

\$220m. climate response



Tasmania's response to the threat of climate change took on substance in February with the announcement of a \$220 million water-infrastructure strategy. Opening the Meander Dam project, the Premier, Paul Lennon, announced the State would add up to \$80 million to a Commonwealth commitment of \$140 million for Tasmanian water projects. "Over the coming three years, we will witness the greatest on-ground water development activity seen in Tasmania since the boom days of hydro development," he promised. "We want to start rolling these projects out as quickly as possible. Work is well progressed on assessing the feasibility of a number of ... projects to get them to the construction stage."

The projects include:

- Pipelines and dams to take water from the Poatina Channel in the central highlands to the midlands and further south;
- A chain of large dams in the north-east to underpin major dairy farming developments;
- A series of developments in the central highlands to greatly improve water security for Hydro Tasmania and for towns and irrigators in the Ouse and Clyde catchments;
- Pipelines to take water from Hydro Tasmania storages to irrigate rich farmlands in the Mersey-Forth region;

- Pipelines to take water from the new Meander Dam to surrounding farmland so the benefits of the development can be shared across a much greater area of the Meander Valley.

The proposals will be designed to increase statewide irrigation water by over 250,000 megalitres a year – the equivalent of more than 10 Meander-sized dams.

Mr Lennon said farmers would require an extra 150-200,000 megalitres of irrigation water by 2015. "That would mean a 40-50 per cent increase in our existing irrigation supplies," he said. "Water is the key to the continued growth of our rural and regional communities. A drought-proofed Tasmania has the capacity to become the southern food bowl of Australia. We already have the nation's most efficient irrigation farmers, as well as large areas of good farming land that could be used for irrigated agriculture. What we need is the ability to access stored water - and that investment is now well underway."

Mr Lennon said Tasmania, with less than 1 per cent of Australia's landmass, received nearly 12 per cent of Australia's rainfall. "It is an absurdity that Tasmania should ever be in a position where it is short of water. That is why I have made it one of my central commitments for 2008 to work to drought-proof Tasmania for the future. ... capturing run-off and storing it rather than watching megalitres of storm water simply run down the drain."

Chef influx whets appetites

By Graeme Phillips

It's the produce, stupid. And the lifestyle. And the environment. And....

For whatever reason, the past year or so has seen an unprecedented influx of highly talented young chefs into Tasmania from other States and overseas.

They've brought with them fresh skills, youthful energy and passionate commitment that are transforming the local food scene and promising great things for the future.

The most recent arrival is Alistair Wise, 28, returning to his home town of Hobart after working with *uber*-celebrity chef Gordon Ramsey – two years with him in London and, for the past year, heading up the pastry kitchen in Ramsey's first restaurant/hotel venture in New York.

Frank Bruni, the formidable restaurant reviewer for the *New York Times* wrote in his Ramsey review: "The best desserts by the pastry chef, Alistair Wise, were terrific: a tarte *tatin* with crisp pastry, and a flawless apricot soufflé with sugary almonds and almond ice cream."

Wise fulfilled his one-year contract, winning his employer the *New York Magazine's* best "bonbon trolley" award with his chocolates, nougats, fudges etc, beating chefs like Ducasse, Robuchon and Thomas Keller for the award in the restaurant's first year.

"Going to New York was the best thing I've done," Wise said. "It was hard work but it put my head in the right space, made me realise that the most important things are excellence, execution and consistency and that, for the customer, there's no such thing as a restaurant having a good day or a bad day."

Like Wise, who is running the kitchen at Café Toulouse in Harrington Street, Luke Burgess is the protégé of another world-famous chef, Tetsuya Wakuda of Sydney – who also happens to be Brand Tasmania's ambassador at large. After working in London and New York, Burgess and his partner, Katarina Birchmeier, fell in love with Tasmania while here on a photographic shoot for *Gourmet* magazine. A few more visits, a good look round and, last July, they opened their first restaurant, Pecora, at Grandveve Cheesery, in Birchs Bay, south of Hobart.

"We really wanted something out of the city and the Huon-Channel area is perfect," Burgess said. "In terms of quality produce and wine, it has everything going for it and could become one of Australia's great regional food icons."

Swiss chef, Xavier Mouche, arrived by a more circuitous route via Michelin three-star restaurants in Europe and a number of years in Sydney as head chef at the highly acclaimed Regent and Bathers Pavilion.

He was sunning himself on a beach in north Queensland when he saw an ad for a position in northern Tasmania, hopped in his car, drove straight down and is now in the process of re-launching the 50-year-old Launceston institution, Pierre's, as an up-market French bistro.

For young Hobartians, Narelle Monks and Fabian Christoph, it was a more normal progression of apprenticeships in Tasmania followed by experience in diverse kitchens in Melbourne, then managing and cooking at a hotel in England before jumping in the deep end with their first solo venture, the classic-style Restaurant 373, in north Hobart. It is now one of the best and most popular in the city.

Michael Godfrey, 28, and Iain Todd, 24, also brought their Melbourne and UK experience with them when they opened Piccallily in Battery Point last September and proceeded to introduce Hobart diners to what they call *assiette dining*, small-plate menus of exquisite modern European-style food.

And, in Wrest Point's 35th birthday year, young home-grown chef, Luke Stepsys, is transforming The Point with his brilliant exposition of the up-to-the-minute, molecular-style food that originated at El Bulli in Spain and is now sweeping the world.

It really is a most exciting time.

Foonote:

Five of Hong Kong's leading executive chefs visited Tasmania in February to sample natural produce and experience the environment in which it is produced. The Minister for Economic



Development and Tourism, Paula Wriedt, who hosted the visit, said the tour had potential to expand exports to the booming gateway city.

Irish order boosts Incat

An Irish-based leasing company, MGC Chartering Ltd, has ordered a wave-piercing catamaran from Incat Tasmania. The order for the shipyard's third 112-metre vessel was confirmed in February soon after an Incat consortium was awarded a multi-million design contract that places it on a short-list for a \$2 billion United States defence deal.



The Hobart shipyard is putting the finishing touches to a second order from Higashi Nihon Ferry for a 112-metre car ferry after delivering the first of the series, *Natchan Rewa*, for service between Honshu and Hokkaido last August. The second ship, *Natchan World*, was launched in February and will be completed in mid-year. At nearly 11,000 gross tonnes, the *Natchan World* will have a loaded draught of just 3.83 metres, enabling her to operate in the shallowest of ports. *Natchan World* has eye-catching livery based on children's sketches of "lovely creatures".

Incat executives are hopeful about a third order from Higashi Nihon Ferry.

Meanwhile, Hull 066 will be specifically designed for the European ferry market, with capacity to carry 417 cars or 567 lane-metres of trucks and 195 cars at around 40 knots. Stylish accommodation has been designed to cater for 1,200 people in luxurious comfort. Delivery to Ireland is scheduled for February 2009.

MGC Chartering Director, Darryl Tishler, said: "We have over 25 years experience in aviation leasing and in founding MGC Chartering we have adapted that very successful aviation model to the needs of the ferry market. Our intention is to acquire quality assets like the Incat catamaran and then market a range of charter options to potential global operators, be they commercial or military."

Mr Tishler said his choice of vessel had been influenced from experience of trends in the aviation industry. "The Incat 112 metre is built to be as light as possible and it consumes clean diesel fuel ... the economic and environmental credentials of the vessel are outstanding."

Incat's design contract with the US Department of Defense (DoD) was secured in collaboration with Revolution Design Pty Ltd. The two Tasmanian-based companies are part of an international consortium bidding for a Joint High Speed Vessel (JHSV) contract. The JHSV program aims to supply a multi-use vessel to serve the US Navy, Army, Marines, and the US Special Operations Command (or SOCOM). The bidding consortium is led by Incat's US partner, Louisiana-based Bollinger Shipyards Inc. "As one of three companies chosen for a preliminary design contract, the Incat consortium is well placed to proceed to the next phase, thanks to the experience it has built up while providing three vessels for intensive US military service," Incat Chairman, Robert Clifford, said.

The Incat-built HSV-X1 *Joint Venture*, TSV-1X *Spearhead* and HSV-2 *Swift*, have been deployed in recent years by DoD as logistic support and to trial military application of high-speed vessel technology. The three craft have operated in the Persian Gulf, the Horn of Africa and South East Asia. HSV-2 *Swift* also successfully supported tsunami relief operations in Indonesia and the response to the Hurricane Katrina disaster on the US Gulf Coast. The Australian Navy used an 86-metre Incat vessel, HMAS *Jervis Bay*, during the East Timor crisis.

The JHSV will be a new-generation, multi-use vessel capable of transporting troops and their equipment and supporting humanitarian relief efforts. It will be able to operate in shallow waters and to reach speeds of more than 35 knots fully loaded.

The 112-metre model forms the basis of the Incat consortium's bid for the JHSV contract. The largest catamaran built in Australia, it has demonstrated in commercial service in Japan its sea-keeping qualities and high levels of passenger comfort. If its bid is successful, the consortium expects an initial order for eight or nine vessels, which would reportedly be worth \$2 billion.

State revenue surges



The Tasmanian Government is now positioned to fund construction of a new Royal Hobart Hospital, as well as a range of other initiatives, without resorting to politically difficult methods of financing, according to noted economic commentator Saul Easlake.

The ANZ Bank's Tasmanian-born Chief Economist said the Government could be well-pleased with the outcome of its Mid-Year Review of the 2007-08 Budget, which included a \$245 million upward revision of forecast revenue.

In a detailed assessment of the review, Mr Easlake said the Government's financial position had improved dramatically since the June 2007 Budget, allowing it to fund the bulk of the projected hospital cost of more than \$1 billion from future budget surpluses, without departing from its fiscal strategy objectives and without forced sales of government business enterprises.

An edited version of Mr Easlake's assessment follows:

Revenue projections for 2007-08 through 2010-11 have been revised upwards by an average of \$245 million a year, or by nearly \$1 billion (6 per cent) in total, while forecast operating **expenses** have been revised upwards by an average of only \$69 million a year, or just \$274 million in total. The Government's projected **net operating balance** (a measure of the extent to which on-going expenses are covered by revenues) has thus improved by a total of more than \$700 million over the current financial year and the remaining three years of the forward estimates period. Instead of running an operating deficit of \$38 million in 2007-08, as originally forecast in the June Budget, the Government now expects a surplus of \$144 million; while the operating surpluses projected for 2008-09 through 2010-11 have been revised upwards from an average of \$19 million a year to an average of \$194 million a year.

And with very little change to projections of the capital side of the Budget, the projected **fiscal balance** (the accrual-accounting measure of the Government's 'bottom-line') improves by a total of \$641 million over the four-year forward estimates period, with the small deficits previously forecast for 2007-08 and 2008-09 turned into surpluses of over \$100 million, rising to over \$200 million in 2009-10 and 2010-11.

These improvements, together with the higher-than-expected proceeds from the sale of Hobart Airport just before Christmas, are mirrored in significant upward revisions to the Government's **cash surpluses**, by over \$350 million for the current financial year, and by a total of \$717 million over the four-year forward estimates period. This, in turn, has allowed Treasury to project a significant improvement in the Government's **net debt** position: the Government's net financial assets are now expected to exceed its net financial liabilities by almost \$1.8 billion by 30 June 2011, compared with the Budget-time forecast of \$946 million.

Revenue windfalls

The substantial improvement in the State Government's financial position is entirely due to significant upward revisions to the Budget-time forecasts of revenues. Continuing the dramatic improvements in the amount and quality of information presented by Treasury, which was a noticeable feature of Michael Aird's first Budget, the Mid-Year Review indicates that these revisions stem from:

- upward revisions to **State taxation revenue** of \$360 million (or more than 11 per cent) over the four-year forward estimates period, of which more than two-thirds (\$235 million) comes from higher **stamp duty** revenues, as a result of a large number of commercial property transactions in the current financial year, as well as a more buoyant outlook for property transactions over the remaining three years. **Payroll tax** revenues have also been revised up by a total of \$136 million, on the back of higher forecasts for wages growth, while **land tax** revenues have been revised up by \$7 million for 2007-08 and 2008-09, but downwards by a similar amount for the two following years;

- upward revisions to forecasts of **GST revenue** and other payments from the Commonwealth, totalling \$237 million;
- \$136 million in additional **interest income** as a result of higher interest rates (since the State Budget is now a net creditor, higher interest rates actually improve the budgetary position rather than worsen it, as used to be the case in the 1980s and 1990s);
- an additional \$253 million (over four years) from a range of other sources, including an additional \$17 million in Department of Justice fees and fines in 2007-08 alone; increased revenues from Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) user charges; and higher tax equivalent payments from the MAIB and Transend, partly offset by lower payments from Hydro Tasmania.

These are all what are known in the language of Budget documents as 'parameter variations', that is, changes in the Budget estimates that are the result of changes in economic assumptions, patterns of service demand and delivery, or other factors outside the Government's control.

By contrast, 'policy decisions' have contributed very little to the improvement in the projected Budget position since the Budget. Over the past eight months, policy decisions have cost a total of just \$80 million over the four-year forward estimates period, of which \$37 million is attributable to additional pensioner concessions for Aurora energy bills.

The Government has maintained fairly tight control over expenses, which abstracting from the impact of policy decisions have been revised upwards by only 1.3 per cent, largely reflecting additional DHHS expenditure (a good deal of which is in turn offset by increased user charges).

Hospital funding now much easier

The dramatic improvement in the Government's budgetary position as a result of these revenue windfalls has greatly simplified the task of financing the construction of the proposed new **Royal Hobart Hospital**, as well as allowing it to provide for additional capital works at the Launceston General Hospital and the North-West Regional Hospital, and provide a further \$60 million for public **housing**, without compromising any of the Fiscal Strategy objectives laid down by the Treasurer in his first Budget.

The Tasmanian Government has sold Hobart International Airport for \$350.5 million, to a consortium consisting of Macquarie Capital Group Ltd, Macquarie Global Infrastructure Fund III and Tasmania's Retirement Benefits Fund. The airport was the last in Australia to remain under the ownership of a State Government and its sale was foreshadowed in the 2006-07 State Budget. The Premier, Paul Lennon, said: "The Government will invest the sale proceeds [net \$300m.] in infrastructure projects critical to our State's continued progress. The projects will include hospital infrastructure, including the Royal Hobart Hospital, the new Brighton Transport Hub and agricultural water storage and irrigation."

Mr Lennon said the new owners planned to continue to invest in the airport to support traffic growth and had advised the Government they intended to retain all existing airport employment. The airport is located on a 570-hectare site at Cambridge and caters for 1.6 million passengers a year on around 12,000 flights. Tiger Airways began its first flights in and out of the airport on 15 January.

Previously, the only options open to the Government for meeting the cost of building a new Royal Hobart Hospital had been some combination of:

- diverting the previously projected cash surpluses away from the Super-annuation Provision Account (to which most of the Government's surpluses had been directed since it became 'net debt free' in 2004-05), thereby pushing out even further the timetable for fully off-setting Tasmania's unfunded super-annuation liability;
- borrowing at least part of the cost, potentially imperilling the objectives of keeping the fiscal balance in surplus on a four-year rolling average basis and of keeping the 'general government' sector net debt-free; or
- undertaking the sale of part, or all, of one or more government business enterprises, such as Aurora or Transend, which would have entailed considerable political difficulty for a government which came to office in 1998 on a platform which included a pledge to maintain the State's electricity assets in public ownership.

Now, however, with Treasury revising upwards the Government's projected cash surpluses by an average of almost \$180 million a year out to 2010-11, and assuming that similar upward revisions would apply to the following two years, the Government can easily divert \$150 million a year into a 'Hospital Capital Fund' which ... would provide \$900 million (not including interest earnings on the fund) towards the capital cost of a new RHH and additional works at the LGH and NWRH. And to the extent that the total cost exceeds that amount, it seems plausible that the difference could be borrowed while still staying within the Fiscal Strategy requirement that the fiscal balance be in surplus on a rolling four-year average basis (although it might be in deficit in the year in which any borrowings were undertaken), and that the general government sector remain 'net debt free'.

None of this is to say that (in this analyst's opinion) it would necessarily have been wrong to fund at least part of the cost of the new hospital by additional borrowings or by asset sales. But it is quite understandable that if the Government doesn't need to contemplate either of these courses of action, it can rule them out.

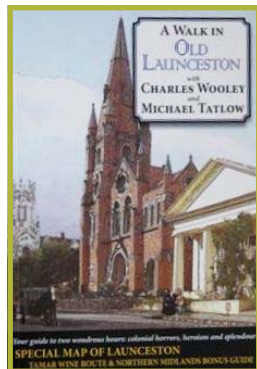
All this is not to say that Tasmania does not still have substantial economic and social challenges ahead. It clearly does. But provided the global and national economies 'hold up' as implicitly assumed (something over which the Tasmanian Government, of course, has no influence), then the State is in a much better position to meet those challenges than it appeared as recently as eight months ago.

For Saul Eslake's full analysis: economics@anz

Walking off the shelves

By Christopher Bantick

They have done it again! Tasmanian streetscape raconteurs, Charles Wooley and Michel Tatlow, have turned their attention north after the success of *A Walk in Old Hobart*.



The recent publication of *A Walk in Old Launceston*, (Walk Guides Australia, \$18.00) generated 1,800 sales in three days from just four outlets in Launceston. It even made the best-seller list in Hobart.

So what is it about this brace of outstanding sellers? The answer is simple: Wooley and Tatlow have an acute ear for what people want. These are simply told stories of Tasmania's two premier cities.

The successful template of *A Walk in Old Hobart* has been used again in *A Walk in Old Launceston*. The book is an unfussy mix of jocular observations, sound historical material, excellent photographs and cut backs to the past in 'Snapshots'. But the feature that is, perhaps, the book's strongest selling point is that this is a strolling read. Good for the body and good for conversation.

The Launceston book is a little longer than the Hobart study. Oops, is this an admission of Launceston having more to offer? Well without massaging the old north and south divide, the simple fact is that the Hobart book has taught the writers what to include and what readers want. And yes, the north/south animus is not quite forgotten.

Teasingly, the authors offer the tantalising prospect that the golden hatchets, the famed symbols of the ending of the Hobart and Lonnie angst, are secreted beneath the pavement outside the Launceston Hotel. A section, Bureaucratic Buffoons, offers a full description of the reverential act of burying the hatchets in 1959 to end the north-south rivalry.

This is a diverting feature of the book, but plenty of others are to be found in its 110 pages. It depends on what you're interested in, but the piece on Launceston's Albert Hall puts into context the significance of the building to the whole of Tasmania.

The Snapshot for 1835, beginning with: "Your pony is taking your open cart into the dusty track called Cameron Street from Tamar Street one balmy day..." is an example of their capacity to set the scene in historical terms.

The inclusion of the mandatory city map with numbers showing the location of various sites discussed in the book is ideal for travellers from the south, tourists generally and Launceston locals, who may be assisted in rediscovering their city.

While all the big public buildings are included, along with many anecdotes, there is also a certain charm about identifying stately Georgian houses in Quality Row.

This book was destined for best-seller status from its launch. It is one for the glove box. Next time you're in Launceston you might like to pass time in the company of Wooley and Tatlow. And yes, they will lead you astray.

\$6.1m. ICT infusion

Seven organisations are sharing more than \$6.1 million in funding from the third round of Tasmania's Market Access and Partnership Program (MAPP). The grants, part of the State's \$40 million Intelligent Island program, are awarded on a competitive basis to assist ICT companies to commercialise products or services for global markets.

Three rounds of MAPP have distributed more than \$12.6 million to businesses in all regions. The latest round of grants is detailed in the accompanying table.

Organisation	Grant (\$)	Project
Point Duty P/L	1,100,000	Development and commercialisation of Phase II of the Point Duty Intelligent Services system
ICS Multimedia P/L	722,500	Development, commercialisation and marketing of Tracker – an integrated tourism/parks management tool
Pan Logica P/L	550,000	Commercialisation and global market development of Neptune – an aquaculture-planning solution
Future Medium P/L	491,633	Product development and global commercialisation of Investrak web-reporting infra-

Organisation	Grant (\$)	Project
Etech Tasmania P/L	1,800,000	Product development and commercialisation of Mobile Learning Interface and Content educational software
Blue Rocket P/L	1,203,695	Development, commercialisation and marketing of toonpets.tv, a children's broadband entertainment channel
TasIT	250,000	A comprehensive assessment of the capability of the Tasmanian ICT industry

Announcing the grants, the Federal Minister for Innovation, Industry, Science and Research, Senator Kim Carr, said: "The seven innovative projects funded under this round will assist in creating a globally competitive Tasmanian ICT sector and further ... the goal of fostering a strong and vibrant culture of innovation to help sustain Australia's future prosperity."

The Premier, Paul Lennon, said the successful applicants demonstrated the diverse expertise being developed by Tasmanian ICT businesses.

In addition to software development, commercialisation and market expansion across the tourism, defence, aquaculture, finance, e-learning and broadband entertainment industries, a MAPP special grant was offered to the Tasmanian Information Technology and Telecommunications Industry Association (TasIT) to undertake an industry capability assessment.

Applications for grants were assessed by an independent industry-based panel that chose some projects specifically for the benefits they would deliver to the ICT sector as a whole. Mr Lennon said: "The program has been well-received by the Tasmanian ICT industry and is providing important support to allow the development of projects across a range of industries."

The \$40 million Intelligent Island Program is funded by the Australian Government and administered by the Tasmanian Department of Economic Development.

Expressions of Interest for the fourth and final round of MAPP opened on 4 February 2008.

More information: www.development.tas.gov.au

Launching pad for leaders



A formally structured, board-administered Tasmanian Leaders Program has been initiated to help develop the State's future leaders. Participants will be offered a unique life-changing opportunity to enhance and develop their leadership

capacity by meeting, exchanging ideas and working together at regular intervals through an action-packed annual program, according to the program's not-for-profit incorporated association. A board of eight prominent Tasmanians is committed to the following vision: "To make Tasmania a better place to live, work, do business and [to] contribute to the community."

Expected benefits to participants, their employers or sponsors and the community are:

- High-calibre training, delivering more rounded, effective employees and more aware potential senior managers.
- A unique, life-changing experience for participants, exposing them to the collective wisdom of a range of business, industry, government, community and arts leaders.
- The development of life-long connections with a strong, diverse network across a broad cross-section of backgrounds, sectors and outlooks.

- Broad knowledge of issues affecting Tasmania and the development of a vision for Tasmania's future, with a focus on the next 10 years.
- Establishment of innovative community or business development projects.

The program will be delivered over a few days each month for a 10-month period each year, giving participants opportunities to develop:

- Understanding of self, understanding of others and insight into group dynamics.
- Skills in motivating, mentoring and leading people.
- Capacity to work with change and foster innovation.
- Competency in problem solving, analysing complex information and assessing competing objectives.
- Communication skills.

The program will develop participants' skills through exposure to business and community leaders, interaction with other participants, field trips and discussion of case studies. Residential retreats and monthly sessions will feature prominent leaders and opinion makers, with significant opportunity for question-and-answer sessions.



Participants will complete a research-based or hands-on community project. There will be no examinations, but each entrant must participate in:

- A four-day opening retreat

- A three-day mid year retreat
- A two-day end of year retreat
- A total of approximately one and a half-days each month for 10 months, comprising: day-long sessions exploring key local, national and international issues; leadership lunches; arts, cultural and leadership evening functions; small (syndicate) group activities; and field trips.

The program's board is chaired by John Perry, manager of London Metropolitan University's Knowledge Transfer Partnerships Centre. He is a barrister and solicitor of the High Court of Australia, a number of State Supreme Courts and a solicitor of England and Wales. He is a board member of London's largest charity for homeless people, St Mungo's.

The members of the board are:

Gillian Biscoe, who has worked across the globe for the World Health Organisation, AusAID and the Asian Development Bank, with an emphasis on policy, strategy, leadership and change management in the health sector. Ms Biscoe lectures at various universities on leadership and development.

Bob Campbell, who has experience in human resource management, recruitment, policy development, training and industrial relations. Mr Campbell provides leadership in strategic and operational planning, organisational design, team building and facilitation.

Brian Lewis, who consults in the public, private and non-government sectors across a range of industries in Australia, Britain, Hong Kong and New Zealand. Mr Lewis's focus is on leadership and management development, organisation development and review, strategic and business planning and executive coaching.

Norm McIlfratrick, who is Secretary of the Department of Economic Development, Chief Executive of Tasmania Development and Resources and a Director of the Tasmania Development Board.

Anthea Pritchard, Marketing Manager for J. Boag & Son, a member of the Food Industry Council of Tasmania and a Fellow of the Australian Marketing Institute.

Kathryn Thomas, Learning Lead for IBM's Global Business Service Consulting Services (BCS), responsible for training programs across the Asia Pacific. Her communication skills and knowledge have earned her appointment to both IBM's and PriceWaterhouseCooper's global learning teams.

Approximately 50 Tasmania business leaders from all regions and sectors have agreed to be Leadership Champions and will work to ensure the program attracts quality participants and that the Tasmanian community receives maximum benefit.

The program hopes to attract applications from emerging leaders with at least five years experience in their fields. Interest is expected from all sectors, including community not-for-profit organisations, statutory organisations, local government and small to large businesses.

Participants must be prepared to examine their own beliefs, have their values challenged and to give of themselves to their community. Selection will be based on the following criteria:

- Proven leadership record with clear potential for further growth;
- Above-average achievement, with at least five years relevant experience;
- Capacity to enter senior levels of management;
- Potential to contribute significantly to the wider Tasmanian community;
- Willingness and capacity to accept the required time and energy commitment.

Applicants will be short listed and selected for interviews from written applications. As places are limited the board intends the selection process to be robust to ensure high quality participants from diverse backgrounds. Many qualified candidates will not be chosen because of the need for diversity. However, individuals not selected are strongly encouraged to re-apply in subsequent years. Applicants must have the full support of their employer organisation and only in exceptional circumstances (and by prior arrangement) will more than one participant be chosen from any one organisation each year.

Participants must be able to attend a schedule of events, including residential retreats. To cover some of the program's costs a contribution of \$3,300 (including GST) will be levied on each participant's employer or sponsor and each successful candidate will contribute \$880 (including GST).

Cost should not restrict any eligible candidate from applying. If funding is an issue for you or your organisation this should be stated in your application.

Tasmanian Leaders provides program sponsorship opportunities. The organisation is seeking the support from sponsors willing to invest in the development of leadership in this State. Financial sponsorship and in-kind support, such as providing speakers or venues, will be important to the on-going success of the program. Sponsor relationship agreements will be developed individually to suit organisational needs.

For more information:

info@tasmanianleaders.org.au

Tassie treats in Paris

Tasmania's rapidly expanding cherry sector is fetching premium prices in



Europe as well as Japan. Black Devil cherries from Lennonville Orchards on Bruny Island were selling for the equivalent of \$80 Australian dollars in Paris in January. As well as Black Devils, Lennonville grows Lapin, Van, Regina, Sweetheart, Sweet Georgia, Simone, Kordia and Sylvia varieties which it supplies to out-of-season markets in the northern hemisphere, including the United States, Norway, Russia, Holland, Germany, Belgium, France, Spain and Italy. Shipments have also been sent to Thailand, Taiwan, India, Dubai, Malaysia, Hong Kong and India.

Lennonville's 1.6ha of orchards, which Minnesota businessman Jon Grunseth began progressively planting in 1997, now include 15,500 trees. Mr Grunseth's historic 126.6ha property is being offered for sale.

While Tasmanians are used to hearing about lavish fruit prices in Japan, where Reid Fruits' Satonishki and Benishuo cherries have fetched \$180 a kilo, European prices of \$80 a kilo will also be food for thought for local orchardists.

Hospital team finalised

The consultant team for the redevelopment of the Royal Hobart Hospital has been finalised. The Government has appointed civil and structural engineers Connell Wagner, environmentally sustainable design (ESD) consultants Kingston & Associates (Australia) and Umow Lai Environment and quantity surveyors Davis Langdon and Padgham.

Melbourne-based Connell Wagner will join local firm Pitt & Sherry to provide civil and structural engineering services. Hobart-based Kingston & Associates will work with Melbourne-based consultants Umow Lai Environment to provide advice on ESD issues, including energy efficiency, greenhouse emission reduction, indoor environment quality and waste minimisation. Quantity surveyors Davis Langdon and Padgham & Partners have formed a new partnership, Davis Langdon Padgham, for the project.

Meanwhile, the Hobart Railyards were confirmed in February as a suitable site for the hospital. A site investigation conducted by Pitt & Sherry found there were no insurmountable problems posed by soil contamination or climate change risks.

More information: www.newroyal.tas.gov.au

Blackout risk denied

Tasmania's energy needs can be met without any risks of power cuts, Hydro Tasmania said in a statement issued in February. Although below-average rainfall continues to affect dam storages, energy demand can be met through a combination of hydro generation, Basslink – which is capable of supplying 25 per cent of total demand – and the gas-fired Bell Bay Power Station which can supply up to 15 per cent.

Existing wind supplies can meet about 3 per cent of demand. General Manager Communications and External Relations, Andrew Catchpole, said recent media reports of pending blackouts were premature given it would require a number of events to occur at the same time, including a prolonged unavailability of Baslink, for there to be even the slightest possibility of restrictions.

Tasdance's national award

Launceston-based Tasdance is joint winner of the national Sidney Myer Performing Arts Award for 2008. The company will share the \$40,000 award with The Song Company of Sydney, but Artistic Director Annie Greig said the money was only a bonus. "The acknowledgement from our peers in the performing arts is what is most gratifying," she said. However, the prize money will enable Tasdance to take its main production for the year, *Parenthesis*, to Melbourne in July and August.

Another jobs record

Employment in Tasmania achieved another record in January, with the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) reporting 230,500 people in the workforce. Since January 1999, jobs have increased by 18.9 per cent, or 36,600 extra positions. Unemployment remained steady at 5.3 per cent, because of a small rise in the labour force participation rate. ABS data also shows long-term unemployment at a record low during the year to January 2008 when an average of only 2,800 people had been out of work for at least 52 weeks. This was a 30 per cent improvement on the previous year and compares with long-term unemployment levels of 8,500 a decade ago.

Exports up by 13.1pc

Merchandise exports from Tasmania grew by 13.1 per cent to \$3.75 billion in the year to December 2007, according to Australian Bureau of Statistics figures. National growth in that period was 2.6 per cent. China and Hong Kong accounted for 22 per cent of Tasmania's exports, with Japan taking 18.7 per cent.

Mini hydro deal

Hydro Tasmania Consulting has been awarded a \$25 million contract to supply and construct six mini hydro plants for Melbourne Water. Tyco Tamar, based at Exeter, will supply the mechanical, electrical and control equipment for the project which will supply enough power for 5,000 homes from installations at Preston, Olinda, Mt View, Upper Yarra, Notting Hill and Silvan Reservoirs.

Beauty on line

Tasmanian photographer Nerida Manson has launched a website featuring a portfolio of outstanding images of the State's wild places. The home page says: "Nerida's love of the natural world, camping and bushwalking have been instrumental in developing her passion for photography. Her work has taken her to a diverse cross-section of landscapes, from remote alpine beaches, turquoise bays, mountain tops, ancient rainforests and weather-beaten coasts. Using a panoramic camera, Nerida's work enables viewers to gain a sense of the true beauty of these locations."

See for yourself at: www.neridamanson.com

Hey big spenders ...

Tasmanians spent a record \$424 million on goods and services in December 2007, according to the Australian Bureau of Statistics. In trend terms, the value of retail trade increased by 0.1 per cent in December 2007 and was 6.8 per cent above the level recorded a year earlier.



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