

## PRESIDENT'S REPORT – 17<sup>th</sup> March 2026

Well, 2026 is off and running – already a war and two interest rate rises!

Recently I was a witness at the Senate enquiry *State of Australia's aviation sector and its ability to deliver reliable and affordable services to rural, regional and remote communities* held in Wynyard. I spoke along with my counterpart at Devonport Chamber, Clare Connelly. I was fortunate to be able to hear from members of the Burnie Airport Corporation who appeared before me.



We are all concerned at the impact that upgrading to a Tier 2 airport may have on ticket prices as the cost of providing security services can impact severely on ticket prices. Our current passenger volume puts us close to this change which will require \$24–29m of capital expense plus an annual budget of \$2m to operate. Spreading this across outgoing Qantas passengers could lead to an increase of \$100–160 per passenger, which could be prohibitive, thereby possibly closing the facility.

We advocated for a national levy per passenger to be imposed to cover airport security nationwide – security is a national issue. I hope our pleas fell upon receptive ears, so watch this space!



The breakfast session held last week featured the CEO of Burnie Airport, Tyler Wilson, who did an excellent job of dispelling some of the myths around the airport and also explained the aforementioned security implementation issues. You can view the video of the presentation [here](#).

Via our partnership with 7BU/SeaFM, we have started our *Shop Small Win Big* Easter promotion and are getting a lot of exposure via the high number of advertisements on the airwaves. This promotion is a repeat of the one done in October which was highly successful in helping our retailers get folks through the doors. This time, 7BU had shops “kicking their doors down” to be part of it.



Unfortunately, we have just had another RBA interest rate rise, and more are expected. This makes it even harder for businesses as it raises costs plus constrains the amount that customers have to spend (which is what the RBA wants). The Iran war has made life difficult for everyone as fuel costs have soared and no end is in sight. This will also drive prices up as everything we eat needs to be grown, harvested and delivered to us (mostly using diesel). Oil is also used to make plastic so there could be shortage on food packaging materials if the conflict drags on.

Whilst we are not in a rationing cycle yet, I urge you to think about each trip you make and try to be more frugal with fuel use.

Our next breakfast is on Thursday April 16th and features Philip Reid from Cradle Coast Authority. Phil is the new CEO, and he will be talking about what the Cradle Coast Authority is undertaking at the moment and what they have planned for the future. He has settled in well and is quite excited at the potential of the region and amazed at the diversity of our economy.





We have a great event on Tuesday March 24<sup>th</sup> hosted by *Brand Tasmania* and *RACT* that features a conversation with Scott Roth (*JackJumpers* coach) and two students from the Tasmania Academy of Leadership and Sport. It will centre around how sport brings the community together and why it is so important. It is 4–6pm at Paranapple. [Get your FREE tickets here.](#)

Burnie City Council is holding two events this week: [A Taste of Harmony](#) on Friday at Hilder Parade from 4–8pm that features food and cultural performances from several different groups to support a stronger, more inclusive community.



On Saturday, the council is conducting a [Food & Feedback](#) event on the foreshore from 9am–1pm. You can view plans for new playground infrastructure at Shorewell and the foreshore plus the West Park Masterplan among many other projects in the region and give your views.

There is face painting, a snake catcher, *Slipstream Circus* and a FREE BBQ! Get along and make your voice heard plus have a famous sausage from the Rotary Club of Burnie West.

I hope to see you at one of our events very soon.

Best regards

**Ian Jones** – President

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