30 pm, at The Greek Centre (Mezzanine Level), at 168 Lonsdale St, Melbourne.

Over the past two years, a considerable number of members of the Greek Orthodox Community of Melbourne and Victoria, have expressed the need to review the constitution and to look at possible amendments, aiming to make it more relevant and representative of our diverse community.

These same members are of the view that any discussion

Community Life



From an older forum which took place at the Greek Community of Melbourne (archive photo)

for constitutional reform needs to be accessible and open to all interested members of the GOCMV, as well as to the wider Greek-Australian community in Victoria.

As part of this process, we are calling an open meeting to allow further discussion and to listen to the various points of view that may exist.

Some members have already submitted their views

to the Board of Management of the Greek Community of Melbourne and during the meeting of June 2nd we will be given the opportunity to find out what these views are.

The consultation meeting is open to all those interested in the future of the GOCMV.

We consider this initiative to be part of the process required to ensure that any

constitutional changes that may occur in the future, will have the support of the overwhelming majority of the organisation's membership.

A consensus approach is the only way that meaningful and lasting constitutional reform can be achieved. Reform that will ensure the representative and inclusive nature, the longevity and the strategic relevance of the organisation into the future.

We hope that this open meeting will be a contributing factor towards the achievement of the above-mentioned objectives.

Finally, we welcome to this consultation meeting, the members of the Board of Management of the Greek Orthodox Community of Melbourne and Victoria.

The public meeting has been called by twenty five current and non-current GOCMV members, including many previous board members.



Cultural, social and political events in South Australia

Contact: Harri on 0484 387 818 - or email your community's news or a photo: info@greektribune.com.au



The Ikarian Brotherhood SA hosted Kostas Mavrikis (in the middle), writer and owner of the Alonissos museum. Costas Mavrikis gave a lecture which mainly revolved around the presence of the Australian ANZACS in the Aegean islands before the intervention at Gallipoli. Together with Mr. Mavrikis, Steve Georganas MP, Socratis Tsapaliaris, the President of the Ikarian Brotherhood George Gronthos and Carlene Starr Vassilaki



ABOVE: Another photo from the presentation by Kostas Mavrikis at the Panikarian Brotherhood. Also in the photo are, John Panteladis, John Tsapaliaris and Eleni Glaros.



LEFT: President Harry Tavlarides and the newly elected executive committee of the Pontian Brotherhood of SA at their premises at Pennington, pose for the Greek Tribune

Adelaide research breakthrough to provide more accurate prostate cancer diagnosis and treatment

Adelaide man Andrew Bills considers himself lucky, after an early diagnosis of prostate cancer five years ago.

"A lot of people say, 'You don't worry about getting prostate cancer until you're over 60'. Well I was 52," he told the ABC.

Mr Bills went through a standard series of tests to receive his diagnosis before he had surgery five months later.

"There's a lot of uncertainty because you don't know what you're dealing with, and you don't know the extent of what you're dealing with and what your options are, and it takes time," he said.

Scientists from the University of South Australia are aiming to reduce that uncertainty, with research identifying precise biomarkers for prostate cancer, making it easier to pinpoint how the cancer will progress.

Researcher Jessica Logan said current detection methods provide a "baseline overview", while the technology they were working on was about "providing an accurate and reliable diagnosis" to avoid patients from receiving too much or too little treatment.

Speaking to the ABC, Dr Logan said their focus was on low-risk patients.

"We know that within

the first two years, there are 35 per cent of those patients who will require some intervention, and within five years that increases to 59 per cent," she said.

"So for those patients that are in this low-risk category... trying to provide them with some clarity and reassurance that we are on the right treatment intervention strategies is a major focus of what we're doing," she said.

Dr Logan said Australia was looking at the most prostate cancer diagnoses this year on record.

She said it has taken researchers around 15 years to reach this stage, and it could be another five before Australians reap the benefits.

"This is I guess our first step in producing a sound data set that will facilitate potentially a clinical trial that will bring the technology here," Dr Logan said.

'Groundbreaking' research

The Prostate Cancer Foundation of Australia's Chief of Mission, Jeff Dunn, said Dr Logan's research showed great promise.

"This research is groundbreaking," Professor Dunn said.

"It helps build a platform



for the way we might treat prostate cancer in the future."

Professor Dunn said the research, which the Prostate Cancer Foundation has given a grant to, could improve outcomes and quality of life for men.

"Dr Logan is using tumour-based biomarkers to help identify those prostate cancers where we need to intervene — those who are perhaps needing earlier intervention in their treatment," he said.

Professor Dunn said the research will hopefully identify which prostate cancers require earlier intervention, and therefore be able to "tailor and target treatment much more effectively".

"At the moment with prostate cancer, some-

times it difficult to determine in early stage disease which ones are aggressive and need intervention and which ones are a little slower and we just need to watch for awhile before we actually get into more complex treatment," he said.

Mr Bills said early detection was "everything", and hoped the new technology could provide more choice for patients in the future.

"I think this new technology is fundamental, because it will give men confidence about maybe not having the operation, which is very invasive, because that's really the choices that I had.

"And to leave the prostate in and monitor it, and that improves the quality of life for men." (Source ABC)

Energy bills to keep rising

Australians are facing a rise in power bills, with energy transmission set to rise in different parts of the country.

A decision by the Australian Energy Regulator will see the amount charged by six electricity distributors rise over the next five years.

In New South Wales, customers reliant on distributors Ausgrid, Endeavour Energy,

Essential Energy will pay between 14 and 39 dollars more, while customers of ACT company Evoenergy will pay 18 dollars more. The biggest increase is in the Northern Territory.

Transmission costs charged by the Power and Water Corporation will rise by 116 dollars a year for the average household, while small businesses are set to pay 332 a year more.

New desalination plant in SA

The federal government is pledging to contribute \$65 million towards the planning process for a major desalination and water transport project in the Upper Spencer Gulf as part of the Future Made in Australia initiative.

It brings the total pre-construction funds for the Northern Water Supply Project to \$230m, which includes funds from the state government and BHP.

The project includes plans for a seawater desalination plant at

Cape Hardy, capable of processing 260 megalitres a day, and a 600-kilometre pipeline to transport the treated water to Whyalla and outback mining sites such as Carapateena and Roxby Downs.

At the moment mining operations in the far north draw on water from the Great Artesian Basin.

The hydrogen power station proposed for Whyalla would need a reliable and abundant supply of water to convert into hydrogen for power generation.

Millions in job support set for people with disability

The Australian government this week announced a 26-million-dollar funding boost to support employment opportunities for people with disabilities.

The funding will include 15 million dollars for organisations that provide training and skills development, 9.8 million dollars for disability employment advocacy, and 1.4 million dollars for employment expositions.

The Structural Adjustment Fund aims to develop the supported employment sector, and provide substantial ongoing

support and resources for people with disabilities.

Social Services Minister Amanda Rishworth stated that the funding would give Australians with disabilities greater choice and control over their job options, contributing to a more inclusive society.

The announcement comes as the government prepares to deliver its formal response to the Royal Commission's final report into Violence, Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation of People with Disability by mid-2024.

Lifeline records busiest day

Crisis Support Service, Lifeline, has reported a record number of contacts last weekend, following increased attention on the issue of violence against women in Australia.

The crisis support service received nearly 3500 calls to its 24/7 hotline, and nearly one thousand text and webchat messages.

That is the busiest day on record with contacts 20 per cent above the annual average.

Researcher Dr. Tara Hunt noted the surge reflected the distress Australians are currently experiencing, due to recent violence against women.

The Australian Institute of Health and Welfare found an estimated 3.8 million Australians have experienced physical or sexual domestic violence since age 15, with 25 women dying as a result of gender-based violence this year alone.

Lifeline's increase in contacts suggests people are reaching out for help, either as victim-survivors or those concerned for others.

Federal Minister for Mental Health Rose Jackson, expressed concern over the spike in calls and noted the government had increased its funding for the service.