

ISSUE 2325

"In Support of Progress" Newsletter

21 December 2023

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Ten Years ON

This newsletter was first produced in 2013, as a vehicle for expressing views "in support of Progress". Effective use of resources, competent leadership and management, and innovation. It is the stuff of progress.

Thus the focus on resource utilisation, such as forestry mining agriculture, power and water, governance in government, and an interest in new approaches to manufacturing and IT. What IS Tasmania's sustainable competitive advantage? And how best to promote it. Statistics and science are useful tools to guide us on this path.

Everything we do has a consequence – we cannot avoid it. The critical piece is to minimise such a disturbance and to offset certain adverse effects with more positive outcomes.

The newsletter has been critical of blanket bans, wobbly science and woke solutions, just as it has been critical of waste, the lack of resolve to improve the human condition and the lack of adherence to appropriate environmental standards (i.e. wanton and willful destruction). In such matters, the public want governments to lead, as distinct from simply manage (i.e. what we do), and the need for a vision (why we do it).

Abattoirs

One cannot help but be horrified by recent footage, showing the mistreatment of animals in their final moments. The matter has been raised before, and one is left to ask why does this still occur?

I am advised cameras are installed in a number of abattoirs, but no-one is monitoring them. Inspectors have been appointed in the past, but they are no longer there. The relevant agencies cannot prosecute because the footage was illegally obtained, and the consequences of closure would have consequences far beyond the premises.

I know the Minister responsible is now driven to resolve this, across all such premises, and I hope the government backs her to the hilt in her resolve.

I am told this is but the tip of a very large iceberg, on-farm (e.g. bobby calves), and within the racing industry, some of which have recently been exposed. I recall when former Treasurer Michael Aird left parliament and was asked about legacy and other such matters, his first response was that we need to do more to ensure animals are properly cared for. A most interesting comment at the time.

Compliance and enforcement issues must be addressed. "No resources" is no excuse. AS well, there is a clear role for the RSPCA in this environment and government could do a lot worse than ensure it is properly resourced.

Political Games.

The maneuvering continues.

Hobart Discerning readers will have noticed an error in my report on the Legislative Council seat of Hobart, when I mentioned John Clark being a candidate. IT should have been John Kelly – I was distracted by the name of the House of Assembly seat while writing it.

And yes, O'Connor has been endorsed by the Greens to contest the seat – so the old is new and the new is old.

Prosser Together with Jane Howlett -Liberal and (Bryan) Green - Labor, also throwing her hat in the ring is Pam Sharpe, former History Professor and an avid campaigner for the "Save the UTAS Campus" cause. Although the issue is Hobart-centric, Sharpe now lives at Swansea, which is in the Prosser electorate.

House of Assembly

The New Norfolk mayor gets pre-selected by Labor, then withdraws her nomination. It is the second time this has occurred. One can only wonder why one would go through a process of pre-selection, only to withdraw once pre-selected.

Jackie Lambie announces more candidates, and the Shooters and Fishers Party will also have a presence on the ballot paper.

Unclear

And, hello, former MP Elise Archer now has a billboard thanking the electorate for past support. The reason is obvious. So, Elise, House of Assembly or Legislative Council?

Waste Recycling

Without going into a rave about this, waste is an issue we must all come to terms with. Discarding stuff, as anyone visiting a tip will tell you, involves huge volumes of material, much of which could be recycled given the incentive to do so.

I have been impressed with the work done by the University of NSW in recycling plastic and its use in steel making.

There was some work done here in Tasmania a few years ago to establish a high temperature furnace, which in its use could recover waste metals, utilitarian and precious. Also recently brought before this government was an opportunity to recycle rubber tyres, by crumbing the rubber and its re-use in Tasmania for the production of a range of solid products, plus as a road surface mixed with bitumen. Nothing further happened.

The government has recently (2022) established a Waste and Resource Recovery Board, which has spent this last year getting its internal affairs sorted and drafting a Strategy, which can be accessed on their website. It is a good starting point, and it has been necessary to do so, but from here on in it needs to initiate action.

It is a classic case of where to start. One can spend a lot of time – too much time – arguing over priorities, but as is always the case, priorities will differ depending on the interests of those prosecuting the case. So, the answer to that question really is there is no one starting point. Much needs to be done and much can be done. Getting started is better than not starting at all. And building a profile of actions taken would be to the Board's advantage.

Fire

Being aware that we are now fast approaching the fire season – be prepared. The warnings are out there. Authorities are gearing up for a difficult season.

So...Where would you go if fire threatened your home. Have you packed an emergency pack. Animals?

Because it could happen to you!

Local Government

A reflection on the number of times local government amalgamation has been brought up, consultations initiated and inquiries held. So much time and energy, and so little result. The fact of the matter is if there is no will by government to make it happen then it won't happen. QED

So, next time, Minister, no more "Mr. Nice Guy". If you are serious about reform, and you say you are, then the ball is in your court to make it happen.

End of year

Unless something very untoward happens, this will be the last edition of "In Support of Progress" for 2023. Some 25 editions, each one endeavouring to comment and provide an opinion on various aspects of the social and economic agenda for the state. Each of them has been written with the social and economic progress of the state in mind.

Some topics have been truly international, others have had a whole-of-state emphasis, such as housing and health, the rollout of infrastructure, the political scene, yet others have had a decidedly local tinge, such as Macquarie Point, the stadium, and UTas.

I am pleased that the newsletter continues to enjoy the coverage and support that it has, and I am thankful for that. May I close off by wishing you an enjoyable and safe festive season, and I look forward to communicating with you once again in 2024.

May 2024 treat us well.

An afterthought

An afterthought – and I dedicate the rest of the page to it.

IT concerns one of the BIG government decisions, recently made.

For some reason I have really struggled over whether to make a comment on paramedics trying to bring some cheer at this time. It has certainly been a topic many others have commented on.

Would reindeer antlers on ambulances really be a road hazard? Seriously I don't think so, and the gesture was a simple recognition and acknowledgement by paramedics to bring some cheer at this time to an otherwise difficult job.

Perhaps, Minister, they could wear Santa hats?

I wish them well.

And Minister, may you also find some joy this festive season!