Insight is more valuable than hindsight.

Together, we’ll anticipate every angle in a deal and transform your business for the future.

Drawing on our deep industry knowledge we’ll work with you to define strategy, unlock value, harness synergies and mitigate risks. Let’s make buying, selling, merging or partnering just the start of new opportunities. To learn more, contact David Pring on 9455 9996.

Anticipate tomorrow. Deliver today.
Sydney’s smartest place
to live, work & play

The Northwest’s one and only Resort Class Apartments – Now Selling
Be part of the fastest growing area in Sydney, with a short walk to future Norwest train station.
Luxurious Sky Residences, private residents’ pool, club & sky gardens set above a world class business and waterfront dining precinct.

This is your the opportunity to invest in the evolution of the Norwest
Make your next smart investment. Enquire now to find out more about large 2 bed apartments $770,000 - $880,000.

VISIT OUR DISPLAY AND VIEW OUR FULL 2 BEDROOM + STUDY APARTMENT
OPEN WED-SUN 12-3PM OR BY PRIVATE APPOINTMENT  |  11 SOLENT CIRCUIT, BAULKHAM HILLS (Situated on Norwest Lake)

1800 088 800 | esplanadenorwest.com.au
Bill shock hurts more in west

The number of residents in Western Sydney experiencing bill shock is on the rise.

Figures released by the Energy and Water Ombudsman show the number of complaints to the energy watchdog from consumers in the Hawkesbury, Wollondilly, Blue Mountains and Central Coast areas had increased by six per cent in 2016/17.

Although the NSW Ombudsman annual report recorded a fall in complaints from residents in Blacktown, Macarthur, Fairfield, Liverpool, Parramatta and Penrith, the number of complaints was trending upwards toward the end of the financial year.

Energy and Water Ombudsman, Janine Young, said 25 per cent of the complaints from residents in the region related to affordability.

Across NSW, most complaints received were about electricity (74 per cent), 23 per cent were about gas, and the remaining three per cent related to water – revealing families continue to feel stretched.

“Affordability issues, payment difficulties, high bills, increasing debt and disconnection of supply have become the norm for NSW consumers experiencing financial vulnerability,” Ms Young said.

The Ombudsman’s report follows the release of a preliminary report on energy prices by the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission which showed “serious problems with affordability for consumers and businesses”.

The competition watchdog’s report said price increases over the past 10 years had put consumers under “unacceptable pressure”.

Ms Young said the Ombudsman’s report showed consumers in the region related to affordability.

Across NSW, most complaints received were about electricity (74 per cent), 23 per cent were about gas, and the remaining three per cent related to water – revealing families continue to feel stretched.

“It is promising to see that retailers are now starting to address debit conditions,” she said. “It is promising to see that retailers are now starting to address debit conditions,” she said. “It is promising to see that retailers are now starting to address debit conditions,” she said. “It is promising to see that retailers are now starting to address debit conditions,” she said.

The Federal Government’s recent national energy guarantee is aimed at delivering this.

Ms Young warned the array of energy offers available may not be the solution to the growing affordability issue.

“Consumers on low or fixed incomes in particular continue to tell us they were not able to take advantage of discounted offers because of compulsory pay-on-time or direct debit conditions,” she said. “It is promising to see that retailers are now starting to address this.”

The Federal Government’s recent national energy guarantee is aimed at delivering more affordable and reliable power to homes and businesses by pushing energy retailers to enter into guarantees on emissions.

Advocacy group One Big Switch has recorded an intensive period of energy switching after more than 190,000 Australians joined its campaign to switch providers and receive discounted offers.

Among them was Graeme Woods who told Access he constantly worried about the cost of his energy bill.

The northern suburbs resident said he was paying almost $200 more than the average of his electricity bill.

“Consumers really need to switch and businesses by pushing energy retailers to enter into guarantees on emissions.”

After looking to switch providers, Mr Woods’ electricity provider matched the rival company’s discount offer which helped him save 14 per cent.

“I’m working longer hours in my gardening business so I’m not starved,” he said.

“No part of this work may be reproduced or copied in any form without the written consent of the publisher. No person or organisation should in any way act on the information and content of Western Sydney Business Access or www.wsba.com.au without first seeking professional advice. The publisher, contributors and agents accept no responsibility for any actions that may arise from the contents of the newsletter or website www.wsba.com.au. The opinions and views expressed by contributors are not necessarily those of the publisher. Advertisements are published at the discretion of正式版工人的新手。名称是：正式版工人。这是一个重要的角色，因为正式版工人要确保新的代码是正确的，符合所有规格说明和标准。他们还要和测试人员一起工作，以确保软件的功能和性能都符合要求。正式版工人通常在软件开发的后期阶段参与工作，因为那时软件基本已经完成，需要进行最终的审查和测试。正式版工人需要有很强的逻辑思维能力和问题解决能力，因为他们要对软件的每一个细节进行检查，找出可能的问题。他们还需要有很好的沟通能力，因为他们需要和其他团队成员，如测试人员和开发人员，紧密合作。
Regional Roundup

$500 million project
A $500 million development is proposed for the Penrith Panthers complex. If approved the village-style project could include 11 residential buildings of up to 14 storeys accommodating 1800 people on the 6.6-hectare site. Council is considering first-stage plans.

NORTH WEST

Up 25 per cent
HOME builder Strongbuild’s state-of-the-art factory, at Baulkham Hills, has increased turnover by 25 per cent over a 12-month period, lifting the group’s annual revenue from prefabrication to over $30 million, of a total turnover of $170 million. Panelisation is the automated manufacturing of key building elements, off-site in a controlled factory environment.

A winner three times
WHITE River Design has won a Sydney Design Award for the third time. Debbie O’Conner, who founded the company 15 years ago, has based her business at The Creative Fringe, at Jamisontown.

Sold for $4.9 million
A FORMER Christmas tree, two-hectare property, at 833 Old Northern Road, Dural, attracted more than 70 bids before being sold for $4.9 million under the hammer to an unnamed buyer.

SOUTH WEST

Freestanding warehouse bought
LEDA Holdings has bought three freestanding warehouses, with almost 20,000 square metres of floor space on a 4.1-hectare site, at 5 Williamson Road, in Ingleburn, for $24.75 million. Tenants include Kimberly Clarke, CSR, Unilever and Super Gas.

Narellan Town Centre revamp
SYDNEY-based retail builder, Mainbrace Constructions, undertook the $200 million redevelopment of the Narellan Town, which increased retail space from 36,000 square metres to 72,000 square metres, added 100 plus new retailers and 1500 additional car park spaces.

MIRVAC partnership
MIRVAC is partnering with the Australian Turf Club to develop a 12,800-square-metre site adjacent to the Canterbury Racecourse. It sits in the Sydenham to Bankstown Urban renewal corridor strategy.

CENTRAL WEST

Eco World buys site
MALAYSIAN property developer Eco World International has secured a development site at 3 Lachlan Avenue, Macquarie Park, for $40 million with plans to develop an $139 million mixed-use project. Eco World plans to develop 125 residential units as well as a retail component. The site is near Macquarie University.

Workers go west
THE march of Sydney CBD workers westwards continues with some 1800 NSW Department of Education staff expected to occupy a fit-for-purpose 15-storey office tower in the Parramatta CBD in March 2018.

Dexus submits a DA
DEXUS has submitted a development application to the City of Parramatta for a 33-storey commercial tower with an estimated cost of over $208 million. The development, at 130 and 150 George Street, will link George and Phillip streets and provide commercial office accommodation with 48,338 square metres of additional ground floor area, which includes 655 square metres of new retail space.

$24 million hotel open
ST Marys Rugby League Club’s $24 million hotel is open for business under the Holiday Inn banner. The 119-room hotel is fully owned by the club under a franchise agreement with Intercontinental Hotel Group. The hotel has direct access to the club via a bridge.

$500 million project
A $500 million development is proposed for the Penrith Panthers complex. If approved the village-style project could include 11 residential buildings of up to 14 storeys accommodating 1800 people on the 6.6-hectare site. Council is considering first-stage plans.

NORTH WEST

Up 25 per cent
HOME builder Strongbuild’s state-of-the-art factory, at Baulkham Hills, has increased turnover by 25 per cent over a 12-month period, lifting the group’s annual revenue from prefabrication to over $30 million, of a total turnover of $170 million. Panelisation is the automated manufacturing of key building elements, off-site in a controlled factory environment.

A winner three times
WHITE River Design has won a Sydney Design Award for the third time. Debbie O’Conner, who founded the company 15 years ago, has based her business at The Creative Fringe, at Jamisontown.

Sold for $4.9 million
A FORMER Christmas tree, two-hectare property, at 833 Old Northern Road, Dural, attracted more than 70 bids before being sold for $4.9 million under the hammer to an unnamed buyer.

SOUTH WEST

Freestanding warehouse bought
LEDA Holdings has bought three freestanding warehouses, with almost 20,000 square metres of floor space on a 4.1-hectare site, at 5 Williamson Road, in Ingleburn, for $24.75 million. Tenants include Kimberly Clarke, CSR, Unilever and Super Gas.

Narellan Town Centre revamp
SYDNEY-based retail builder, Mainbrace Constructions, undertook the $200 million redevelopment of the Narellan Town, which increased retail space from 36,000 square metres to 72,000 square metres, added 100 plus new retailers and 1500 additional car park spaces.

MIRVAC partnership
MIRVAC is partnering with the Australian Turf Club to develop a 12,800-square-metre site adjacent to the Canterbury Racecourse. It sits in the Sydenham to Bankstown Urban renewal corridor strategy.

CENTRAL WEST

Eco World buys site
MALAYSIAN property developer Eco World International has secured a development site at 3 Lachlan Avenue, Macquarie Park, for $40 million with plans to develop an $139 million mixed-use project. Eco World plans to develop 125 residential units as well as a retail component. The site is near Macquarie University.

Workers go west
THE march of Sydney CBD workers westwards continues with some 1800 NSW Department of Education staff expected to occupy a fit-for-purpose 15-storey office tower in the Parramatta CBD in March 2018.

Dexus submits a DA
DEXUS has submitted a development application to the City of Parramatta for a 33-storey commercial tower with an estimated cost of over $208 million. The development, at 130 and 150 George Street, will link George and Phillip streets and provide commercial office accommodation with 48,338 square metres of additional ground floor area, which includes 655 square metres of new retail space.

$24 million hotel open
ST Marys Rugby League Club’s $24 million hotel is open for business under the Holiday Inn banner. The 119-room hotel is fully owned by the club under a franchise agreement with Intercontinental Hotel Group. The hotel has direct access to the club via a bridge.
MOVING HOME OR OFFICE?

USE SYDNEY’S MOST TRUSTED REMOVALIST.
VOTED NO. 1 FOR DEPENDABILITY & AFFORDABILITY!

AAA City Removalist is renowned as Sydney’s most trustworthy company when it comes to moving homes or offices. So aside from the advantages you get in terms of us understanding your needs, you’re also going to benefit from getting THE BEST PRICE!

We can organise free box hire and offer full or part packing/unpacking services. In other words, we’re your ONE-STOP-SHOP when it comes to “removalist services”!

So if you’re moving soon, contact us to discuss how we can help!

FREE BOXES
It’s our way of giving you that “extra” customer service that makes all the difference.

SECURE PACKING
Our packing material exceeds industry standards and is available in various sizes.

DISCONNECTION & RECONNECTION
We can organise your changeover & provide you with our expertise in disconnecting & reconnecting your utilities.

INTERSTATE REMOVALS
We are one of the largest Removal Companies servicing Interstate (Melbourne, Brisbane and Canberra/ACT).

AAA City Removalist
Unit 4, 7 Roberts Rd, Greenacre
Sydney NSW 2190
1800 77 77 81
info@aaacityremovalist.com.au
www.aaacityremovalist.com.au
www.facebook.com/AAACityRemovalist/

1800 77 77 81 aaacityremovalist.com.au
Who’s on Christmas naughty register

The Christmas retailers’ naughty list has been revealed in the latest NSW Fair Trading Complaints Register, Minister for Better Regulation Matt Kean said today.

Kogan, Samsung Electronics and online ticket reseller Viagogo claimed the top spots with 27 complaints each, followed by The Good Guys with 18, Apple and Harvey Norman with 16 each.

Online gadget store Android Enjoyed receiving 15 complaints. Mr Kean said while consumers spend big in the festive season, they should always be aware of their rights as a consumer.

“Electronic retailers, both retail and online, featured heavily on December’s naughty list, as did a number of retail stores,” Mr Kean said.

“Shoppers always have the right to return faulty goods, and retailers that refuse to comply face harsh penalties – even if the item was bought at a discounted price.”

The festive season also saw 12 complaints about Hamper King – an online trader selling Christmas hampers. Now to the list was online baby product retailer Oopsee, with 15 complaints.

Mr Kean said Fair Trading’s Complaints Register provides information about traders that are the subject of 10 or more complaints in a calendar month.

In December, a total of 18 businesses featured in the register, receiving 277 complaints between them. Overall in 2017, the register recorded more than 4500 complaints between them.


Continued on page 7

CONFERENCE & ACCOMMODATION PACKAGES AVAILABLE!

Relax and unwind after your Conference in our stylish & luxurious hotel at Novotel Sydney Norwest. We are located in the heart of the Norwest Business Park, surrounded with lush gardens and open spaces. We offer 132 guest rooms, a dedicated event floor with 7 flexible function rooms, as well as a restaurant and bar, making us the perfect option for your next event.

Talk to a member of our Meeting & Events team today to find out more about booking your next business or social event.

Phone: +61 02 9634 9634

1 Columbia Court
BAULKHAM HILLS NSW 2153
Email: MEETINGS@novotelnorwest.com.au
www.novotelnorwest.com.au
The Parramatta Light Rail is expected to boost property values in the city. Gilkes said the rise reflected the demand for housing close to public transport, road infrastructure and the CBD. He said there had been “very strong demand” for high density sites especially within the town centre.

Raine & Horne Liverpool director, Vince Labbozetta, said Liverpool had much to offer buyers including a new university, upgraded hospital, road infrastructure and an impending airport so it was little wonder it recorded a 19 per cent growth rate in land value.

However, he warned the market had since plateaued and suggested next year’s land values would tell a different story.

The strongest increases were in Blackheath, Faulconbridge, Hazelbrook, Katoomba, Lawton and Springwood which have good access to services, the Great Western Highway and the railway line.

Fairfield: Strong increase in residential land values reflecting the demand for housing near public transport, road infrastructure, major business and retail centres. High demand for properties that could accommodate a second dwelling such as a granny flat.

Parramatta: Increased values reflect a strong demand to be close to transport and a growing CBD culture around new infrastructure.

The land value figures are used by councils to calculate rates however councils are currently using 2016 values for rating. To see how your area performed, visit www.valuereneral.nsw.gov.au.

The Australian Property Institute also recently said residential property prices had declined nationally, dragged down by Sydney which had recorded its biggest fall in two years.

However, he warned the market had since plateaued and suggested next year’s land values would tell a different story.

How the suburbs rated

**Blacktown:** The strong increase was driven by high demand for land that was affordable compared to the broader Sydney market. Other local drivers included the widening of Richmond Road, the staged upgrade to Schofields Road and the construction of the Sydney Metro Northwest railway.

**Camden:** The upward trend was driven by the proximity of the South West Rail Link and the proposed Badgerys Creek airport.

**Campbelltown:** Significant local drivers were urban renewal around seven train station precincts and the widening and improvement of major arterial roads.

**Liverpool:** Strong increases for residential sites at Wallacia, Luddenham and Bringelly due to the proposed Badgerys Creek Airport which will see increased demand for housing and services.

**Penrith:** The upward trend was mainly driven by high demand for more affordable properties. Very strong increases in properties closer to Penrith CBD.

**The Hills Shire:** The strength is driven by a good supply of land for residential subdivisions. Other significant drivers are North West Rail Link and upgrading of the arterial road network.

**Hawkesbury:** This increase was seen more in major residential centres like Windsor and Richmond, especially South Windsor where there was potential for small-scale development on larger lots.

**Blue Mountains:** The strongest increases were in Blackheath, Faulconbridge, Hazelbrook, Katoomba, Lawton and Springwood which have good access to services, the Great Western Highway and the railway line.

**Our Designs**

**YOUR GROWTH**

**BRANDING**

**GRAPHIC**

**DIGITAL**

1300 823 191 www.bthcreative.com

**Housing approvals still rising**

Housing approvals across NSW continue to soar with over 70,000 home approvals granted in 2017, according to the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS).

Minister for Planning and Housing, Anthony Roberts, said this was the third consecutive calendar year that NSW recorded more than 70,000 building approvals.

“The rate of building approvals and completions in NSW is continuing to power the NSW economy and provide vital employment opportunities across the building and construction industry,” Mr Roberts said.

Mr Roberts said almost twice as many homes were approved December 2017 compared to 2010, when, under Labor, only 36,828 homes were approved.

“NSW is the number one state in the nation for housing approvals and continues to far exceed the Premier’s Priority Housing Target of 50,000 approvals per year which improves housing supply and helps to support housing affordability.

“The NSW Government is getting on with the job of delivering the homes for tomorrow to cater for our state’s growing population.”

The latest figures released by the Department of Planning and Environment show that Western Sydney remains the epicenter of the state’s housing construction with 27,540 new homes approved in the year to November 2017.

Acting Treasurer, Victor Dominello said: “One of our Government’s priorities is to get more homes built and make it easier for first home buyers to enter the market and own their own home.

The housing affordability package announced as part of the June Budget removes stamp duty for first home buyers for both new and existing homes for properties up to $550,000 and reduces duty for first homes between $650,000 and $800,000.”

Priority Housing Target of 50,000 approvals per year which improves housing supply and helps to support housing affordability.

The rate of building approvals and completions in NSW is continuing to power the NSW economy and provide vital employment opportunities across the building and construction industry.” Mr Roberts said.

Mr Roberts said almost twice as many homes were approved December 2017 compared to 2010, when, under Labor, only 36,828 homes were approved.

“NSW is the number one state in the nation for housing approvals and continues to far exceed the Premier’s Priority Housing Target of 50,000 approvals per year which improves housing supply and helps to support housing affordability.

“The NSW Government is getting on with the job of delivering the homes for tomorrow to cater for our state’s growing population.”

The latest figures released by the Department of Planning and Environment show that Western Sydney remains the epicenter of the state’s housing construction with 27,540 new homes approved in the year to November 2017.

Acting Treasurer, Victor Dominello said: “One of our Government’s priorities is to get more homes built and make it easier for first home buyers to enter the market and own their own home.

The housing affordability package announced as part of the June Budget removes stamp duty for first home buyers for both new and existing homes for properties up to $550,000 and reduces duty for first homes between $650,000 and $800,000.”

The rate of building approvals and completions in NSW is continuing to power the NSW economy and provide vital employment opportunities across the building and construction industry.” Mr Roberts said.

Mr Roberts said almost twice as many homes were approved December 2017 compared to 2010, when, under Labor, only 36,828 homes were approved.

“NSW is the number one state in the nation for housing approvals and continues to far exceed the Premier’s Priority Housing Target of 50,000 approvals per year which improves housing supply and helps to support housing affordability.

“The NSW Government is getting on with the job of delivering the homes for tomorrow to cater for our state’s growing population.”

The latest figures released by the Department of Planning and Environment show that Western Sydney remains the epicenter of the state’s housing construction with 27,540 new homes approved in the year to November 2017.

Acting Treasurer, Victor Dominello said: “One of our Government’s priorities is to get more homes built and make it easier for first home buyers to enter the market and own their own home.

The housing affordability package announced as part of the June Budget removes stamp duty for first home buyers for both new and existing homes for properties up to $550,000 and reduces duty for first homes between $650,000 and $800,000.”

“NSW is the number one state in the nation for housing approvals and continues to far exceed the Premier’s Priority Housing Target of 50,000 approvals per year which improves housing supply and helps to support housing affordability.

“The NSW Government is getting on with the job of delivering the homes for tomorrow to cater for our state’s growing population.”

The latest figures released by the Department of Planning and Environment show that Western Sydney remains the epicenter of the state’s housing construction with 27,540 new homes approved in the year to November 2017.

Acting Treasurer, Victor Dominello said: “One of our Government’s priorities is to get more homes built and make it easier for first home buyers to enter the market and own their own home.

The housing affordability package announced as part of the June Budget removes stamp duty for first home buyers for both new and existing homes for properties up to $550,000 and reduces duty for first homes between $650,000 and $800,000.”

“NSW is the number one state in the nation for housing approvals and continues to far exceed the Premier’s Priority Housing Target of 50,000 approvals per year which improves housing supply and helps to support housing affordability.

“The NSW Government is getting on with the job of delivering the homes for tomorrow to cater for our state’s growing population.”

The latest figures released by the Department of Planning and Environment show that Western Sydney remains the epicenter of the state’s housing construction with 27,540 new homes approved in the year to November 2017.

Acting Treasurer, Victor Dominello said: “One of our Government’s priorities is to get more homes built and make it easier for first home buyers to enter the market and own their own home.

The housing affordability package announced as part of the June Budget removes stamp duty for first home buyers for both new and existing homes for properties up to $550,000 and reduces duty for first homes between $650,000 and $800,000.”

“NSW is the number one state in the nation for housing approvals and continues to far exceed the Premier’s Priority Housing Target of 50,000 approvals per year which improves housing supply and helps to support housing affordability.

“The NSW Government is getting on with the job of delivering the homes for tomorrow to cater for our state’s growing population.”

The latest figures released by the Department of Planning and Environment show that Western Sydney remains the epicenter of the state’s housing construction with 27,540 new homes approved in the year to November 2017.

Acting Treasurer, Victor Dominello said: “One of our Government’s priorities is to get more homes built and make it easier for first home buyers to enter the market and own their own home.

The housing affordability package announced as part of the June Budget removes stamp duty for first home buyers for both new and existing homes for properties up to $550,000 and reduces duty for first homes between $650,000 and $800,000.”

“NSW is the number one state in the nation for housing approvals and continues to far exceed the Premier’s Priority Housing Target of 50,000 approvals per year which improves housing supply and helps to support housing affordability.

“The NSW Government is getting on with the job of delivering the homes for tomorrow to cater for our state’s growing population.”

The latest figures released by the Department of Planning and Environment show that Western Sydney remains the epicenter of the state’s housing construction with 27,540 new homes approved in the year to November 2017.

Acting Treasurer, Victor Dominello said: “One of our Government’s priorities is to get more homes built and make it easier for first home buyers to enter the market and own their own home.

The housing affordability package announced as part of the June Budget removes stamp duty for first home buyers for both new and existing homes for properties up to $550,000 and reduces duty for first homes between $650,000 and $800,000.”

“NSW is the number one state in the nation for housing approvals and continues to far exceed the Premier’s Priority Housing Target of 50,000 approvals per year which improves housing supply and helps to support housing affordability.

“The NSW Government is getting on with the job of delivering the homes for tomorrow to cater for our state’s growing population.”

The latest figures released by the Department of Planning and Environment show that Western Sydney remains the epicenter of the state’s housing construction with 27,540 new homes approved in the year to November 2017.

Acting Treasurer, Victor Dominello said: “One of our Government’s priorities is to get more homes built and make it easier for first home buyers to enter the market and own their own home.

The housing affordability package announced as part of the June Budget removes stamp duty for first home buyers for both new and existing homes for properties up to $550,000 and reduces duty for first homes between $650,000 and $800,000.”
Situated within the picturesque landscapes of Bicentennial Park, Waterview blends modern elegance with tranquil park and lake views, offering the ideal setting for your next event. Boasting soaring ceilings, a large wrap around terrace and an abundance of natural light, Waterview is surrounded by vast parklands, ponds, and lakes creating a picturesque landscape for your guests.

Offering flexibility and versatility to each event, Waterview can accommodate Weddings, Business Events, School Events and Special Occasions of all kinds.

Phone: +61 2 9764 9900

WATERVIEWVENUE.COM.AU
A COMPLETE SOLUTION

• Open 7 days, 365 days a year
• Free onsite parking
• Convenient Castle Hill Location
• Unlimited access
• World class security protocol
• 5 different lockers sizes
• Prices starting at $18 per month (conditions apply)

KUBER VAULTS
Safety • Security • Prosperity

27/9 Hoyle Avenue, Castle Hill, NSW 2154
Phone: 1800 058 237 • info@kubervaults.com.au

kubervaults.com.au
Free legal service for businesses

Businesses in Western Sydney now have access to free legal advice under a new partnership between law firm Madison Marcus and Western Sydney University.

The university’s business and innovation support program, Launch Pad, is working with the commercial law and corporate advisory firm to provide businesses with a share of $150,000 in legal advice and support.

Businesses that are members of Launch Pad will be able to access legal advice in the areas of contract law, mergers and acquisitions, corporate structuring, tax, intellectual property and dispute resolution.

Since its introduction in 2016, Launch Pad has been supporting Western Sydney based start-ups and existing small to medium enterprises with assistance and resources.

The new initiative, which aims to deliver free and discounted legal services, has already helped about 30 businesses including Guildford based start-up, PreYourWay.

Madison Marcus partner, Stephen Jenkins, helped PreYourWay founder, Dhruv Kohli, with trademarking issues. The support helped the business get off the ground faster and at a minimum cost, Mr Kohli said.

“Getting access to a lawyer through Launch Pad for an initial free session and then being able to access services at a discounted rate has saved us a lot of money,” he said.

It also meant that we could progress things much more quickly than we otherwise would. Stephen has been a great source of advice and support for us as a business that is just starting up,” Launch Pad senior business advisor, Limi Rana, said.

Launch Pad’s more than 150 business members came from a diverse range of industries including IT, software, cloud services and manufacturing.

“Launch Pad is a fantastic service initiated by the Western Sydney University that works with start-ups according to their needs,” she said. “We are able to facilitate access to various networks and grant funding and we are flexible to work with how the business wants to progress but we can help make that progression happen faster.”

Madison Marcus managing director, Bechra Shamieh, described the partnership with Launch Pad as “providing a formidable pathway for entrepreneurs and small to medium enterprises in Western Sydney in need of specialised services”.

Businesses must first apply to join Launch Pad before accessing the free legal advice.

For more information, visit www.westernsydney.edu.au/launch-pad.

History-making thoroughbred sale

History will be made when the fastest-growing sale of thoroughbreds in the southern hemisphere occurs at the new $140M Riverside Stables, at Warwick Farm.

The sale will mark the first at Riverside Stables after the relocation of William Inglis & Son, Australia’s oldest thoroughbred auctioneering house, founded in 1867, in Sydney.

A total of 800 horses – the largest Inglis Classic Yearling Sale catalogue in the company’s history – will go under the hammer, from February 10-13.

To mark the opening of the complex, Inglis and the Australian Turf Club have combined to hold a race day on Saturday, February 10 prior to the commencement of the annual four-day sale.

A new $2M race for two-year-olds and a $1M race for three-year-olds will highlight what will become known as the annual Inglis Race Day, at Warwick Farm, each February.

The introduction of the $2 million Inglis Millennium, which will have its first running in February 2018, will leave only the Group 1 Golden Slipper worth more prize-money for two-year-olds in the southern hemisphere.

After 112 years at its Newmarket site at Randwick, which it sold for a rumoured $280 million, the company relocated to a site adjacent to the Warwick Farm racetrack to expand its operations and provide new up-market services.

The complex includes more than 800 stables, extensive parade area, hospitality suites for vendors and a 100-space car park.

The up-market, 144-room William Inglis hotel, is within the precinct and will be available, in the main, for buyers and principals/managers of stud farms attending sales.

Facilities of the hotel, which opened last month, include a rooftop bar and pool deck overlooking the racecourse and stable precinct.

Western Sydney Business Access – the region’s only independent media covering business, progress, development and lifestyle.
Reena builds the perfect vault

WHEN Reena Jethi returned from a night out to find her Western Sydney home had been robbed, foremost in her mind were the many precious heirlooms that had been passed down from generations including her irreplaceable jewels.

Fortunately, the thieves had spared her prized jewellery but the shocking experience planted a solution in Mrs Jethi’s mind that would not only help her family but their local community too.

Kuber Vaults, a state-of-the-art safety deposit box facility, opened in the Hills Shire late last year, offering comfort to people looking to secure their own significant and valuable items.

Mrs Jethi said after the theft, she sought to have her treasures protected at a local bank but the wait for a security box was long. When one did become available, she had to contend with inconvenient access hours and costly tolls to get there.

Fast forward several years and Kuber Vaults arrived on the scene. CEO Mrs Jethi located an ideal site in Castle Hill and negotiated a partnership with a prominent security firm and the backing of a world renowned insurer. The safety deposit boxes come in a range of five sizes to store items either impossible or not easy to replace – insurance policies, certificates, special jewels, business data drives and legal documents.

The safety deposit boxes are stored in a vault protected by a sophisticated and impregnable security system that Mrs Jethi likened to Fort Knox.

The premises is encircled by bollards, the glass is bullet resistant and the guard room is staffed by “extremely experienced security personnel from a highly acclaimed organisation”. “Our customers are protected by an added level of security in our triple layer biometric access system,” Mrs Jethi said.

“Traditionally it has been proven that fingerprints cannot be altered, they are unique, and so we have opted for fingerprint scanners. As well, customers receive a card and a unique pin code all of which they have to satisfy before they go through an airlock door to gain access to the vault, or the inner sanctum,”

Customers can access their security deposit box every day of the year, access is unlimited and there is free, on-site parking.

Prices start from as little as $18 per month for a mini size locker and a private viewing room is also available.

Get paid to dob in a vandal

BLACKTOWN City Council is offering cash rewards aimed at tackling the crime that is disfiguring its streets and buildings.

Mayor Stephen Bali said Council will pay up to $2,500 for any information that leads to the arrest and conviction of a vandal.

“Traditionally it has been proven that fingerprints cannot be altered, they are unique, and so we have opted for fingerprint scanners. As well, customers receive a card and a unique pin code all of which they have to satisfy before they go through an airlock door to gain access to the vault, or the inner sanctum,”

Customers can access their security deposit box every day of the year, access is unlimited and there is free, on-site parking.

Prices start from as little as $18 per month for a mini size locker and a private viewing room is also available.

Get paid to dob in a vandal

BLACKTOWN City Council is offering cash rewards aimed at tackling the crime that is disfiguring its streets and buildings.

Mayor Stephen Bali said Council will pay up to $2,500 for any information that leads to the arrest and conviction of a vandal.

The community is fed up with their streets being defaced by senseless vandals who think they can operate above the law,” Mayor Bali said.

Mayor Bali said Council will pay community members a reward, from $500 up to $2500, when information they provide leads to the conviction of an offender.

For more information visit: www.blacktown.nsw.gov.au/report-vandalism

Kuber Vaults is also an authorised distributor of ABC bullions, making it a “one-stop shop” for people looking to buy and store precious metals.

Kuber Vaults is at 27/9 Hoyle Avenue, Castle Hill. For more information, visit www.kubervaults.com.au or search for Kuber Vaults on YouTube for a look inside the facility.
No curriculum for student entrepreneurs

TWO Western Sydney schools have taken part in a national research project aimed at changing the way students learn.
The Ponds and Rooty Hill high schools were among 21 state schools across NSW and Victoria to take part in the Mitchell Institute led project that looked at “shifting the education paradigm” by promoting entrepreneurial thinking in the classroom.
Mitchell researchers worked with the schools to explore how to tailor learning to grow individual talents and better prepare young people for future success.
Mitchell Institute Director, Megan O’Connell, said the initiative uncovered some ideas that could help Australian schools step out of the industrial age and bring education in line with the needs of our modern, global society.
“The findings from this approach are resoundingly positive – students said they gained more knowledge, developed new skills and had better relationships with teachers after participating in the initiative,” she said.
The Ponds High School principal Jennifer Weal said a highlight of the year-long project was seeing the students take ownership of their learning.
“Students feel empowered about their role in learning they are more engaged,” she said. “Engaged leads to better and deeper learning experiences for students.”
Ms Weal said she first heard about the project a few years ago through international education expert and professional fellow at the Mitchell Institute, Professor Yong Zhao, but dismissed the concept in its then form because it meant throwing out the curriculum.
She later reconsidered when the current project meant the curriculum would be preserved - and she wasn’t disappointed.
The project led to the establishment of the school’s Creativity and Innovation Team (CAIT) who set about creating products and ideas that would benefit the school and their local community.
They made short films including a video tour of the school for incoming Year 7 students on Orientation Day and a 100 Faces project. Inspired by the photography project Humans of New York, it features photos and quotes from students sharing what it feels to be part of the school community.
Ms Weal agreed with the project findings that students become more flexible, creative, and resourceful after participating in the initiative. They also reported better connections within classrooms, schools and communities as a result of working in networks of schools pursuing similar objectives.
“The Ponds students were not put off that they were only in Year 7 and 8 and the rest of the students involved were in Years 10 and 11,” she said. “They presented just as well and had excellent ideas. They grew in confidence with every experience.”
Students from The Ponds and Rooty Hill high school were selected to present their experiences at the 2017 Australian Council for Educational Research.

McCrindle headlines State of The City Event

This year’s SOTC will focus on what the city will look like Beyond the Construction Zone and the opportunity for business in a new paradigm.
This year’s SOTC will be held on Friday, March 16 at 12pm at the PARKOYAL Parramatta.
Chris Bath returns as MC and keynote speaker is Mark McCrindle – social researcher, renowned for his expertise and valuable insights.
Other guest speakers include: President David Hill - Parramatta Chamber of Commerce and Lord Mayor Cllr Andrew Wilson – City of Parramatta Council.
Tickets are on sale now. visit www.parramattachamber.com.au or contact Romina Bousimon 9635 0022 or romina@parramattachamber.com.au

OUR BUSINESS ADVISORS ASSIST OVER 4,000 LOCAL BUSINESSES EACH YEAR

Whether you want to start a business, grow your business or just need someone to help you along the way, our Advisors are available to guide you towards your business goals and help your business reach its full potential.

Your first 4 hours are fully subsidised

Offices across Western Sydney & Mobile Advisors Available

HEAD OFFICE: 02 4721 5011

We are a non-profit community based organisation supported by the Australian Small Business Advisory Services programme, an Australian Government Initiative and the NSW State Government Business Connect Program

WWW.WSBUSINESS.COM.AU
Parramatta Chamber of Commerce presents the annual

STATE OF THE CITY ADDRESS
Parramatta 2018

- Beyond the Construction Zone -

Date:  **Friday 16 March (12 - 2pm)**

Venue:  PARKROYAL Parramatta
30 Phillip Street, Parramatta

Cost:  PCOC Members $155pp*
Table of ten $1,350*
Non-members $165pp*
Table of ten $1,500*

*Price includes gst

RSVP:  By 2nd March 2018
rsvp@parramattachamber.com.au
www.parramattachamber.com.au
Social media in a customer-led world

Lisa Bora
Gregory Daniel

It’s a ubiquitous tool to communicate with, acquire and maintain customers, but the true strategic insights come from delving into the unstructured data to deeply understand customer needs, and to make structured and insights-led decisions for success.

Social media has long been harnessed by private and public organisations to communicate to and engage with their customers, and many are doing this very effectively. However, Lisa Bora, Partner, Customer Brand & Marketing Advisory, KPMG, says to be truly competitive in today’s customer-led world, it’s vital to harness the deep insights hidden in social’s unstructured data.

More and more organisations are seeing that the value of social media is not just about servicing community relationships, Bora explains. “It can be the basis for auditing, engaging and retaining customers.”

With around 1.71 billion monthly active users on Facebook, for example, the information offered is diverse, rich, and ripe to be mined to deeply understand customer needs and expectations.

“The raw unstructured data forms part of the larger suite of information being used to drive your marketing, sales effectiveness and testing and learnings frameworks for going to market,” she says.

The growth and importance of social media is now holding organisations accountable for being agile and responsive to customers’ continually changing expectations and community activism.

“We’re no longer in a product and price economy, we’re in an experience and service era, and the way you engage customers both in proactive and reactive forms is a key litmus test,” she says.

Social is not just Facebook

For organisations to truly harness the power of social media, Bora says it requires much more than a company Facebook page that is often not updated or where the consumer conversation is located.

“Twitter, YouTube, Instagram and Pinterest are becoming increasingly influential with customers. Some are incorporating commerce facets that can directly lead to transactions,” she says.

When developing new products and services, Bora says social media is an effective place to find a market and test the ideas and is often cost effective with real-time feedback. It can also help alleviate traffic and pain points in other areas of a business that offer customer help.

Gregory Daniel, Head of Social Media Intelligence, KPMG, adds that these continually evolving advantages mean social is now being taken more seriously.

“It’s no longer the concern of certain sections of an organisation such as marketing alone – there needs to be a holistic use of social media and an all-encompassing strategy,” he says.

Social is a universe

Interacting with customers on social media must happen where the customers are, not just on an organisation’s own channels, Bora says.

“It’s important to engage customers in different ways, and not just thinking about them as ‘users’ and you as a ‘producer’. It’s an important way to also showcase and live your brand values.”

This requires organisations to lessen the control they have over how their organisation is discussed online, so that conversations can happen organically. Bora explains. This way, it’s possible to learn what customers really think and want. This rarely happens on a company’s social pages, but in the ecosystem of this universe.

However, Daniel says the risks of this ‘freedom’ have made some organisations scared to invest in social adequately. For example, the risks could be customers writing negative reviews, activists campaigning, information leakage, employees behaving inappropriately, or an account being hacked.

The key is to have the right governance structures to mitigate the risks, he explains.

“When the correct architecture structures are in place, you can manage the things that have held organisations back from investing,” he says.

Unstructured data insights

Organisations are getting accustomed to ‘big data’ analysis, drawing on their transaction information, customer touch points and customer relationship management systems for insights. However, they are less comfortable with gathering and analysing that data when it is ‘unstructured’, such as the way information is shared on social media.

Bora says the unstructured data on social media contains countless insights that can help an organisation to understand its customers. However, to engage with this information in a tangible way, it is essential to have the right methodology, technology, and expert assistance to provide the structure and insight.

“Just because the online chatter is loud, doesn’t mean that it represents the whole of your audience base. To counteract that, you need to ensure the relevancy and context of the data is balancing out the noise and consider the whole of market view,” she says.

Daniels offers an example: “When online activists were applying pressure on supermarkets to divest from certain areas, some funds were caught unaware and didn’t know who the groups were or how much power they held.

“We were able to create a matrix that could show the superfunds which ones were really well connected, which ones had strong points in, and which ones were developing support among their core demographics. That put them on the front foot and allowed them to engage with the groups and help satisfy their concerns.”

Social can’t be ignored

Engaging in social media is not only important to communicate with, acquire and maintain customers, but also to understand customers and stay a step ahead of their needs, Daniels says.

“Social is the most important communication medium in the world. It has proven its ability to change governments and brands. Organisations that are not utilising the full resources and capability of social media are not going to compete,” he says.

It’s not what you see, but how you see it.

Whether you’re an innovative start-up or thriving business, KPMG Enterprise can help you take the next steps to growth.

To learn more, contact David Pring on 9455 9996.

Anticipate tomorrow. Deliver today.

© 2016 KPMG, an Australian partnership, all rights reserved. KPMG Australia and Gregory Daniel, Head of Social Media Intelligence, KPMG Australia.
The reality. By lowering the upfront costs of cutting-edge technology, software-as-a-service systems are changing the competitive landscape for mid-sized businesses.

Until recently, the information technology systems of run-of-the-mill businesses have been complex to install and often have high start-up costs. In recent years, however, a new generation of software-as-a-service (SaaS) offerings have given small and mid-sized enterprises the ability to access similar capabilities, at affordable fees.

As KPMG Enterprise Partner Brad Miller and Director Michael Alf explain, these new offerings let mid-sized businesses narrow the gap with their larger rivals. Popular SaaS offerings for mid-sized firms include enterprise resource programs (ERPs) like Oracle NetSuite, SAP’s Business ByDesign, as well as customer relationship management systems (CRMs) such as Salesforce.com. These systems bust the myth that top-tier information technology requires huge upfront spending.

But mid-sized enterprises need the will to take advantage of what’s on offer, Miller and Alf suggest. Many do not recognize the cost benefits conferred by SaaS.

IT spend has changed

SaaS eliminates the expensive front-end investment in on-premises infrastructure and license fees that often deters mid-sized organisations from buying similar software to their larger rivals.

In the past companies would implement a big-finance ERP, and many would upgrade it every 5, and it would take me 12 or 18 months to implement,” Miller says.

He says this encouraged businesses to ‘sweat’ existing software assets, keeping them running long after they fell behind technology’s leading edge.

A SaaS subscription model managed and upgraded by the program creators changes this dynamic, he says. Instead of a multi-million-dollar sum, the upfront cost could be a couple of hundred thousand dollars a year. But SaaS systems do more than reduce cash-flow impacts; they add a new flexibility and can bring regular capability improvements.

New opportunity

Miller sees this flexibility as the single biggest opportunity that the new technology offers mid-sized enterprises. “They actually become faster than some of the established competitors,” he says. “They can compete in a different way with the big end of town... it changes the nature of information technology spending.”

Cloud-based systems are also allowing enterprises to adopt extremely cheap new systems that further enhance productivity and flexibility.

All adds: “There are more solutions out there, very powerful solutions, which really help your productivity, your effectiveness, your teamwork, all the challenges, for very, very little money.”

He points to the example of Slack, a collaboration system whose popularity has soared in the past 3 years. With 24/7 support and a 99.99 percent uptime guarantee, it costs US$15 per user per year. That gives mid-sized businesses large-corporate affordable capabilities thanks to their smaller numbers of users.

Exploit cloud-based IT

Taking advantage of these opportunities does require another change in mindset, Miller and Alf point out. Traditionally IT solution searches started with a tight definition of requirements which the software had to meet. To unlock the power and value of today’s systems, it is sometimes necessary to bend processors to fit the system. “A lot of the benefits of cloud are dependent on the fact that you adopt whatever approach needs to sit with that technology,” says Miller.

Mid-sized enterprises willing to take that step can challenge bigger rivals. Alf sums it up: “The race between mid-sized and large is completely open.”

Technology, media and telecommunications: Future potential for mid-market enterprises

Despite the complexities of the technology, media and telecommunications sectors, there is immense opportunity for mid-market enterprises to disrupt dominant industries of operating, and engage new customers for growth. In a series of three viewpoints, KPMG Enterprise explores how this can be achieved.

Changing competitive dynamics and implications for mid-market companies

After a promising period at the turn of the millennium, the Australian Technology, Media & Telecommunications (TMT) sector has experienced immense highs and lows. In 2017, it was clear that the challenges of new technology adoption and the rapid pace of segmentation is utterly complex. Enterprises have to think boldly about the future, and understand the vast expectations of customers and the extremely competitive landscape – from Australia and internationally – to have the chance. Innovating to offer something completely different is the standard baseline to gain market share.

Drawing on our deep experience in the TMT sector, and awareness of the challenges and complexities that the industry faces now and to come, we have developed a series of viewpoints – Technology, Media & Telecommunications: Changing competitive dynamics and implications for mid-market companies – delving into how mid-market organisations can make the most of this dynamic area.

Viewpoint 1

Shift from engineering centricity to services-driven customer centrity

In viewpoint 1, Shift from engineering centricity to services-driven customer centrity, including the continued growth in Over the Top (OTT) services, we explore how the increasing role of technology intellectual property, together with lowered access to industry entry, has brought about the commoditisation of technology.

We show that while many TMT companies have traditionally focused on engineering or network excellence as their point of differentiation, these factors are no longer enough to stand firm. In addition, we demonstrate how customer expectations of products and services have changed – why companies must offer something OTT to keep them engaged.

Viewpoint 2

Blurring of technology, media and telecommunications sector lines

In viewpoint 2, we explore the Blurring of the sector lines between Technology, Media and Telecommunications.

Traditionally, TMT companies have provided much of the infrastructure and platforms required to deliver the mass digitisation and digital connectedness that consumers have come to expect. TMT companies were in three distinct sectors, and companies in each sector did not offer related services.

However, with technology platforms now created by other parties, we are seeing sectors merge and the creation of new customer engagement channels. We unearth the boundary shifts in TMT, and reveal the potential for enterprises to be at the forefront.

Viewpoint 3

Creation of original content or content aggregation for competitive advantage

In viewpoint 3, A focus on the creation of original content or content aggregation as a key competitive advantage, we examine why developing fresh content, or content aggregation, has emerged as a key competitive advantage for TMT organisations. We demonstrate why organisations who have pioneered this approach have been highly successful, and the lessons and opportunities for mid-market companies going forward.

These three core trends show dynamic changes in the TMT sector, but also great potential for mid-market enterprises to make the best use of their agility and fast decision-making capabilities. They can leverage the latest technology to increase their knowledge of customers and utilise these insights to improve their customer management practices.

Source: KPMG and Forrester Consulting conducted a global study on disruptive technology adoption trends and the organisational and customer impact of these technologies on technology, media, and telecommunications companies. Disruptive Technology Barometer: If you would like to receive further information regarding viewpoints – Technology, Media & Telecommunications: Changing competitive dynamics and implications for mid-market companies please contact David Pring davidpring@kpmg.com.au
Together, let’s turn your aspirations into reality.

Our advisory professionals can help your fast-growing company set the foundations for sustainable growth.

kpmg.com/au/enterprise
Unforeseen events, family disputes – PT 3
Let’s look at family trusts, businesses and self-managed superannuation funds

N January, we highlighted key considerations for your personal estate plan. This article outlines dealing with family trust, businesses and self-managed superannuation funds succession.

**Trusts**

Many individuals set up trusts for asset protection and tax reasons. However, standard discretionary trust deeds rarely comprehensively deal with succession on your death or incapacity.

Upon your death or incapacity, trusts continue to operate and the assets in them do not form part of your estate, but documents can be prepared to deal with succession of control. The positions of control are:

- Trustee - decides what investments are made and how trust funds are distributed;
- Appointor (or guardian) - has ultimate control over the trust and can appoint and remove the trustee.

However, dealing with these positions alone does not resolve what happens to a discretionary trust controlled by your children, since:

- No beneficiary has the right to income and capital. This can cause a dispute, deadlock or some children overlooking the decisions of the others; and
- With a standard trustee company constitution, a new director can only be appointed if a majority of directors agree. This could leave one child or their family branch excluded from trustee decisions.

For a new trust, consider instead forming a ‘succession planning trust’, which:

- Is fully discretionary for tax and asset protection reasons until after a trigger event (usually the death of both parents);
- After the trigger event, could automatically split income where a dispute/deadlock cannot be resolved unanimously or through dispute resolution clauses; and could have an exit clause to deal with capital;
- Comprehensively deals with appointor (or guardian) succession; and
- Is coupled with a tailored company constitution and special classes of shares. Each share could allow each child’s family branch the right (after the trigger event) to appoint a director.

It is not usually advisable to amend an existing trust to include these provisions, which can trigger a tax liability. Instead, a new ‘succession planning company constitution’ and special classes of shares can achieve the same outcome.

**Business succession**

Whether you have a family business or own a business with others, it is important to consider what happens on your death or incapacity:

- For individuals owning a business with other individuals, a buy-sell agreement (usually coupled with appropriate insurance) is recommended. The buy-sell agreement allows owners to set out how their interests will be dealt with, which avoids involving the deceased or incapacitated owner’s spouse or relative in the business. Instead, that owner’s interest is paid out to their estate, usually appropriate insurance (as they in numerous cases have failed and benefits passed to someone unintended) and kept current.
- For individuals with trusts or entities holding family businesses, a bespoke family agreement may be appropriate. This provides a clear framework for the operation and future of trusts and businesses held through those trusts on the death of key family members. The agreements vary greatly but often cover matters including:
  - Control.
  - Key decision making.
  - Distribution policy.
  - Transferring of shares.
  - Death of descendants.
  - Involvement of children or partners.
  - Exit strategies.

**Self-managed superannuation funds (SMSF)**

Like a trust, superannuation does not form part of your estate for your Will, so it is essential that you:

- Prepare binding or non-binding death benefit nominations (depending on family circumstances) to state where your death benefits and any life insurance in your SMSF should pass to. These must be carefully drafted (as they in numerous cases have failed and benefits passed to someone unintended) and kept current.
- Clearly state in your Will where you want your shares in your SMSF trustee company (if applicable) to pass to.
- Consider the impact of the 2017 changes on your strategy, as anything over $1.6 million must be paid out as a lump sum on your death, but there are strategies to manage.
We’re all ears, not all talk.
How firms can help workers enduring domestic abuse

VICTIMS have to cope alone when managers lack relevant training

MANAGERS are already uncertain about their ability to help workers who are suffering violence at home, but things get even worse when it comes to remote workers.

If it can be difficult to discern if a colleague is being abused at home when you see them all day, five days a week, how can you fulfil your duty of care when your only contact with them is by phone, email and occasional Skype meeting?

There is a growing acceptance of the role of employers in helping their employees who are subject to domestic violence, but the lack of training for managers in this area means that well-meaning organisational policies can be ineffective, according to Karin Sanders, a professor and head of the school of management at UNSW Business School.

“It can be a tricky conversation, but we should all be trained much better in it. If there is a change in someone’s performance, for instance, line managers should be aware of what is going on,” Sanders notes.

Domestic violence, also known as intimate partner violence, is a social problem that cannot be quarantined from the workplace. If people live in fear, their performance at work is likely to be affected and they may need time off to get help, medical treatment, counselling, legal assistance or safe accommodation.

The perpetrators may find ways to harass them at work and deliberately sabotage their careers. The widespread nature of the damage is revealed in the Australian Bureau of Statistics’ 2012 National Personal Safety Survey, which shows one in four Australian women has experienced physical or sexual violence by an intimate partner.

And, on average, at least one woman a week is killed by a partner or former partner in Australia, according to Australian Institute of Criminology data.

A role to play

Of the respondents to Sanders’ survey, 132 say they have some involvement with the White Ribbon organisation, which campaigns against violence to women and accredits workplaces for their policies and practices in the area.

Along with workplace training around the issue of intimate partner violence, White Ribbon recommends employers offer 10 days of domestic violence leave (that does not take away from other leave types, such as sick leave or holidays).

Almost one-third of respondents to Sanders’ survey offer such leave and a further 18% say they plan to introduce it in the “near future.”

The fact that a significant number say they are going to introduce domestic violence leave could indicate this is a new and booming area of policy growth, says Sanders. However, she cannot be certain that respondents mean what they say.

“We would like to do another survey in two years’ time and see if we really find differences,” she says.

Research by the Workplace Gender Equality Agency shows around 12% of private sector companies presently offer paid domestic violence leave and they include NAB, Telstra, Virgin Australia, PwC and some public-sector organisations.

The GPT Group last year announced a policy of up to 10 days of additional paid leave, priority access to flexible working arrangements, and $5000 in after-tax support to help workers in those matters. Qantas introduced 10 days of domestic violence leave last year. Lesley Grant, chair of the Qantas Group Diversity & Inclusion Council, says domestic violence is a challenging topic to address and manage, but the airline is committed to building an awareness of it.

“Providing a supportive workplace and removing barriers to inclusion are important and we aim to inform, educate and support our employees and managers by sharing information through our internal communication channels, leadership programs and in events such as our annual Safety Week,” Grant says.

Two-thirds of the respondents in Sanders’ research have some sort of policies in place with the potential to support victims. They are focused on inclusion and diversity, flexible working arrangements, parental leave and bullying.

Sometimes people have a mask on, sometimes they prefer that no one knows.” – KARIN SANDERS

Societal attitudes

Some positive news is that there may be increasing acceptance that employers have a role to play in helping combat domestic abuse.

In the survey, only five people asserted that if people were suffering violence at home, it was none of their business.

This is a change from the attitudes that prevailed six years ago when Peter Wilson, chairman and national president of AHRI, published an article with then sex discrimination commissioner Elizabeth Broderick, calling for employers to assist employees who suffered violence at home.

“Many hundreds of readers commented on the article, with around half asserting, some rancourously, that employers have no role in what is essentially a private matter between couples,” according to Wilson.

“Just six years later, it pleases me to see that view is no longer so widely shared,” he notes.

Lyn Goodear, CEO of AHRI, says awareness campaigns during the intervening years may have had an impact on societal attitudes.

“But the transition from policy to practice is something we still have to put a lot of work into. It is always the harder part,” says Goodear, who was project director of the survey.

She says because the respondents were mostly working in human resources, their responses may be more informed than those of line managers, CEOs or the public at large.

“But I think if we did do a broader public survey, I would hope we would see change there as well,” Goodear says.

To get help from Lifeline, phone 131114. Or visit online.
Loxley on Bellbird Hill is offering an exclusive offer to all those who book and secure their upcoming wedding during the month of February & March this year.

They are offering 4 Complimentary suites for the wedding night: The Bridal Suite, Rose Suite, Camellia Suite and Cottage Suite. All suites include a full country cooked breakfast. Valued at over $1000. Loxley’s Wedding & Events Manager, Sonia Murray is also kindly offering Winter Wedding Packages for 2018 from just $95pp.

Please contact Loxley’s wedding coordinators on 45677 711 or by email to info@loxleyonbellbirdhill.com.au to make an appointment to come for a personalised tour of Loxley and to discuss your wedding plans.

Loxley on Bellbird Hill is open 7 days a week and is located at 993 Bells Line of Road, Kurrajong Hills NSW 2753. Visit their website: www.loxleyonbellbirdhill.com.au

To the team at Loxley,

Adriana and I greatly appreciate the level of service and professionalism we received. From the day Adriana walked into Loxley for the first time and fell in love with the venue, through to the morning after the big day we received efficient, polite and professional service.

A particular thank you to Brittnee who was understanding and insightful along the way. She helped guide us with a few ideas and was more than accommodating with any ideas we had. When we had an issue with a supplier that spanned 2 months, one phone call to Brittnee and she fixed it all up without the need for anymore follow up.

On the day the team were particularly helpful, when it started to rain they were quick to move everything indoors so we could still proceed. All wait staff did a fantastic job of serving food and drinks to our guests.

Thank you to all involved in making our day work so smoothly.

Kind regards
JOSH AND ADRIANA WHITE
One Love - Weddings at Loxley on Bellbird Hill
THE WORLD’S LARGEST SHORT FILM FESTIVAL

16 FINALISTS
FOOD & WINE
LIVE MUSIC

TSI: ROSE

PARRAMATTA PARK
SATURDAY
FEBRUARY 17

Tropfest

CGU
Crane survey explores commercial trends

**DEVELOPERS** are repurposing residential sites to meet an increasing demand for high quality commercial developments. The trend comes at a time of historically high infrastructure investment in Parramatta, according to analysis from Deloitte of the Parramatta development market.

The inaugural Parramatta Crane Survey revealed an unprecedented level of construction in Parramatta, identifying 39 developments. Across these developments, the survey discovered:

- 92,000sqm of office floor space currently under construction.
- Zero vacancy rate for A-Grade office space with total vacancy rate at 4.3% compared to 5.9% in the Sydney CBD.
- Apartment construction is slowing with only 1,100 DA approved apartments in the pipeline. 63% less volume than currently under construction.
- By 2020, 857 new hotel rooms will have been built across four projects.

Survey author and Deloitte Western Sydney’s Real Estate Leader, David Hagger, said the shift of momentum towards commercial development, away from residential, will continue to attract higher paid jobs to Parramatta.

"The Parramatta Square development alone could house over 20,000 workers, with around 10,000 more expected across the rest of the city. "Many of these will be public servants, with the NSW Government being the anchor tenant after making the largest pre-lease commitment we have ever seen. "We are also seeing an influx of private sector companies, including the high profile move by NAB to make Parramatta its second home, with a number of other businesses now circling for space in the remaining repurposed commercial building on Parramatta Square," said Mr Hagger.

The survey reveals that there are currently 2,707 apartments under construction in the Parramatta CBD, due for completion between 2018 and 2019. With a further 4,865 apartments proposed across 12 projects, a potential ‘flood’ of the market is being predicted. According to Mr Hagger, however, the survey indicates a different outcome.

"We see the market entering a cooling phase. There are only 1,110 apartments with DA approval in the pipeline, providing a short-term supply of approximately 2-3 years, indicating lower risk of oversupply," he said.

"Plans to expand the Riverside Theatre, move the Museum of Applied Arts and Sciences to the banks of the Parramatta River and construct a new 30,000 seat stadium are all in place, with the Parramatta Light Rail connecting people between these amenities, the Westmead Health and Education precinct and Sydney Olympic Park. "Future investment in Badgery’s Creek airport and the Metro Sydney West project will provide an additional boost in the coming decade."

---

**Preferred partner selected for Penrith transformation**

*RED DWYER*

One of Australia’s leading diversity-focused property groups is the preferred proponent to redevelop a Penrith Council-owned car park to transform the city centre.

Fraser Property Australia has been chosen to redevelop the 631-space Union Road car park into a multi-storey mixed-use precinct as part of council’s aim to capitalise on the 47.8 hectares of public land in the CBD.

Council wants to use these sites to transform the city to grow the economy, attract investment, create jobs and draw residents.

Among the latest moves to change the dynamic of the CBD to a place in which to live, work and relax, is Fraser’s proposal which would make a significant change to the streetscape.

Council’s vision in calling for expressions of interest in 2015 was to create a vibrant urban village with potential developers required to present innovative designs which also provided an extra 1000 public parking spaces in addition to the 631 currently on site.

A key feature of the proposal is six apartment buildings ranging in height from 17 to 34 storeys including retail and commercial space, a child care centre, public plaza and landscaped communal spaces.

Penrith Mayor, John Thain, in welcoming the endorsement of Fraser as the preferred proponent, said this was the first step in a lengthy and rigorous process – up to 12 months – for a proposed development with the potential to shape the future of the city.

"The proposed development will power the vibrant and dynamic high-time economy in the heart of our city centre, providing residents with immediate access to local restaurants, cafes, shops, businesses and transport links. "Penrith isn’t waiting for things to happen – our community is ambitious and has a vision to support the aspirations of new businesses, workers and residents."

Penrith, self-described as the New West, regards itself as ‘a place, an attitude and a world of opportunities’ and is prepared to leverage the potential of the city by using public land to transform the city centre.

Another example of the transformation of the city centre is the $75 million, eight-storey, 10,000-square-metre office building at 50 Belmore Street, which ‘will change the face of Western Sydney’, according to William Phillips, director of the privately-owned property investment company Sandran Property Group.

The new building will be located directly opposite the upgraded Penrith bus and rail interchange, and a short walk to Westfield.

---

**Agreement over warehouse project**

*RED DWYER*

QUBE Holdings has reached agreement with Target Australia to develop a 37,860-square-metre facility at Moorebank Logistics Park.

Qube will develop 37,860 square metres of warehousing, offices and facilities which will be among the first purpose-built operations within the precinct.

Target, which will have a 10-year lease on the facility, is expected to take up occupation early in 2019.

The company has also agreed to a new five-year logistics services contract with Qube covering freight from Port Botany to Moorebank.

"Securing Target is testament to the quality product that is Moorebank Logistics Park," said William Hara, Qube strategic assets director.

Qube is developing, managing and will run the precinct on 243 hectares under a 99-year lease and is expected to include up to 850,000 square metres of integrated warehousing when fully developed.

The site has a direct rail link to Port Botany and the interstate rail freight network which, along with its proximity to major motorways, makes it ideal for an internodal facility, the company said.

Qube managing director, Maurice James, said the precinct would transform Sydney’s freight and logistics supply chain.

"The Moorebank development is certainly a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity linking one of the nation’s busiest ports by rail to an inland facility with the sheer scale and location benefits of the Moorebank site is a game-changer."

Moorebank was identified as a priority location for a freight terminal in 2004 and in October 2016, was included on Infrastructure Australia’s priority list for national infrastructure projects.
Parramatta leads the way in education

GEOFF LEE

It’s wonderful that Australia Day recognised some of our state’s best and brightest scientists and educators.

World renowned physicist Michelle Simmons was named Australian of the Year Award. Mathematics teacher Eddie Woo was awarded Australia’s Local Hero and Greg Whitby, ED of the Catholic Education Diocese of Parramatta appointed Member in the General Division of the Order of Australia (AM) for innovation in education.

We need smart teachers, scientists and educators to drive a future agenda in innovation and education to make Parramatta renowned as a smart city of the future. I have no doubt that we can lead the way in mathematics, science and technology with the right infrastructure and people.

Eddie Woo’s nomination as Australian Local Hero not only recognises the impact that he has on so many students around the world – it also raises the importance of mathematics and teaching and provides a great opportunity to help encourage more of our best and brightest to choose a career in teaching.

The Australia Day Awards follow a successful year for our local schools with outstanding results by students from both public and independent schools in last year’s HSC. We also saw Carlingford named in the top 10 list of best performing suburbs in the NSW State taking the number one spot for 22 Schools continue to outperform schools across Australia. The top 10 list of best performing suburbs in the HSC. We also saw Carlingford named in the top 10 list of best performing suburbs in the NSW State taking the number one spot for 22 Schools continue to outperform schools across Australia.

2017 was featured on the ABC’s Australian Story. Starting in 2012, his mathematics videos have now been viewed by millions and he has over 175,000 subscribers. On receiving his award Mr Woo said "technology has allowed the education sector to think outside the box when it comes to resources."

Inspirational teachers, technology and new pedagogy is what will drive Parramatta’s transformation into a STEM (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics) Education City - focusing on disciplines that will grow in demand well into the future.

The relocation of the Museum of Applied Arts and Science, once described as “our answer to the Smithsonian” to Parramatta along with the decentralisation of 1800 Department of Education staff from Sydney into a new purpose built facility in Parramatta CBD will complement our move towards a STEM Education City.

Great teachers are vital but new schools like the new O’Connell Street Public School which opened its doors in January also plays an important role in inspiring and preparing our students for the future. Built for future learning this new school combines beautiful old sandstone architecture and new student-centred pedagogy.

There are plenty of open spaces and modern facilities to delight and inspire learning. This school will cater for 1,000 primary school students, so not only will offer great learning opportunities but will meet the education needs of local families for generations to come.

The NSW Government is also investing more than $220M on a state-of-the-art vertical primary and secondary school to open in the heart of Parramatta in 2019. These flagship schools are architecturally designed with modern flexible and collaborative learning spaces, equipped with the latest technology and more outdoor green spaces. As the NSW Government’s flagship schools, they will facilitate modern teaching and embrace new student-centred pedagogies that excite and inspire.

It is not just the public sector that is transforming.

Catholic Schools in Western Sydney, under the leadership of Executive Director of the Catholic Education Diocese of Parramatta Greg Whitby are also innovating. In 2017 Bulletin Magazine named Greg the most innovative educator in Australia in their annual SMART 100 awards.

This year he was appointed a Member in the General Division of the Order of Australia (AM) for his outstanding contribution to innovation in education and for “rethinking school for the digital age and the role of learning environments and technology in supporting learning and teaching.”

The Diocese incorporates this thinking into plans for a new multi-campus school in Parramatta to cater for up to 2000 students from preschool to post-school at St Patrick’s Cathedral College. Like the new public flagship schools, St Patrick’s Cathedral College will incorporate a modern five-storey building and rooftop recreational space.

The Western Sydney University and University of New England have campuses in the heart of Parramatta’s CBD. These institutions provide unparalleled access to tertiary studies for students in Western Sydney.

Parramatta is forming into an innovative and education precinct through the clustering of leading schools, universities and other complementary institutions such as the Department of Education’s new head office and the Museum of Applied Science. We now have the opportunity to realise the enormous potential as a Education and Innovation City.

Geographically, Parramatta is well positioned to service employers and employees in Western Sydney and to cater for the predicted population growth over the next 25 years.

For students, Parramatta offers the convenience of public transport with the busiest bus-rail interchange outside Sydney’s CBD and all the other amenities that cities offer. With significant public and non-government investment we are laying the foundations of a world leading education precinct.

For many, the investment in Parramatta is delivering the impetus for our CBD to be a world class innovation and excellence education precinct.

Geoff Lee is State Member for Parramatta.

IS YOUR BUSINESS KEEPING UP WITH WESTERN SYDNEY’S GROWTH?
How cyberbullies target their victims

**LARISA MCLoughlin**

We hear a lot about cyberbullying, but we hear less about what it actually constitutes. Cyberbullying is defined as an aggressive, intentional act using electronic forms, repeatedly and over time, against a victim who can’t easily defend against it.

As technology evolves continuously, cyberbullying originally was restricted to the sending of emails and texts. But now it can include image-sharing, online communities, blogs and forums, and sharing of personal information.

While cyberbullying is an iteration of traditional bullying, victims of cyberbullying often have worse outcomes than victims of traditional bullying. And a combination of traditional bullying and cyberbullying has the most severe negative impact on mental health.

Cyberbullying can include both overt (name calling, mocking, shaming) or covert (exclusion, isolation) aspects.

Cyberbullying can involve written-verbal behaviours such as phone calls, text messages and comments on social media.

Two specific examples of written forms of cyberbullying are the well-known “trolling” (purposefully posting hurtful comments to provoke a response), and flaming (an array of aggressive comments from one to another).

Other forms of cyberbullying involve:
- Visual behaviours: posting, sending or sharing pictures or videos, usually to cause embarrassment.
- Exclusion: intentionally excluding someone from an online group or, in the case of online gaming, excluding a player from groups or teams.
- Catfishing: falsifying online identities to trick the victim into romantic relationships.
- Impersonation: using the victim’s name and account to damage the victim.
- Stalking: for example, sending multiple text messages to the victim to show the bully knows exactly what they are doing, where they have been.
- Threatening violence: for example, threatening some form of traditional bullying, such as a physical fight. These forms of cyberbullying occur in one of three ways: direct, by proxy, or by public post (to a wide audience).

Direct attacks are between the bully and victim only, and the identity of the former is known by the latter.

Whereas “by proxy” attacks are indirect, and the bully typically tricks someone else into cyberbullying the victim. This means the bully convinces someone else to post something online about the victim, with that person not realising it’s intended to hurt or embarrass the victim.

Cyberbullying may also involve the posting of the above-mentioned behaviours to a wide audience via social media, a website or a blog. This can include creating a false social media account of another person.

Cyberbullying can occur on any number of platforms. It can occur via social networking sites such as Facebook or Instagram, or through popular apps such as Snapchat. It can also occur through text messages and emails, or via question-and-answer type platforms such as askFM (an anonymous platform for asking people questions).

There’s no way of knowing which platform could be used to cyberbully someone and there’s not always a preference.

Though direct and public cyberbullying are both very serious, young people perceive public cyberbullying to be worse than the private form, with anonymous attacks being more severe than non-anonymous.

While cyberbullying is an iteration of traditional bullying, victims of cyberbullying often have worse outcomes than victims of traditional bullying. And a combination of traditional bullying and cyberbullying has the most severe negative impact on mental health.

Cyberbullying can include both overt (name calling, mocking, shaming) or covert (exclusion, isolation) aspects.

Cyberbullying can involve written-verbal behaviours such as phone calls, text messages and comments on social media.

Two specific examples of written forms of cyberbullying are the well-known “trolling” (purposefully posting hurtful comments to provoke a response), and flaming (an array of aggressive comments from one to another).

Other forms of cyberbullying involve:
- Visual behaviours: posting, sending or sharing pictures or videos, usually to cause embarrassment.
- Exclusion: intentionally excluding someone from an online group or, in the case of online gaming, excluding a player from groups or teams.
- Catfishing: falsifying online identities to trick the victim into romantic relationships.
- Impersonation: using the victim’s name and account to damage the victim.
- Stalking: for example, sending multiple text messages to the victim to show the bully knows exactly what they are doing, where they have been.
- Threatening violence: for example, threatening some form of traditional bullying, such as a physical fight. These forms of cyberbullying occur in one of three ways: direct, by proxy, or by public post (to a wide audience).

Direct attacks are between the bully and victim only, and the identity of the former is known by the latter.

Whereas “by proxy” attacks are indirect, and the bully typically tricks someone else into cyberbullying the victim. This means the bully convinces someone else to post something online about the victim, with that person not realising it’s intended to hurt or embarrass the victim.

Cyberbullying may also involve the posting of the above-mentioned behaviours to a wide audience via social media, a website or a blog. This can include creating a false social media account of another person.

Cyberbullying can occur on any number of platforms. It can occur via social networking sites such as Facebook or Instagram, or through popular apps such as Snapchat. It can also occur through text messages and emails, or via question-and-answer type platforms such as askFM (an anonymous platform for asking people questions).

There’s no way of knowing which platform could be used to cyberbully someone and there’s not always a preference.

Though direct and public cyberbullying are both very serious, young people perceive public cyberbullying to be worse than the private form, with anonymous attacks being more severe than non-anonymous.

Larisa McLoughlin is a postdoctoral Research Fellow at Sunshine Coast Mind and Neuroscience Thompson Institute, University of the Sunshine Coast.
Bumper weekend of world-class events

Penrith will attract the national and international spotlight with an exciting line-up of world-class events being held here this month. Locals and visitors will be especially spoiled for choice on the weekend of February 17-18, with an impressive variety of sporting and family events on the calendar.

Across the weekend, around 800 competitors from future stars to elite world riders will bring the marvel and thrill of BMX racing to Penrith in the BMX Australia Championships. More than 100 of the best paddlers in the world, including Olympic medalists and Penrith’s slalom World Champion, Jessica Fox will compete at the Canoe/Slalom Australian Open at Penrith Whitewater Stadium.

Olympians, Australian Team members and the top rowers in the country will converge in Penrith for the NSW State Rowing Championships at the Sydney International Regatta Centre.

There’s also plenty of family friendly fun on offer across the weekend with the 114th Annual Luddenham Show, Cinema in the Park, and Chinese New Year at Jordan Springs.

Penrith Mayor John Thain said being recognised as a location of choice for events is great news for our community and local economy.

“Major events provide a significant boost for our local economy and continue to lift the profile of Penrith as an attractive place to invest and visit,” Cr Thain said.

Penrith’s run of world-class events in the second half of 2017 – including the Matildas vs Brazil match, the Defqon.1 music festival, the Penrith Tennis International and the NSW Golf Open boosted the local economy by nearly $10 million, benefitting local businesses including motels, restaurants and tourist attractions.

“‘This is another example of the opportunities that a growing city can deliver for its community,” Cr Thain said.

For information visit www.visitpenrith.com.au.

Around 800 competitors will bring the thrill of BMX racing to Penrith in the BMX Australia Championships.

Jessica Fox will be one of the star attractions at the Canoe/Slalom Australian Open.

Nelson Bay Breeze Holiday Apartments
We provide some of the best accommodation Port Stephens has to offer.

Fully self-contained townhouse or one level apartments that have everything you require for your comfort and enjoyment to make it a relaxing holiday and a home away from home.

• 2 minutes walk from the beach
• 250m from Fly Point Beach
• 2 minutes’ drive from Nelson Bay Golf Course
• A short walk from Nelson Bay Marina
• Air-conditioned apartments
• Apartments with double spa bath
• Outdoor heated pool and spa
• Free parking on site
• Kitchenette with a microwave and refrigerator
• Foxtel and DVD player
• Laundry facilities
• Enjoy a variety of outdoor activities

Families friendly - rated it 8.6 for a stay with kids.

Perfect for those wanting a centralised location within Nelson Bay, to be able to leave the car parked and enjoy being at the centre of it all!

www.nelsonbaybreeze.com.au

02 4984 3199

Nelson Bay Breeze Holiday Apartments
1 Trafalgar Street, Nelson Bay NSW 2315

Follow us on Facebook
Riverside presents
Flight Paths premiere

F rom March 15 to 24 the National Theatre of Parramatta will present the world premiere of Flight Paths by award-winning Sydney-based playwright Julian Larnach.

Set over a week in the world’s most prestigious university and the world’s largest slum, Flight Paths is a passionate coming-of-age story exploring privilege, families, mobility, Australia’s place in the world and the consequences of charity.

Luisa doesn’t know who she is. Tired of being a token of her skin colour, she leaves Australia for university in England hoping for a life unfeathered by a complicated past not of her making. Emily knows she is changing the world.

Working for an NGO in Sydney she has figured it out but when she volunteers for one of their programs on the ground in Kenya, she uncovers the unexpected. At the same time their fates are becoming irreversibly entwined with a man who has fallen from the sky.

Directed by Anthea Williams (HIR, Kill the Messenger and Mother’s Ruin: A Cabaret about Gin), Flight Paths will be brought to the stage for the first time with a stellar cast including Ebony Vagulans, Airlie Dodds, Monica Kumar, Richie Morris and Brandon McClelland.

Julian Larnach said, “When I began writing Flight Paths I set about putting worlds on stage that I hadn’t been seeing, populating them with young characters that I hadn’t been hearing in order to prompt discussions about the world that we haven’t been having. I am excited to see this new work about Australia’s place in the global community come alive with one of the country’s newest and boldest theatre companies.”

DATES & TIMES
Thursday 15 March - 7.30pm
Friday 16 March - 7:30pm
Saturday 17 March - 7:30pm
Tuesday 20 March - 7.30pm
Wednesday 21 March - 2.15pm
Thursday 22 March - 6.30pm
Friday 23 March - 7:30pm
Saturday 24 March - 2.15pm and 7.30pm

Tickets: Adult $49, Concession $44 – Available from the Box Office (02) 8839 3399 or www.riversideparramatta.com.au. Transaction fees: phone $4.60, web $3.60 and counter $2.60. Discounts available for Riverside Theatres’ Members.

Venue: Riverside Theatres – Corner of Church and Market Streets, Parramatta
CRUISE expert, Roderick Eime, travels to Miami to inspect one of the newest and largest cruise ships in the world. The MSC Seaside has certainly set tongues wagging. “Ugly!” “Is that a ship or an office block?” “Too big!”

These were some of the comments on my Facebook page when I posted pictures of the brand new MSC Seaside from when I attended its public debut in Miami last December.

Now, I get that not everyone likes a ship this big and it’s certainly not my usual choice when it comes to cruising, but I was intrigued with this vessel, particularly as it was the first in a brand-new class of advanced technology ship from this ebullient Italian family-owned shipping and cruise line.

MSC Seaside brings to 14, the number of modern (and modernised) cruise ships in the world’s largest privately-owned fleet. She is the first in a new class of vessel and part of MSC Cruises’ rapid expansion plans that include the 5714-passenger MSC Meraviglia, which entered service in June last year and the forthcoming 200,000GRT, LNG-powered World Class, due on the water beginning 2022. MSC Cruises certainly adheres to the motto ‘big is beautiful’ with more and bigger launches planned over the next few years. Her sister ship, MSC Seaview, is due this year and will embark on Mediterranean cruises.

First off, there is no getting away from the size of the 323m long, 72m high MSC Seaside. She will carry more than 5000 guests in luxury, feed them in 11 separate dining venues, relax them in 20 bars and lounges, cool them in 6 pools and entertain them in a 1000-seat theatre. But as if prepared for our scrutiny, MSC is at the forefront when it comes to new, environmentally-friendly technology. Power-saving LED lighting is widely used throughout the ship. All waste water is filtered and recycled, resulting in zero effluent discharge to the sea. Scrubbers are installed to neutralise the most harmful of exhaust gas emissions.

“We build our ships to exceed all the most stringent regulations,” CEO Gianni Onorato told me when our little group cornered him in the exclusive Yacht Club bar, “The sea is our environment and all of us at MSC bring a personal commitment to protecting it.”

It could be argued that despite her size, the environmental impact per guest is less than many of the current (regular sized) cruise ships with older, less sophisticated technology.

Apart from her sheer size, the polarising factor seems to be the radical new prototype design of her superstructure which is intended to provide an atmosphere reminiscent of the towering scenes aft.

I do like to be aboard the Seaside.

Continued on page 29
famous Miami Beach condos. MSC Seaside will be based year-round in Miami, hence her descriptive tagline “the ship that follows the sun” and her eye-popping appearance.

It’s the aft superstructure in particular where twin towers rise above a large pool deck that is just a few floors above the waterline and is part of a low-level promenade that encircles the ship.

Two glass elevators provide access between that Deck 7 area and the other main ‘Aqua Park’ pool area way up on Deck 16. Two glass-floored catwalks and a 40m high ‘Bridge of Sighs’ give guests a truly breathtaking view of the ocean.

The ship’s design also features a wide promenade lined with bars and restaurants on Deck 8, that’s likewise designed to put people closer to the sea. MSC Seaside will offer the brand’s distinctive entertainment program with innovative, high production value shows as well as a host of new international dining concepts, including the signature Asia Market Kitchen from renowned Pan-Asian chef Roy Yamaguchi.

Other foodie highlights include a fancy seafood restaurant, Ocean Cay, a good ol’ American-style steakhouse, the Butcher’s Cut and a chic French bistro, La Bohème.

Guests can count on outstanding facilities for families such as the Lego-themed areas for kids up to 12. Teens can enjoy a wide array of electronic and arcade-style games including a full-scale Formula 1 simulator - that they may have to jostle with eager adults to drive.

There’s a twin cable zipline across the top deck that is the longest aboard any ship.

MSC Seaside includes the exclusive MSC Yacht Club elevated to a whole new level. The Yacht Club concept has become one of the benchmark luxury offerings throughout the cruise industry and creates a serene ‘members only’ enclave within the ship with dedicated facilities such as spa, sundeck, restaurant, bar and superb suites with private whirlpool baths.

MSC Seaside will sail from a newly expanded and dedicated terminal in Miami on 7- and 14-night Itineraries that will naturally be Caribbean in nature. Ports of call include Nassau in the Bahamas, Cozumel in Mexico, the Cayman Islands, San Juan in Puerto Rico and St Maarten among others.

Cruising is fast becoming one of the most popular forms of leisure travel, not just in Australia, but all over the world.

The choice is yours whether big is your bag when it comes to ship choice, but you can be assured that these new wave of mega-liners from MSC Cruises will provide on-board activities and entertainment like never before at prices everyone can afford and with a firm acknowledgement that with such size comes responsibility for the environment.

For full information and itineraries on all MSC Cruise ships and destinations, see your local cruise specialist travel agent or visit www.msc cruises.com.au

The writer travelled as a guest of MSC Cruises
Images: Roderick Eime and supplied.
Feature supplied by: www.wtfmedia.com.au

We’ve got Western Sydney covered

Western Sydney Business Access – the region’s only independent media covering business, progress, development and community.

Read all editions online www.wsba.com.au
How kids’ learning and health is shaped by genes they don’t inherit

JENNY GRAVES

T’S a hoary old debate: how much do our genes define how we grow and learn, and how much is due to the environment?

A new study by Kong and colleagues shows that parents’ genes, even those not passed on to children, have major effects on kids’ health and educational attainment.

Although this discovery has been reported by some as ‘headspinning’, to me it is not too surprising.

We already know parents contribute genes that directly influence development, and that the child’s environment determines how these genes have an effect.

But a crucial part of this environment is the parents. To me, this new study highlights the importance of parental genes in shaping how we are raised.

Genes and human development

We know from many studies that most aspects of human growth and development are strongly influenced by the genetic make-up of the child. For instance, comparing identical and non-identical twins shows big genetic components for such physical differences as height and weight.

Scientists can look at the whole genome of thousands of children, and their parents, and identify sequence differences all over the genome. This technique, called genome-wide association study (GWAS), has identified many human genes involved in normal development and human diseases.

For example, we know from a study of 100,000 people that 74 regions of the genome and human diseases.

Now that DNA sequencing is cheap, scientists can look at the whole genome of thousands of children, and their parents, and identify sequence differences all over the genome.

This technique, called genome-wide association study (GWAS), has identified many human genes involved in normal development and human diseases.

For example, we know from a study of 100,000 people that 74 regions of the genome are associated with ‘educational attainment’ (the number of years spent studying).

The development of these triplets will be shaped by their genes and their environment. from www.shutterstock.com

Continued on page 31

A-GRADE
PRE-UNI EDUCATION AND TRAINING PTY LTD

Certificate III in Early Childhood Education and Care - for High School Students - Study through your holidays!

We are very pleased to announce A-GRADE Pre-Uni Education and Training will be offering Certificate III in Early Childhood, to be followed by a Diploma in Early Childhood to all Year 10 and 11 students respectively.

Grow Your Career!

If you love Children and are interested in their Educational and Social Development, we can give you the skills and knowledge to provide care, giving you the skills to plan engaging and educational activities, enabling you to maximise their development.

Learn how to create individual profiles and work with Families to provide appropriate Education and Care. From Family Day Care Provider to Pre-school Assistant or an “Educator” for Before and After School Care - it’s the perfect course for your future needs! All this can be done so simply during your School Holidays.

Your future is awaiting you!

COMMENCE YOUR STUDIES THIS APRIL SCHOOL HOLIDAYS!

A-Grade Strives to Make a Positive Contribution to the Next Generation.

When you embark on a career in Early Childhood Education you’ll be rewarded every day with the knowledge that you’re making a positive difference in the future of others.

Our Certificate III will qualify you to work in Early Childhood Education at the level of an “Educator”, as well as preparing you for our Diploma or further Tertiary studies – it can even provide you employment opportunities if you wish to work in any Childhood field while studying another Degree qualification such as Law, Medicine or Engineering. If you complete our Diploma in Early Childhood, it will stand as a third of a “Degree” should you wish to follow a career in Teaching - this then offers countless Career opportunities.

COMMENCE YOUR STUDIES THIS SCHOOL HOLIDAYS!!!
MORE than one million school children across the state are now eligible for the NSW Government’s new annual $100 Active Kids voucher.

Premier Gladys Berejiklian said from today all parents with school-aged children will have help to cover the cost of sports and active recreation fees.

“This is a fantastic boost for parents because we know the cost of kids’ sport and activities can really add up. Active Kids is one of the ways the NSW Government is easing cost of living pressures on families,” Ms Berejiklian said.

“We have allocated $207 million over the next four years to help parents with the costs of getting their kids into sport.”

Active Kids is a key initiative of the 2017-18 Budget and will not be means-tested. It supports the Premier’s Priority to reduce overweight and obesity rates of children by five per cent over ten years.

Parents have until December 2018 to claim and use their voucher.

When you first an online business, it is easy to get carried away and forget about the consumer laws that you must abide by in Australia. You should pay particular attention to the rules relating to returns and spam as these are most likely to be applicable to your business.

Below, you will find an easy to understand guide on each of these areas that will help you to ensure that your business is compliant with the laws.

Returns Policy
The Australian Consumer Law stipulates that customers have the right to request a repair, replacement or refund for products or services purchased after 1 January 2011. Although customers have the right to request a repair, replacement or refund, you do not always have to fulfil their wishes. For example, these rights do not apply if you changed your mind or you found the item cheaper elsewhere. If there is only a minor issue with the product or service, the business can choose to repair the item for free instead of refund or replace. However, if there is a major problem, the business must provide a refund or replacement.

The guidelines for determining whether an item has a major problem is as follows:
- It has a problem which would have stopped the buyer from purchasing it if they were aware of the problem, or
- It is not safe, or
- It is different from the sample or description. This difference must be significant, or
- It doesn’t do what it is supposed to, or what you asked for it to do, or
- It cannot be easily fixed.

In these cases, you should offer your customers an option of repair, replacement or full refund. You should bear in mind that it is illegal to display a no refunds sign at your business. It is also illegal to tell your customers that they are not entitled to refunds in any circumstance. If there is a problem with the product, customers are entitled to return a product, even if it is not in original packaging.

Spamming
While it might be tempting to inundate your potential clients with emails and messages about your online business, you need to ensure that you are still complying with the law. The Spam Act 2003 makes it illegal for anyone to send spam in Australia. Spam is defined as the sending of unsolicited commercial electronic messages.

Once you have consent to send spam, you must ensure that the subject matter upon which you are sending the spam is directly related to the person or business you are sending it to.

Key points
- Rules around returns generally apply.
- It is illegal to display a no-refunds sign.
- Consent to receive emails comes in two forms.

For example, if your online business provides catering to offices, you should only send your spam through to them if they have provided consent (either express or inferred) and they would be likely to order catering for their business.

Katherine Hawes is principal at www.digitalagelawyers.com

Digital Age Lawyers
Hi my name is Katherine Hawes and I am a woman in business - just like you. I understand the stress involved in owning and operating a business in the digital and social media age.

Here at Digital Age Lawyers we are internationally recognised as leaders in online and digital protection. We strive to ensure that you are protected in all aspects of your business and personal life.

Why Digital Age Lawyers?
Digital Age Lawyers empowers individuals and business owners to deal with future legal issues, ensuring that they are protected into the 22 Century. We understand that life is complex so we work with you to ensure that all legal aspects are in place to protect your assets. Digital Age Lawyers is right for you if you want a trusted advisor we will become your partner not someone just to turn to when you are in trouble

- to help you grow and protect your greatest assets
- to help with ensuring you have the right business model in place and can navigate to a new one, if you don’t,
- to help you with getting the right agreements in place with vendors, team members, investors, partners and others,
- to keep you out of trouble and respond when you get too close to the edge. If that’s what you want, we just might be the right law practice for you.
- ensure that you are protected online when conducting business

What we can offer?
- All of our fees are fixed fees agreed to in advance, so there are no surprises. At our initial meeting you will choose the level of planning and fee that works best for your business, so there will never be any surprises.
- We also have LegalSquad and LegalWatch to ensure that you are kept up to date with all legal changes.

(02) 8858 3211 • info@digitalagelawyers.com • www.digitalagelawyers.com

Legal
“The time has come for Western Sydney to have its own cultural icon.” - Richard Errington, CEO, Western Sydney Performing Arts Centre, on the commencement of a self-funded $100M state-of-the-art, 2000-seat theatre, at the Rooty Hill RSL.

“This rezoning is a great opportunity to harness the benefits of the $20 billion Sydney Metro, Australia’s largest public transport project.” – Anthony Roberts, Minister for Planning, on the rezoning of the Bella Vista and Kellyville Precincts to support the development of new town centres.

“It will change the face of Western Sydney” – William Phillips, director, of the privately owned property investment company Sandan Group, when referring to the company’s $75M, 10,000-square-metre office building in the Penrith CBD.

“The proposed development will power a vibrant and dynamic night-time economy in the heart of our city centre, providing residents with immediate access to local restaurants, cafes, shops, businesses and transport links.” – John Thain, Mayor of Penrith, announcing Fraser Property Australia as the preferred tender to redevelop the 631-space Union Road car park into a multi-storey a mixed-use precinct.

“It’s been incredible to watch the project take shape.” – Mark Condi, CEO, Bankstown Sports Club, on the $55M Flinders Centre expected to open mid-2018.

“At our Liverpool facility alone, we’ve grown our workforce by 10 percent, adding 30 employees this year to deliver around $11 million in product to WestConnex.” – Adam Talbot, commercial manager, Prysmian Cables Australia Pty Ltd, on being awarded an $11 million contract to provide 1100 kilometres of product for the WestConnex project.

“With two data centres in Sydney and two in Melbourne, we are pleased to be further expanding our footprint in Australia to better serve our growing customer base.” – Krupal Raval, CFO, APAC, Digital Realty, on the US-based company’s construction of a new 16,360-square-metre data centre at Erskine Park.

“Traditionally it has been proven that fingerprints cannot be altered, they are unique, and so we have opted for fingerprint scanners. As well, customers receive a card and a unique pin code all of which they have to satisfy before they go through an airlock door to gain access to the vault, or the inner sanctum.” - Reena Jethi from Kuber Vaults.

“If you would like to make a booking, please contact our Functions Team on 9426 9513 or functions@smithfieldrsl.com.au

**WHAT THEY SAID...**

**NSW is the number one state in the nation for housing approvals and continues to far exceed the Premier’s Priority Housing Target of 50,000 approvals per year which improves housing supply and helps to support housing affordability.” - Minister for Planning and Housing, Anthony Roberts.

“We are also seeing an influx of private sector companies, including the high profile move by NAB to make Parramatta its second home, with a number of other businesses now circling for space in the remaining repurposed commercial building on Parramatta Square.” – David Hagger, Western Sydney’s Real Estate Leader.

"Traditionally it has been proven that fingerprints cannot be altered, they are unique, and so we have opted for fingerprint scanners. As well, customers receive a card and a unique pin code all of which they have to satisfy before they go through an airlock door to gain access to the vault, or the inner sanctum.” - Reena Jethi from Kuber Vaults.

**Searching for a corporate function space?**

Look no further than Smithfield RSL
Whether it’s 50 or 400 guests, Smithfield RSL has a space to suit your needs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Corporate Packages include:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Private meeting space</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Break out rooms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Variety of catering</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>and beverage packages</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Data projection and AV</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>equipment available</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friendly and professional</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>event staff to assist you</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>on the day</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

If you would like to make a booking, please contact our Functions Team on 9426 9513 or functions@smithfieldrsl.com.au

02 9604 4411 | Cnr Cumberland Hwy and Neville St | www.smithfieldrsl.com.au
Book a tour of our new centre NOW!

2 WEEKS FREE* CHILDCARE

*Limited places available

www.youngscholars.com.au

3 Columbia Court, Baulkham Hills below the Hills Medical Center on Windsor Rd

Refer a friend and receive $100

*Conditions Apply

AUSTRALASIAN INTERNATIONAL ACADEMY

BSB50215 Diploma of Business
This course prepares you to establish and operate your own business or to manage an existing one that wants to take advantage of new opportunities.

Achieve your Diploma of Business with AIA’s easy plan.

Course Cost: $8,000 (includes enrolment fee)
• Affordable payment plans available

TEL: 1300 AIA NOW
(1300 242 669)
www.aiacademy.com.au

Access to student resources
Private offices, co-working
Many placements for work experience available
Business advice
Access to research
Training programs

ABN: 41144 PROVIDER CODE: 35167538910
In times of crisis, you can give HOPE where it’s needed most. Please donate now.

13 SALVOS | SALVOS.ORG.AU
Crowne Plaza Hawkesbury Valley offers the perfect balance of boardroom and play.

Begin the day with a lakeside yoga session followed by a healthy breakfast in our sun-filled Gazebo. Take the team to new heights with a treetop adventure where your team will conquer fears, solve challenges and cement relationships. Whatever your meeting outcomes, Hawkesbury Valley will deliver tailored solutions for successful work and play.

Book your next meeting at Crowne Plaza Hawkesbury Valley today.

Call our Crowne Meetings Team on 4577 4222 or email sales.cphawkesburyvalley@ihg.com
61 Hawkesbury Valley Way Windsor 2756