

Date: 26 April 2018

[More elections](#)

[New Ministers](#)

[The MYER City Council](#)

[A Reflection](#)

## More Elections – the Leg Co seat of Prosser

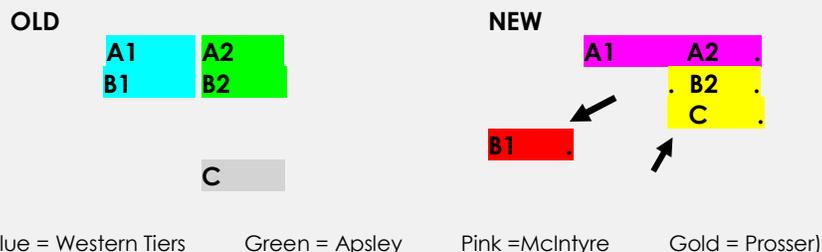
On the 5<sup>th</sup> May, a number of electors will once again go the polls, this time to elect two new Legislative Councillors, in the southern seats of Hobart and Prosser. Prosser is a new seat, covering the south-east corner of the state (it includes Bicheno, Campbell Town, Brighton and Sorell) and together with the northern seat of McIntyre was created last year in an electoral redistribution.

In that redistribution, depicted graphically below, the two seats of Western Tiers and Apsley, divided along a north-south line, were abolished and the two new seats were created, this time divided along a west east line.

In diagrammatic representation of the seats' geography:

- A1 represents the NW, once in Western Tiers, now in McIntyre
- A2 represents the NE, once in Apsley, now in McIntyre
- B1 represents the SW, once in Western Tiers, now in Derwent
- B2 represents the SE, once in Apsley, now in Prosser
- C represents the S, once in Rumney, now in Prosser

*(NB Bits of other seats were added to the mix (e.g. "C" from Rumney in the south) and bits were removed (eg the western part of A1 to its western neighbors and parts of "B1" to Derwent in the south).*



No part of the new electorate of Prosser covers electors once an elector of Western Tiers, whereas a significant part of the new electorate of Prosser covers electors who were once electors of Apsley (B2).

The two existing Legislative Councillors live in the north. Greg Hall was elected to Western Tiers in 2012, and lives in A1, and Tanya Rattray was elected to Apsley in 2016, and lives in A2. Both were serving 6-year terms. What the Electoral Commissioners should have done is declared Rattray the member for Prosser (going to the polls in 2022) and Hall the member for McIntyre (going to the polls in 2018), and the matter would have resolved itself.

However, in a very strange decision indeed, the Redistribution Tribunal, charged with the responsibility to recommend changes to boundaries, determined that both members were to be made members for McIntyre and no-one a member for Prosser. Furthermore, Prosser was to go to the polls in 2018, but McIntyre was not to go until 2022. Very strange indeed!!!

Enter Mr Tony Mulder. Mulder was the **Independent** Member for Rumney, a southern electorate which borders the new seat of Prosser to the east, and the seat of Pembroke to the west. He won the seat from Labor in 2011 but lost it to Labor in 2017. Last year, Mulder had the opportunity of standing for Pembroke, in a byelection. However, he declined to do so, stating at the time that **as a Liberal** he would not stand against a **Liberal-endorsed** candidate.

Now, in 2018, he is standing as an **independent** for Prosser, against a **Liberal-endorsed** candidate. So a very fluid allegiance, methinks.

However, that's not all. On June 8 last year, after having lost the seat of Rumney, Mulder appeared before the Tribunal to present the case that the two sitting members should both be in McIntyre, and gave as reasons:

- that they both lived in the north;
- that Rattray had not really serviced the southern part of her electorate (he had actually done so) as it was too far away from her home, but she wished to continue with her career;
- that Hall was going to retire in 2018 anyway; and therefore
- that the election for Prosser should be held in 2018 and McIntyre in 2022.

The trouble with all of that was that, according to Hall he had never said he was going to retire, and the Commission never sought to confirm this "allegation". And how extraordinarily convenient it would all be for Mulder, if the election for Prosser was to be held in 2018, without a sitting member.

And what business is it of the Tribunal anyway to determine whether a member is an effective member?

The hearing was a veritable Mike and Tony show. No formalities - Hi Mike Hi Tony. (Mike Blake was the Chair of the Tribunal). I have no criticism of Mulder for prosecuting a case (assuming what he said was true), but I am really critical of him for his sin of omission (i.e. that he did not declare his interest in standing for Prosser) and I have deep concerns at the way the Commission responded to this commentary.

I am sure the Tribunal will have answers as to why it made the decision it did, but something does not seem to be kosher, and it leaves a very bad taste.

### **New members of Cabinet**

Two new members have been appointed to Cabinet

#### **A new Minister for Primary Industries and Water**

The new Minister for Primary Industry has had to face three big issues: the fruit fly outbreak, the polo horses on the TT Line, and live sheep exports. Each of them is in the hands of "officers", or outside of her immediate control, but each of them has provided her with a fantastic opportunity to make her mark. Seems to me she is still unsure what to do.

#### **Fruit fly**

The recent discovery of fruit-fly (larvae and adults) in the north of the state is of the utmost concern. Quarantine (biosecurity) officers have responded magnificently and hopefully the outbreak can be contained. The Minister has a responsibility to keep the public's focus on this matter, because public reporting of possible infestations is paramount to the success of the eradication campaign.

She should be providing a focus, in the paper every day, standing shoulder to shoulder with her quarantine staff greeting the TT Line boats, at the airport, picking up fallen fruit in the infected zones etc etc. She should be standing shoulder to shoulder with farmers caught up in the infestation zones, seeking alternative market opportunities for the crop etc. etc. Such a golden opportunity for her to shine, and yet she is notably absent from the day-to-day media.

### **Polo horses**

In January, sixteen horses died *en route* from the north-east of Tasmania to NSW and no-one seems to know how or why. Suspicion immediately fell onto the TT Line boat – “something must have gone wrong on board”. The problem with that theory is that there were other animals on board and they were OK.

So maybe the accident was not caused by the boat, and maybe did not even occur on the boat after all. What were the checks and balances employed on arrival at the dock and on embarkation at the other end? Where was the duty of care? These are simple questions and require an answer.

Three months later, and still no-one is the wiser. The Minister, whose government has responsibility for the TTLine, has a duty of care to clear the ship if in fact the problem did not involve the ship.

To not do so means the suspicion remains, and the reputation of the line suffers.

### **Live Sheep Exports**

After seeing the horrendous footage of animals dying in transit to the Middle East a second vessel has now come under scrutiny for exactly the same thing. There have been so many warnings, and yet animals continue to be subjected to such ghastly treatment. Sorry, but time's up!

The supply chain is broke, and apologists can no longer claim it is simply a case of one bad apple. It is a systemic problem, for what is essentially a gruesome trade. I recall Treasurer Aird once saying "A society can be judged by the way it treats its animals", and he was spot on. It is no argument in justification to say that it's not our problem, because it is. To lay the blame at the feet of the shipper or the importer ignores the fact that they come under an Australian regulatory regime, and it has failed. In fact it has misled its Minister.

The callous disregard with how these animals are shipped and meet their end is to be deplored, and it is time people spoke out against this obscenity. Susan Ley, Liberal member and former Minister has done so. What do you think, Minister?

### **A new Minister for Human Services**

The old Department of Health and Human Services has been broken into two, with the Department of Human Services being hived off as a separate entity, and given to a new and inexperienced Minister.

Poor bugger! What did he do to deserve this? He cannot rely on criticising his predecessor, as new Ministers tend to do, because the previous Minister sits with him in Cabinet. So, he is left with a box of nails, and with no idea how to resolve some deep and systemic problems in the sector. He appears to be all at sea.

His is the public face of the two-speed economy, caring for those that are being left behind. He has responded to these issues as though he has been blinded by headlights, while trying to figure out what to do.

**Homelessness**

A tent city was forming at the Showgrounds. On his appointment, the Minister said he first wanted to be briefed by his Department. The Minister took over 20 days before visiting the show-grounds site, which suggested either a very long briefing or a total lack of empathy if not compassion for those affected. He needs to send out different signals – signals of concern and action.

The government held a summit of sorts, but without any conclusions. One suggestion was to free up land, but the government came up with very little in the way of land. Throw money at the problem? Some \$500,000 has been allocated, but without any guidelines and no payments made as yet.

The response of the Opposition has been to call for a parliamentary Inquiry. Well, that is really helpful, not. What will that achieve, and particularly so in the short term, where the need is greatest. The talk fest continues, and people remain under canvas. In other words, no-one has got an idea.

The issue is critical, and solutions are needed now. Some people say punish landlords into submission, even "dob them in", others say reward them for taking on the homeless. Both approaches are silly, because in a very practical sense, it is not their issue. Solutions such as these don't solve the problem, and relying on the private sector in such a manner to solve the problem is delusional.

The critical point is that the accommodation needed now is emergency accommodation. It should not be seen as an ultimate and a permanent solution, rather that people can have safe and secure shelter.

The longer-term solution involves public housing. The sooner that is accepted, the sooner the problem can be addressed effectively. There is some public housing stock available – it may not be convenient, but it is there, and it can buy some time while longer term solutions are put in place.

As an aside, I suspect every architect has a plan for building temporary accommodation – prefab, demountable, converted containers, all easy manufacture, and all quick to do. Maybe the Minister could also have a chat with them.

**Child Protection**

It is obvious that this area of government activity is under-resourced. So many kids are at risk, and yet, it remains an insoluble problem. It can be resolved, but it needs commitment. This is an area where the Minister can shine, but he will need to get on top of his portfolio very quickly indeed if he is to make an impact.

**Private philanthropy**

Meanwhile, while the government ponders, private philanthropy is stepping in to resolve some deep-seated issues in some of our most disadvantaged suburbs. The crew from MONA are to be congratulated for their recent efforts to provide some practical education in disadvantaged areas. The response from the community was positive.

There's a lesson for our politicians here. Practical solutions can resolve problems. It requires a will, and an understanding. Relying on a bureaucracy to do so without guidance will fail.

In summary:

Our two new Ministers face significant issues, and those issues require leadership if they are to be resolved. Ministers are more than managers. They provide direction. Letting things drift is not an option, and it is certainly not a good career move. We will watch with interest.

### The MYER City Council

After many years of waiting, the Myer store has expanded back into its old space. The Council, pleased to see this development, provided a free one-day park-and-ride service to enable prospective shoppers to park on the domain and catch buses to the city centre, to shop at Myer.

Back in 2014 a deal was made whereby Council was to pay Myer \$3.5 million cash to assist with fitout over 2 years and a similar amount stretched over 4 years, if the company failed to meet an undisclosed turnover target. I made the point at the time that this deal was wrong on so many levels (see #1418, 1419), and I am unaware of how much Council has now paid Myer to stay in Hobart. In fact, how much has now been paid? A question indeed.

What is so special about Myer that Council believes it should gain a benefit over other retail outlets in the city and in other precincts? There has been no similar service provided by Council for shoppers to shop in the city over the last few months? On what basis does the Council determine that the retail future of the city is so dependent on this one department store, run by a company that is now in serious trouble nationally?

Council seems to be blinded by Myer's bigness – when in fact so much positive activity is happening elsewhere. Not that the Council seems to want to encourage people to come to town to experience all the other things that are going on. The parking issue is dire, and yet Council seems to want to increase restrictions. Traffic is a nightmare, and yet Council does not want to resolve the obvious bottleneck of the Davey Macquarie dual carriageway.

Council has argued for less vehicles to come to the city and has argued against making it convenient for motorists, stating that it wants less parking places and talking up the need for a public transport option, whatever that might be. And yet, with Myer, the message has been quite the opposite.

Council should be supporting the precinct, and endeavouring to make it easier for people to come to the city, but it should not be playing store favourites.

### A Reflection

We came together, in the dark. Quietly gathering around the village cenotaph, waiting quietly, each with their own thoughts. At the appointed time, the ceremony started.

We heard of a local lad who lost his life in the trenches. A prayer was given to a God of love and understanding – rather incongruous, considering the circumstances. And yet we listened, searching for some logical explanation for the madness we had come to recall.

A school student then sang the song "And the Band Played Waltzing Matilda". So apt, so touching, so emotional. Flags were raised, and then it was over. As dawn broke in the eastern sky, we departed, back to where we had come.

It was a simple service, poignant, no brass bands, no pomp or grandiose speeches, just us, citizens, locals, in an act of remembrance and reflection.  
...and in the morning, we remembered them.

This newsletter is supported by **Tasman Management Services**.  
Further information can be found at [www.julianamos.com.au](http://www.julianamos.com.au).