



Senator Claire Moore

Labor Senator for Queensland

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Michael Caisley (ALP Candidate for Longman), Claire, and Bill Gissane (ALP Candidate for Fisher) at the annual **Woodford Folk Festival** on 30 Dec 2012. This was the festival's 27th year. [Click here](#) for views of the 2012 festival.

Welcome to the first Weekly Update of 2013

The **Weekly Update** provides links, media announcements, and current information.

4 January 2013

Dad and Partner Pay



Dad and Partner Pay started 1st Jan 2013 – Dad and Partner Pay is a new entitlement under the Australian Government's Paid Parental Leave scheme, that is paid directly by the Federal Government.

It provides eligible working dads or partners with financial support to be able to take time off work to bond with their new baby and support mums or partners in the vital early months of their baby's life.

The Gillard Government is giving eligible dads and same-sex partners something to cheer about this new year with the new Dad and Partner Pay scheme which started on 1 Jan 2013.

Claire encourages new and expecting parents in Queensland to apply for Dad and Partner pay. "Dad and Partner Pay gives eligible dads and other partners two weeks paid leave at the national minimum wage, which is currently about \$606 a week," she said. "This extra support will give new dads the financial security to take some time off work when the new baby is born.

"They will be able to spend that time at home helping and bonding with the newborn in those critical early weeks of a child's life."

The Dad and Partner Pay extended the Government's historic Paid Parental Leave scheme, which has been supporting local families since January 2011.

For more information call 136 150 on Parents hotline or Visit www.australia.gov.au/dadandpartnerpay . To download Dad & Partner Pay supporting material visit: www.fahcsia.gov.au/dadandpartnerpay

Engineering Hub reality for University of Sunshine Coast (USC)

- Claire and Wayne Swan, the Deputy Prime Minister & Treasurer, were at USC's Sippy Downs Campus on the Sunshine Coast on Thur 3 Jan to mark the successful bid by the University from the Federal Government's [Education Investment Fund](#).



More young Australians will have a career in engineering thanks to a \$37m for an **Engineering Learning Hub** to be built by the Gillard Government at the USC; the Hub will enhance the pathway to engineering degree courses from TAFE and schools, to address skills needs in the region and as at a national level.

Sen Moore said, "This project will give Queenslanders access to better quality education and training opportunities and world-class facilities. It will help increase the number of engineering students in the region by working with TAFE and high schools, giving more students access to rewarding engineering jobs in the future." Claire added, "This is not just a great result for the University, but also for the entire region. This investment demonstrates clearly the Gillard Government's dedication to the future of education on the Sunshine Coast."

The Treasurer stated, "At the very heart of the Gillard Government's vision for Australia is investing deeply in education in every corner of our country, I'm thrilled at what this facility will mean for the Sunshine Coast. By delivering first-class education facilities we will help generate jobs and future prosperity for the Sunshine Coast region, and the country."

Message from David Bradbury, Acting Minister for Financial Services and Superannuation – Thu 3 Jan 2013 marks a key milestone in the implementation of the Gillard Government's superannuation reforms, with the **Australian Prudential Regulation Authority** receiving the first **MySuper** applications from superfunds.

MySuper is a new cost effective, simple superannuation product that superfunds will be authorised to offer from 1 July 2013. The Gillard Government's MySuper reforms will lower fees and charges and make superannuation more transparent. Key MySuper features include:

- standardised disclosure of costs, fees, risk and returns, making comparisons easier;
- a ban on the payment of sales commissions and entry fees; and
- new standards for the payment of performance fees to fund managers.

Funds will have to disclose executive pay and the assets they have invested in.

Labor built Australia's superannuation system and this Government is improving super by lowering fees and charges and cutting taxes on superannuation contributions.

In addition to the MySuper reforms, the Government has effectively abolished the 15 % contributions tax for anyone who earns **\$37,000 or less** through the provision of the low income earner superannuation contribution. This means over 3 million Australians will receive up to \$500 a year more into their super accounts, including part-time working mums and workers on lower incomes.

From 1 July 2013 the increase in universal super from 9% to 12% will commence.

Have your say on Queensland's electoral laws - The Newman Government's Attorney General, Jarrod Bleijie, released a [discussion paper](#) on Thu 3 Jan. The paper seeks to canvas 'issues and options for improvement and change to Queensland's electoral law.' and has been 'developed to facilitate public input into changes and improvements to the electoral laws', The paper is divided into two parts:

'Part A focuses on options for reform in relation to political donations, public funding for elections and election campaign expenditure; and

Part B identifies a range of other issues including the voting system, voter enrolment, postal voting and political advertising The most controversial element of which was the option to dump compulsory voting in state elections'.

A controversial element within the paper is the proposed move towards a voluntary voting system at state elections, which is one among an extensive list of options the State Government is seeking feedback from the public and organisations on issues and matters relevant the State's electoral system.

Consultation closes on 1 March 2013

Submissions by email: electoralreform@justice.qld.gov.au OR by Post to:

Electoral Reform, Strategic Policy, Legal & Executive Services, Department of Justice & Attorney General
GPO Box 149, Brisbane QLD 4001

Set to Swelter – Be Prepared - With a record heatwave set to send temperatures soaring across most of Australia over the next week, Australians are reminded to be prepared.

Minister for Emergency Management Nicola Roxon said, "Hot and dry conditions increase the risk of bushfires in many areas of the country, it's crucial that people are aware of fire bans and warnings in their local area."

The Commonwealth Government's improvements to the **Emergency Alert** system, ensure Australians will be able to receive location based emergency alerts to their Telstra mobile phone if disaster does strike.

All landlines and mobile phones, regardless of carrier, will still be able to receive **Emergency Alert** warnings based on the registered service address of the handset. Telstra mobile phone customers will benefit from the technology this season with Vodafone and Optus mobile phone customers to follow later this year.

The Australian Government's [Preparing for the Unexpected brochure](#) and the [Red Cross's Emergency REDiPlan](#) are good resources to help be better prepared should disaster strike.

Preparing a household emergency kit that includes battery-operated radio, torch, first aid kit and medications supplies is a good idea. Other items to include in an emergency kit - copies of important family documents, contact details for your out-of-town contact and spare clothes and strong shoes.

What's on!

The annual **Woodford Folk Festival** was held from 27 Dec 2012 through to 1 Jan 2013. This festival has been running for 27 years, about 438 artists converged on Woodfordia. To find out what went down and everything you ever wanted to know about the Woodford Folk Festival – click [here](#).

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On the **Australia Day 2013** public holiday, 28 Jan, ' **Fernberg**' will be opened to the public. Government House is located in Paddington and is the official residence of the Governor of Queensland, Her Excellency Ms Penelope Wensley, AC.

Walk through historic Government House; view the informative displays in the Investiture Room; guided tours of the wonderful gardens and surrounds at 10.45am, 12 noon and 1.30pm; stop and appreciate the musical entertainment throughout the day; refreshments will be available for purchase; or ring a picnic to enjoy on the lawns. Details for the day can be found are [here](#).

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Karen New Year Celebration – The Karen Era 2752 – will be held at the Burnie Brae Convention Hall in Chermside on Sat 12 Jan from 10am to 2 pm. Explore Karen culture and traditional dress, witness Karen traditional dance and music performances. More information on 0402 857 378 or 0412 069 426

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Highfields Pioneer Village will hold their annual **Australia Day celebrations on 26 January 2013**. Plenty to interest and engage families at the Village all day. The program includes blacksmithing, tin and silversmithing, a working draught horse, sheep shearing and wool spinning and weaving. The day's demonstrations start at 9:30am with a cow being milked in the Russell & Sons Dairy Pavilion. Youngsters will love the Animal Nursery! Find out more about the day's activities by clicking [here](#).

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TECHFEST 2013 will provide participants with the opportunity to network with global and local leaders in government, industry, education and research. There will be invaluable insights from expert speakers on digital transformation and join the debate regarding the ICT skills gap in Australia.

The Great Hall, Parliament House Wednesday, 13 Feb 2013 from 1.00 - 6:00 pm (EST). There will be the opportunity to interact with the latest technology. For more information follow the [link](#).

Current Senate Committee Inquiries

To make a submission to an inquiry, visit the Parliament website, [here](#)

Private Health Insurance Amendment (Lifetime Health Cover Loading & Other Measures) Bill 2012. Closing date not set. Reporting date: 12 Mar 2013.

National Disability Insurance Scheme Bill Closing date not set. Reporting date: 13 Mar 2013.

The impacts on health of air quality in Australia Closing date not set. Reporting date: 16 May 2013.

The Involuntary or Coerced Sterilisation of people with disabilities in Australia. Submissions by 22 Feb 2013. Reporting date: 24 April 2013.

Australia's domestic response to the World health Organisation's (WHO) Commission on Social Determinants of health report "Closing the gap within a generation" Reporting date: 27 Mar 2013

Keep up to date on all [Senate Inquires here](#), and all [House Representatives Inquiries here](#).

Petitioning the Senate [here](#). Petitioning the House of Representatives [here](#)