

PRESIDENT'S REPORT – 18th March 2025

Another busy month at Business Northwest. We continue to wait for the election date to be announced – time is running out for the PM. Interestingly, all the politicians are soon on their way back to Canberra as the Treasurer will bring down his budget next week. I really wonder of the value of this, as if the government is not re-elected then it may all come to nought. An expensive exercise.

Retail and hospitality sectors are still struggling so if you can please shop local and help support our retailers, cafes, bars and restaurants.



We have been introducing the candidates at federal Braddon elections for the last ten years and have both major party candidates set to present at breakfasts in the next few weeks. I will be asking them to focus on matters that affect the small business sector as I am sure we will hear of the general policies plenty of times during the campaign. See [our website](#) for breakfast dates.

Today I attended a Chamber Alliance (CA) meeting in Longford. About ten of the regional chambers participated and Small Business Minister Jane Howlett spoke to us of the initiatives the government has recently announced: red tape reduction, including changes to securing liquor licenses.

One of the benefits of our CA membership allows our members to use the IR Hotline for two workplace matters per annum. This is available for all IR matters and 95% are solved during that initial phone call. If unsolved, the call can be escalated to TCCI legal services which are available at much lower rates than commercial lawyers. Businesses that have used this service often say it has saved them up to ten years' membership as most of us know it is costly to take on *Fair Work*.



On Sunday March 30th we will be welcoming the first Qantas Q400 plane into Burnie/Wynyard airport. The Q400 has 28 more seats than the Q300, is 30% faster and is a more efficient aircraft. Qantas had added 14 new Q400s to its national fleet (total 45) in a bid to improve service as the Q300s were becoming unreliable and impacting service levels - I can personally attest to that after being delayed eight hours at Tullamarine after a 27-hour journey from London.

I have been working with the Cradle Coast Authority and Advance North West on creating a view of the potential impact of renewables projects on the region. Projects such as *MarinusLink*, Robbins Island, HIF Global, Lake Cethana and the required transmission network will require massive workforces to build. These could all occur across a similar timeframe, exhausting all local resources, thereby



needing a large Fly In Fly Out (FIFO) workforce. This could consume major tourism assets such as hotels, motels and Airbnb properties plus all the extra seats on the new planes.

We have two partner events in the next few weeks. The first is with TasTAFE on April 8th at *The Point* in West Park. The TasTAFE Board will be present and tell us of what the future holds in terms of training available for our current and future workforce. Last month I spoke of the new *Clean Energy Centre of Excellence (CECOE)* to be located at the Burnie TAFE campus. I am on the advisory committee for this and will attend the initial meeting next week.



Last Friday evening I saw the announcement of the 2025 Burnie Print Prize at "The Bridge" popup exhibition space in Wilmot St. The overall winner was Lois Waters - *Pleat 4*. The exhibition is open from today and is sponsored by Burnie City Council, Ten Days on the Island, Communion and the Tasmanian Government.

Speaking of Ten Days on the Island, the 2025 festival runs from March 21-30 and you can [buy tickets here](#). It looks like another great program.

Burnie City Council staged its "*Food & Feedback III*" last Saturday offering a free BBQ and a chance for community members to share feedback on local projects and initiatives. It was well attended and well received also.

We have been working closely with Warren Moore at *Braddon Business Centre* on our strategic plan and will complete it in the next few weeks. Our aim is to go forward with a sustainable model that ensures our future for many years.

More on this next month.....

Best regards



Ian Jones – President

