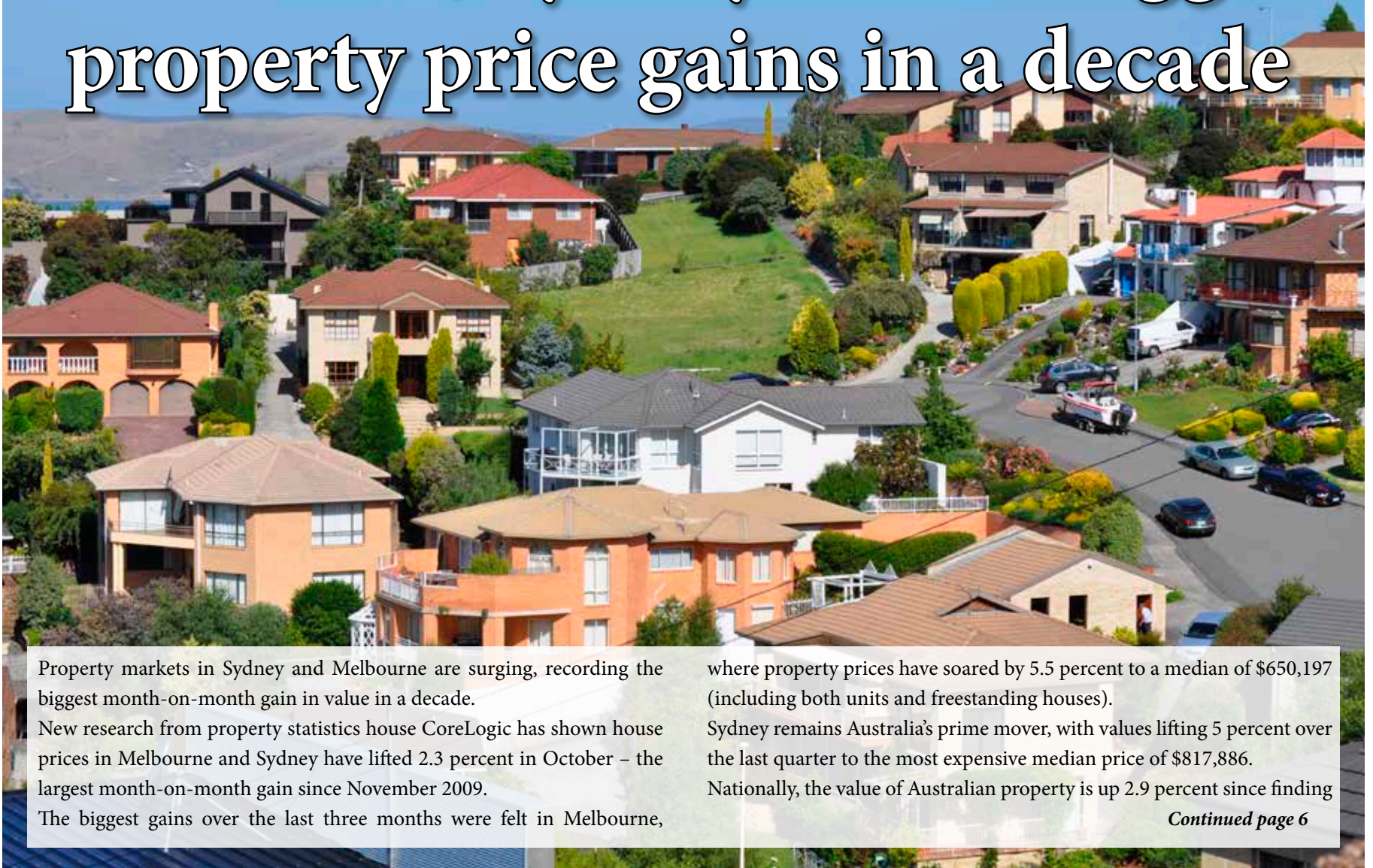




Melbourne, Sydney record biggest property price gains in a decade



Property markets in Sydney and Melbourne are surging, recording the biggest month-on-month gain in value in a decade.

New research from property statistics house CoreLogic has shown house prices in Melbourne and Sydney have lifted 2.3 percent in October – the largest month-on-month gain since November 2009.

The biggest gains over the last three months were felt in Melbourne,

where property prices have soared by 5.5 percent to a median of \$650,197 (including both units and freestanding houses).

Sydney remains Australia's prime mover, with values lifting 5 percent over the last quarter to the most expensive median price of \$817,886.

Nationally, the value of Australian property is up 2.9 percent since finding

Continued page 6

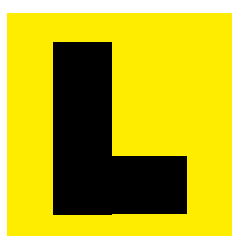
'I like oil!'

Trump reaffirms predatory intentions in Syria

Donald Trump is not trying to hide Washington's true policies and intentions behind the doublespeak about freedom and democracy.

"We've stayed back and kept the oil," Trump reiterated on Friday, reaffirming the main US interest in Syria and making clear that all less immediately lucrative and longer-term endeavors like keeping peace and reconstructing the devastated country should be taken care of by someone else. "Other people can patrol the border of Syria... let them – they've been fighting for a thousand years..."

I like oil! We're keeping the oil!



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NSW Law Enforcement Complaints Commission funding row reveals 2 per cent of complaints fully investigated

The vision is confronting and disturbing

A woman is pulled over by NSW police highway patrol officers for driving an unregistered vehicle. But the traffic stop takes a sudden turn when she is arrested for swearing, her head hits the car while she screams that her arm has been dislocated.

The incident was among 2,547 complaints assessed last year by the police watchdog the Law Enforcement Complaints Commission (LECC).

But it has been revealed that just 2 per cent of complaints to the LECC were fully investigated due to funding cuts.

The commission recently found two officers engaged in serious misconduct over the racial abuse of two Afghan Muslim women at another traffic stop in Sydney's west.

In a report released last week, LECC chief commissioner Michael Adams QC said it was struggling to process an increasing number of complaints, with cuts of around \$6 million over the next four years.

"Like most other public service organisations, we are consistently required to do more

with less," Mr Adams said.

"We are, so to speak, drinking from a firehose."

The first traffic stop incident occurred in November 2016 and was investigated by the LECC earlier this year.

In video captured from the patrol car, the woman is clearly upset by her exchange with the police.

"Why don't you go pick up ice dealers and paedophiles?" she tells the officers as they remove her licence plates.

"That's not our job," comes the reply, along with several warnings for her to stop swearing.

As they part ways one officer runs back the woman, grabs her by the arm and arrests her for swearing.

"Are you for real? You just bashed my head against a f***ing window," she screams.

An internal investigation by the local highway patrol found the motorist's complaints of unreasonable force and unnecessary arrest powers were "not sustained".

But the LECC found the arresting officer engaged in serious misconduct and used excessive force against her.

Pressure on Government to overhaul age pension as growing number of baby boomers leave workforce

The Federal Government is coming under pressure to make changes to the age pension, as a growing number of baby boomers are expected to leave the workforce over the next decade.

Analysis by the Parliamentary Budget Office (PBO) predicts an ageing population will require an increase in government spending of \$16 billion by 2029.

More than \$9 billion of that will be on the age pension.

"The age pension is eminently affordable, but we can and we should do stuff better," Deloitte Access Economics' Chris Richardson told 7.30.

Mr Richardson said the PBO analysis strengthened the case for further raising the pension age, which is currently at 66 years. In 2023 it will become 67 years.

"If we're going to live a lot longer, well, chances are we're going to have to work a bit longer to pay for the



bits when we're not working," he said.

Photographer Roger Arnaud, 64, thinks raising the pension age is a terrible idea.

He is finding it hard to get full-time employment, does not have a lot of superannuation and is planning to take the pension as soon as possible. "I actually believe that it would be a lot better if the Government actually lowered the pension age," he said.

"There's a lot of people who've moved to over 60 and they're never going to find work again."

Pensioners could see up to \$804 a year more after funding boost

About 1 million Australians will receive a cash boost of up to \$804 a year, after the Government announced long-anticipated changes to so-called deeming rates. Seniors groups and Labor have been lobbying the Government to cut the official deeming rate, which is used to calculate how much a pensioner earns on their financial assets — regardless of the actual return.

That calculation is then used for the pension income assessment and therefore affects how much someone receives through their pension.

Labor had argued the current rate was short-changing pensioners, saying deeming rates were meant to be set with regard to returns available in the market.

On Sunday, the Government bowed to that pressure, with Families and Social Services Minister Anne Ruston announcing the deeming rate on the first \$51,800 of a single pensioner's financial investments — and the first \$86,200 of a couple's — would drop from 1.75 per cent to 1 per cent.



The deeming rate for balances above those amounts will change from 3.25 to 3 per cent.

It means couples whose income is assessed using deeming will receive up to \$1,053 extra a year, while singles could pocket up to \$804 extra a year.

The move is expected to cost the Government \$600 million across the next four years.



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By Mamdouh
Sukkarieh

Glorious Syria

I watched an interesting video about Jordanian researcher Dr Maen Qatamin. He was talking with so much pain and passion, about Syria and Syrian refugees. Before the war, which has been one of the most hard fought and dirty wars, this has also destroyed Syria's and some say one of the world most beautiful countries which has the amazing history and the impressive present.

Syria is one of the most beautiful countries; everyone came here to see the beautiful monuments and old cities, from Palmyra, Mallala to the old castles in Aleppo and Al Hosn and Kasab, where the ancient Folklore Forest stands. Syrians are old-fashioned, they welcome anyone who knocks on their doors and they are very generous, and you definitely see that when you visit them. Dr Qatamin was talking about the Syrian war, what a dreadful experience everyone went through before they reaching the western country shores of death and destruction to open new pages of life.

Here some remarkable information he started with this question:

Do you know what Syria is?

Today you know Syria for its death and destruction. However Syria was a cradle to all civilizations.

Do you like olives or the oil?

The first olive tree was planted in Syria

Do you eat bread?

The first wheat field was in Syria, planted in the first agricultural village in history, ploughed with the first plow in history, harvested with the first scythe in history, and ground for the first time in history in 7000BC.

This refugee is from Syria his mother tongue is Syrian, a part of the Aramaic language, the language of Jesus Christ.

Christianity started, as preached by Paul the apostle, and John the Baptist who died and was buried in Syria. Damascus is the capital of Syria it was the first inhabited city in the world. It encompassed the First School in history. It was the home town of Ibn Al Nafis who discovered the circulatory system.

You will be astonished when you learn that Syria presented the world with first alphabet in history. Yes ABC from Syria in 7500 BC. You would be amazed to learn that Syria introduced music to the humanity. The oldest musical note on the world was made of clay, dated 1400 BC was discovered in Syria. It contained 4 verses in the Hurri language and was the scale of a song dedicated to the goddess Nikal, the wife of the god of the moon.

Did you know that Syrians possess some of the best values in the world? Did you know that the people in the Arab world respect and love Syrians as they excelled in every aspect of life? They excelled in medicine, engineering, astronomy, art and culinary arts.

Do you like hummus?

Do you like Tabbouleh?

They are both Syrian dishes.

Why do we love Syrians?

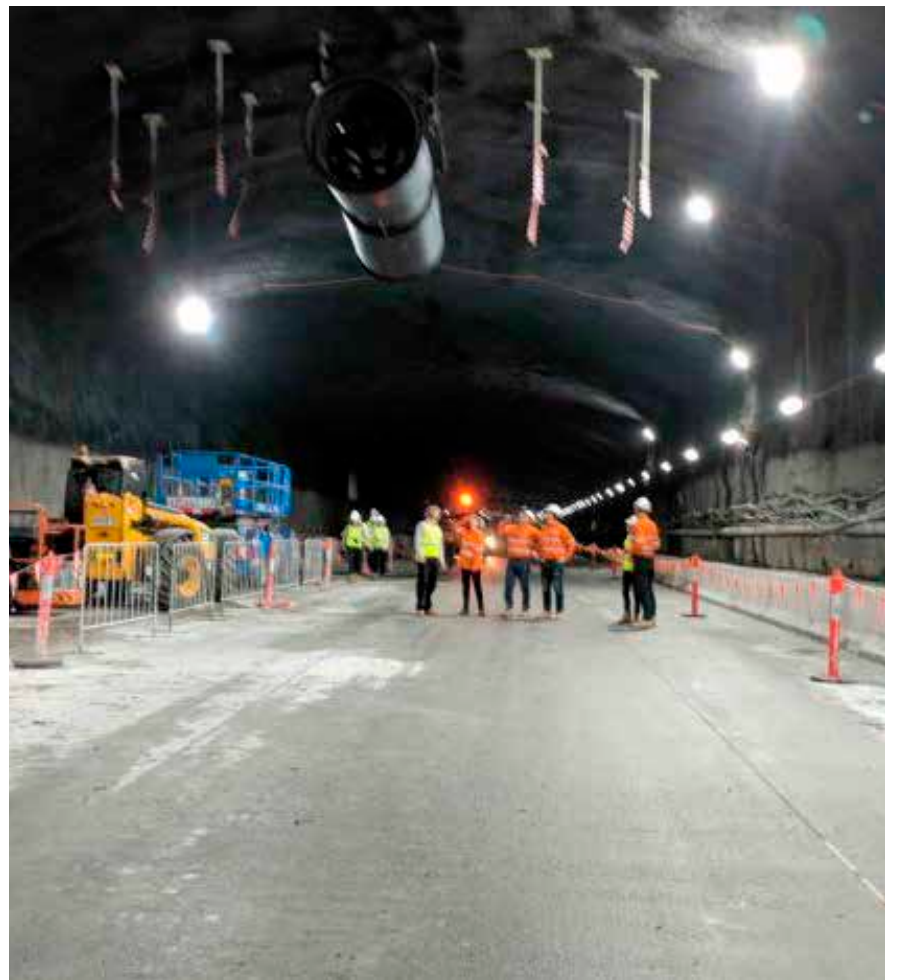
1. Because they are one of the most generous nations in the world.
2. They are the origins of mankind
3. They are the most loyal people on earth

Today is your turn to host Syrian, but mark my words, a day will come when you will thank god for hosting Syrians. Syria is the nation of dignity, the land of sun and the offspring of civil nations. One day the Syrian will be your brother in citizenship and will live with them in peace and harmony.

If one day, god forbid, the situation is reversed you will be first to thank those Syrians who stood by you.

Adding to the above before the war most of the Syrian were happy in Syria, they had free school and university education available for everyone, free healthcare, life expenses were very cheap, controlled bank, state owned central bank, they are self-sufficient and have no foreign debt to any country or bank. Life in Syria before the crisis was so beautiful. Now it is hard and horrific in some regions.

NAB warns tax cuts won't deliver much economic boost



National Australia Bank modelling has cast doubt on the belief the tax refunds that will soon start flowing into taxpayers' bank accounts will stimulate the economy in a meaningful way.

The Government's tax cuts passed through Parliament last week, with stage one soon to be seen in bank accounts as people lodge their tax returns.

On past behaviour, UBS economists estimate that half the returns will be lodged by the end of September, another quarter by the end of this year and the remaining quarter over the first half of 2020.

Treasurer Josh Frydenberg is hoping taxpayers will pass much of the cash they receive straight into the tills of their local stores.

"I'm very confident this money will be used to ensure greater economic activity. It will be used at the local shop. It will be supporting local employers and local businesses," he said.

"There are a number of things that are happening together with these tax cuts that will continue to see strong economic activity across the Australian economy."

But NAB's economists, using similar modelling to Treasury and the Reserve Bank, predict that the \$7.5 billion in tax offsets is likely to have "only a marginal effect on the economy".

NAB's chief economist Alan Oster

said the amount of cash being splashed was small in a roughly \$2 trillion economy.

"So it's about 0.3 per cent of the economy, in terms of the cash," he told The Business.

"When we run our macro[economic] models we get very small impacts there, because half the money gets spent, half gets saved."

Economists at UBS expect that retailer sales could be about 1.1 percentage points higher than they would be otherwise over the next year.

"Based on the 08/09 cash handouts, we assume (approximately) 50 per cent of these tax cuts will be spent on retail — with likely another (approximately) 20 per cent on other non-retail consumption," UBS noted.

"Following cash handouts in 08/09, clothing, department stores, and eating out showed the largest improvement. A similar pattern could be expected with 'windfall' money spent on discretionary consumption."

In a recent analysis, ANZ's economic team suggested that retail may not see as much of the cash as it did back in 2008/09.

'You need infrastructure ... now' Regardless of where the money from the tax cuts is spent, Mr Oster said the overall economic boost from the Reserve Bank's interest rate cuts would be much larger, but later.



'Nobody is above the law': Dutton rejects pleas to drop media cases



Peter Dutton has rejected calls to drop legal action against journalists targeted in recent police raids, saying "nobody is above the law".

Two ABC reporters and a News Corp journalist are under police investigation after publishing separate stories based on leaked government information.

The heads of both media organisations have written to the Home Affairs Minister, asking that action against their journalists cease. But on Friday Mr Dutton pushed back against their requests.

He inferred ABC reporters Dan Oakes and Sam Clark, along with News Corp journalist Annika Smethurst, had committed a crime. However, Mr Dutton insisted he would not interfere in the police investigation.

"If you've got top secret documents and they've been leaked, it is an offence under the law," Mr Dutton told the Nine Network.

"Nobody is above the law and the police have a job to do under the law. I think it is up to the police to investigate, to do it independently, and make a decision whether or not they prosecute."

But Mr Dutton's statement was rejected by News Corp.

In a statement, group executive for corporate affairs, policy and government relations Campbell Reid

said it was "time the government stopped paying lip service to standing up for press freedom".

"It is not that journalists are above the law but some of these laws are being applied in ways that are not appropriate if you have a commitment to an open society," he told news.com.au.

"The government cannot keep talking the talk and not walking the walk."

Labor leader Anthony Albanese also backed the media organisations, saying it would be a "common sense outcome" for the investigations to be abandoned.

"Quite clearly the government needs to show leadership on this issue," Mr Albanese told the Nine Network.

"They have to point out what here was exposed that was inappropriate, that wasn't in the public interest."

The police raids have attracted international attention, with high profile human rights lawyer Amal Clooney publicly challenging Australia to "be better than North Korea" on press freedom.

"What happens in a country like Australia or the UK or the US will be looked at by every other leader in the world and potentially be used as an excuse to clamp down even further on journalists," Mrs Clooney told a conference on media freedom in London this week.

Clive Palmer liquidation trial is delayed further



It took 1179 days, three judges and countless adjournments to get Clive Palmer into court for a trial over the collapse of Queensland Nickel and already it has been delayed.

The billionaire businessman is fighting a massive federal government lawsuit against him and his nephew Clive Mensink over the liquidation of his Townsville nickel refinery, which left hundreds without a job.

Government-appointed liquidators of QN brought the former federal MP to Brisbane Supreme Court on Monday in a bid to claw back about \$200 million owed to creditors over the collapse in early 2016.

On day one of the trial, Justice Debra Mullins adjourned it to accommodate further discussions between the warring parties.

The trial will recommence on Tuesday but before that, the court will consider Mr Palmer's last-minute legal bid to postpone it because an expert defence witness was reportedly "incapacitated".

Court documents lodged last Thursday say the former liquidator Peter Dinoris is unavailable to testify that Mr Palmer had not acted as a shadow director or traded while insolvent, The Australian has reported.

If the trial is not delayed, Mr Palmer argues he will be denied natural justice and suffer "very significant prejudice".

The liquidators' 280-page claim, first lodged in the court in June 2017, names 21 defendants, including Mr Mensink and a string of Mr Palmer's companies.

Flammable cladding to be stripped from buildings under Victorian Government plan

Hundreds of millions of taxpayer dollars will be spent to deal with the flammable cladding crisis in Victoria, where about 500 buildings need rectification work to be made safe.

Premier Daniel Andrews has announced a \$600 million package to fund the work, and was asking the Commonwealth to cover half of that cost.

But Canberra has resisted the request for cash, with Treasurer Josh Frydenberg saying building regulation was a state issue and that the Federal Government "would not pick up the bill".

To make up for the \$300 million shortfall, Victoria will increase a levy on building permits on larger buildings with works worth more than \$800,000.

The cost increase for a two-bedroom apartment worth \$610,000 would be \$2,200 but low-risk buildings, such as

townhouses, would be excluded.

The announcement is a win for owners of buildings that have combustible cladding, who were facing huge rectification costs — but consumer advocates warn the budgeted funds will not go far enough.



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Australian Syrian League BBQ



July 13, 2019- It was a fantastic BBQ hosted by the Australian Syrian League (ASL), Approximately 500 people who turned up to (ASL) first BBQ. The sun was shining, delicious food, nice drinks, music & dancing, great company and all came

together as a community around the incredible children and families who are at the heart of the ASL gathering.

The message from the Australian Syrian League BBQ was "we all love Syria". We look forward to

walking the next steps, together.

A huge and special thank you to all our volunteers, entertainers, and photographers for making this a special day, we could not have done this without you.

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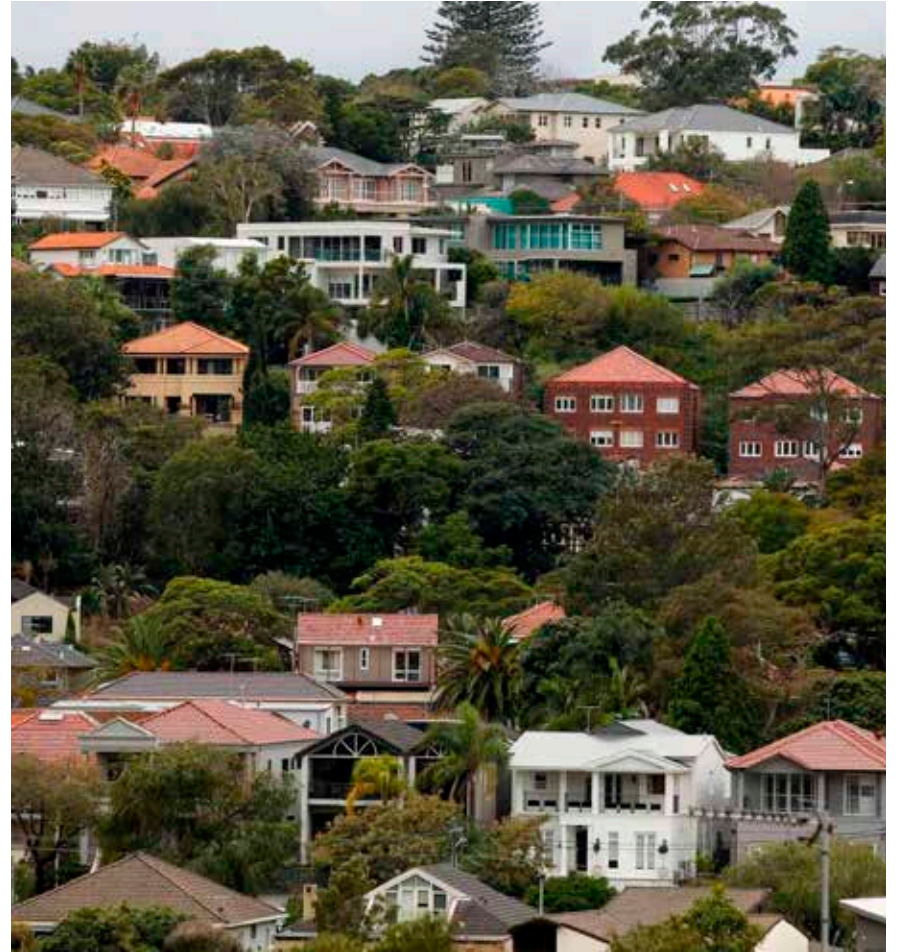
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From page 1

Melbourne, Sydney...



a value “floor” in mid-June this year.

Property values are now at a similar level to where they were three years ago. CoreLogic’s Head of Research Tim Lawless said the rebound of values can be attributed to low mortgage rates, stamp duty exemptions and stronger population growth.

“It’s becoming increasingly clear that the housing market rebound is gathering pace, both geographically and across the broad valuation cohorts, off the back of lower mortgage rates and improved access to credit,” Mr Lawless said.

“Demand for housing is responding to stimulus measures, including mortgage rates that are now lower than anything we have seen since the 1950s and improved mortgage serviceability tests following APRA’s decision to adjust the minimum interest rate serviceability rules in July this year.”

Outside of Sydney and Melbourne the gains experienced by smaller capital cities were far more modest.

Canberra grew 2.4 percent to record a median of \$601,487, Brisbane grew 1.1 percent to notch up a median of \$493,426 and Hobart lifted 1.0 percent to \$460,033.

Over the last quarter Adelaide held onto a marginal improvement, lifting 0.1 percent to \$433,140 while Darwin dropped 1.2 percent to record a median of \$394,132.

Perth suffered the biggest loss over the last three months, falling 1.7 percent to record a median value of \$435,119.

Perth now has the lowest median house price (excluding units) of any capital city in the country.

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Australia’s property prices October 2019

By Natalie Sukkarieh



War is dark

War, The destruction of the world

People Crying

People dying

Scary machines in the sky flying

Dropping bombs to earth

Taking away all it’s worth

While mothers are at home

Their husbands are in battle

Making the world rattle

The children scared

Wishing that their families will be spared

They cling to their teddy bears

And hope someone will save them from

their nightmares

The soldiers being forced to fight

Even though it’s not right

Country leaders blind to the consequences

Of winning at high expenses

War is dark

War is when demons come out to play

In the light of day

ATO eyeing tax return claims for cars, travel, mobile phones, internet and rental deductions

Unsubstantiated or higher-than-expected tax deductions relating to cars, travel, clothing, mobile phone and internet use, and rental properties are among the top claims the Australian Taxation Office (ATO) will be eyeing this tax time.



Each year, almost 14 million Australians lodge income tax returns and claim tens of billions of dollars in tax deductions, the highest being for work-related expense claims and rental claims.

Assistant Commissioner Karen Foat said while some people sometimes make legitimate mistakes, the ATO was concerned many people were deliberately making dodgy claims in order to get a bigger refund.

“We are still concerned that some taxpayers aren’t getting the message that over-claiming will be detected and if it is deliberate, penalties will apply,” she said.

The three big themes the ATO said it was focusing on this year include people overclaiming work-related expenses, people overclaiming rental expenses, and people not declaring all of their income.

There was no such thing as a standard tax deduction. While people could claim \$300 for general work-related expenses, \$150 for work-related laundry and up to 5,000 kilometres travelled for work without a receipt, she said taxpayers still need to have incurred the expense and be able to substantiate it.

“We see people treating these as almost a free kick and we’re concerned about that,” Ms Foat said.

The ATO’s data analytics matches more than 600 million transactions annually. It also compares taxpayer claims with others earning similar amounts in similar jobs.

Deliberate attempts to overclaim can attract penalties of up to 75 per cent of the claim.

The ATO is also reminding employees that they may not get a paper payment summary this year, as this is now reported directly into ATO online systems and can be accessed by either myTax or registered tax agents.

Ms Foat encouraged taxpayers to wait a few weeks before lodging their tax return.

“We know from previous years that the early birds who lodge in the first weeks of July are far more likely to make mistakes or submit incomplete data,” she said.

ATO plans to triple number of audits over rental claims

More than 2.2 million Australians claimed \$47 billion in rental deductions in 2017-18.

The ATO audited more than 1,500 taxpayers last year over rental claims and handed out penalties totalling \$1.3 million.

The ATO is intending to triple the number of audits it conducts this year to 4,500.

Ms Foat said some examples of problematic claims include people initially claiming their mortgage interest bill on their rental property but then refinancing and buying a boat or doing kitchen renovation in the home they are living in, but still claiming the interest on the rental property.

“The other thing we see is people who are claiming capital works or capital assets in a single year when either of those things need to be written off over a number of years,” she said.

The ATO will also be looking closely at income earned through other sharing-economy services, such as those driving an Uber or carrying out paid tasks via the Airtasker platform.

‘One in five car claims are exactly at the maximum limit’

In the 2017-18 financial year, about 7 million Australians claimed \$16.5 billion in work-related expenses.

This included more than 2.8 million Australians making work-related car expense claims totalling \$6.2 billion.

The ATO is worried that too many taxpayers are automatically claiming the 5,000 kilometres limit regardless of the actual amount of travel.

“One in five car claims are exactly at the maximum limit that doesn’t require receipts,” Ms Foat said.

Under the cents-per-kilometre method, taxpayers do not need to keep receipts, but they do need to be able to demonstrate how they worked out the number of kilometres they travelled for work purposes.

“Simply driving between work and home is not enough to warrant a deduction.” She said taxpayers also need to keep records to prove how they have worked out the claim.

Meals, accommodation, clothing must relate to your work

There were 1.1 million people claiming \$1.5 billion in work-related travel expenses in 2017-18.

Ms Foat said a common problem was people trying to claim a travel expense such as meals and accommodation that they either had not incurred or for which they had already been reimbursed by their employer.

There were six million people claiming \$1.5 billion in clothing expenses relating to their job in 2017-18.

Ms Foat said the ATO would be checking taxpayers who incorrectly claimed the exemption from keeping receipts for \$150 on laundry expenses.

People believed that because they were required to wear black pants and white shirt for work, they can claim for that.

“But they are not distinctive uniforms so they can’t claim for it,” she said.

And she said if they are able to claim they need to have incurred the cost.

Self-education expenses cannot be for a new job

In 2017-18 there were 450,000 people claiming \$900 million in self-education expenses.

Ms Foat said one of the biggest concerns here is where people claim for a course that they are not eligible for.

“So if I’m a nurse studying to be a doctor — something that’s going to get me a different role to the one I am currently in — it’s not eligible,” she said.

There were also 6 million people claiming \$6.5 billion in “other” work-related expenses such as home office, and mobile phone and internet use.

Ms Foat said the biggest issue here was in relation to apportionment.

“That is, people try to claim their whole mobile phone or whole internet plan when they use it only partially for work,” she said.

“If people are wanting to make the claim, they need to have to have some sort of reasonable basis for it,” she said, adding that it was a good idea to keep a diary for a month if there were multiple users in a home.

In addition, she said there was a whole host of other things that people try to claim but that are not deductible.

“These include things like child support, gifts to family and medical costs,” she said.



Cambodian girl escapes life of poverty to land scholarship at University of Melbourne

Sophy Ron spent eight years of her childhood surrounded by garbage and toxic fumes while living in a notorious Cambodian rubbish dump nicknamed “Smoky Mountain”.

Less than a decade after escaping, the 21-year-old is about to begin studying at the University of Melbourne and dreams of running her own business.

Her former home, the Steng Meanchey landfill in Phnom Penh, has long been a symbol of the country’s poverty.

Each day, thousands of people pick through the filth in the hope of finding edible food and recyclables to sell.

On a good day Ms Ron would earn 50 cents, enough for a few cups of rice to share with her parents and six siblings.

“I didn’t realise it was smelly, I didn’t realise it was dirty,” she said.

“I slept there, I ate there, I did everything there, so it became my home.”

Ms Ron said overwhelming debts left her family with no choice but to live at the dump site.

The local school only offered a place to one child per family, so Ms Ron missed out on a chance to study.

She said she followed her older sister to school and learned what she could by looking through the classroom windows.

From dumpsite to classroom

Her life changed after a chance meeting at the dump with Scott Neeson, the founder of the Cambodian Children’s Fund (CCF).

“He asked me whether I wanted to study English, and at that time I had no idea what English was,” Ms Ron said.

“I ran home feeling happy because he promised he would take me to school.”

Mr Neeson’s charity, featured by the ABC’s Australian Story in 2012, has provided education, housing and medical treatment to thousands of people in Cambodia since its launch in 2004.

The poverty rate in Cambodia dropped from 53 per cent in 2004 to 13.5 per cent in 2014, according to UNICEF, but children’s living conditions remain poor.

In a 2018 report, the United Nations agency said a third of children under four were stunted and about half aged between five and 14 did not have access to proper toilets.

Ms Ron said she vividly remembered her first day of school, aged 11, when for the first time she saw groups of children laughing and playing.

She was also a quick learner and a good communicator; by 2016 she was on stage presenting a Tedx Talk in English.

‘I hope it changes my life’

Through CCF, Ms Ron was able to secure a scholarship to complete a foundation year of study at the University of Melbourne’s Trinity College.

She graduated in June, paving the way for her to start a Bachelor of Arts degree when the new



semester begins this month.

While Ms Ron said she loved life in Melbourne (apart from the cold), she hoped to eventually return home to start a business and continue working with CCF.

Her uplifting story of transformation has been featured in Cambodia’s local media in recent weeks, and Ms Ron said she hoped it encouraged others to donate to charity.

“I can’t really describe the feeling. I hope it changes my life in the future,” she said.

“I have this message throughout my life journey: a not-giving-up message. It doesn’t matter in what circumstances.”

Sophy Ron will begin her degree after completing a foundation year of study at Trinity College. Sophy Ron and her family lived at the dump because they couldn’t afford proper housing.

Baby bird photographed holding cigarette butt in its beak

A photo of a baby bird clutching a cigarette butt is being held up as the latest example of the problem of plastic pollution in our oceans.

The photo of the skimmer chick was taken by birdwatcher Karen Mason on a Florida beach.

In a second shot, an adult skimmer bird can be seen passing the rubbish to the chick.

Ms Mason said the birds “feed by skimming along the water with their beaks open”.

“When the bottom mandible touches something the top one snaps shut,” she said.

She said the adult bird probably picked up the butt in shallow water and then shared it with the chick.

Ms Mason urged beach users to dispose of cigarette butts thoughtfully.

“This could have been a child, too. What we are doing to our Earth may not affect you but it will affect our grandchildren,” she said.

According to NBC News, cigarette butts are the single



Mother and baby skimmer birds, the butt was probably collected from the water by the bird's mother. Skimmer chick with cigarette butt, the photo was taken on a Florida beach on June 20.

largest source of ocean rubbish, with more than 60 million collected from beaches since 1986.

Trillions of cigarettes are manufactured every year and most of them have filters, which are made from a form of plastic.

Mobile phones to be banned in Victorian state schools from ‘first to last bell’

A ban on mobile phone use in Victorian public schools aimed at curbing distraction and cyberbullying has divided opinion among teachers and students.

Education Minister James Merlino said the ban, which would be in place during school hours in state primary and secondary schools, would start in the first term of 2020.

Phones must be kept in school lockers from first bell to last bell unless a child needs to keep a phone for medical reasons or if there is a specific instruction from the teacher that the phones are needed for a classroom activity.

The policy may not be universally popular, Mr Merlino said, but it was the “right thing to do”.

Mr Merlino said teachers wanted children talking to each other in the schoolyard, not checking their phones. “Teachers are constantly asking kids to put their phones away. This is common sense,” he said.

It's not going to [absolutely] resolve cyberbullying but it will make a big difference.

“We cannot stamp it out. It is going to occur. But we can take some real steps to reduce the level of

The Victorian Association of State Secondary Principals president Sue Bell said taking phones away from students would not teach them to manage their phone use.

She said phones were used by students for important reasons, such as calendars to work out assignment due dates and class locations and times.

“I think it's going to cause lot of grief,” she told ABC Radio Melbourne.

“We don't want teachers in conflict with students. Some students will want the ban, but many won't.

“I'd rather have teachers in front of the class teaching and inspiring learning rather than standing at the door having students turning out their pockets.”

‘Education should come first’

Melbourne teenager Adam agreed with the ban and said

students at his school snuck phones into class.

“Education should definitely come first in my opinion,” he told ABC Radio Melbourne.

“I know education will depend on my job when I'm older, so I don't want to fail.”

Bundoora principal Ann Marie said students in her school were the ones who had agreed to mobile phone restrictions during school hours.

“Students said it was things to do with bullying, distraction and one-upmanship,” she told ABC Radio Melbourne.

“Because there's some students who can afford very expensive phones and others who can't afford any.

“The students were the ones who said, everyone needs to get refocused on their learning and to only use mobile phones as a tool.”

Schools with ban say they've seen improvements

Mr Merlino said the Government could not impose the ban on non-government sector [such as] Catholic and independent schools.

A number of private schools have already banned the use of phones and McKinnon Secondary School, a government school in Melbourne's bayside has enforced a ban since last year.

Principal Pitsa Binnion believes students at the school have become more entrenched in their studies as a result.

“Our students are more focused learners in the classroom without this distraction,” she said.

“[Since the ban] we have observed improved social connections, relationships and interactions in the school during lunchtime.”

Asked how the ban would be policed, Mr Merlino said he would issue a ministerial order making it “absolutely clear” for schools.

He said schools embrace technology in the classroom and they want kids to be digitally literate but mobile phones “enable” cyberbullying.

Want a six-figure salary? Software and construction roles among highest-earning jobs



When 30-year-old project engineer Peter Davis graduated he wanted to build high-rises, but couldn't find a job.

Now he's underground, in charge of Metro Rail excavations deep beneath the city of Sydney.

“Did I think this is what I'd be doing as an engineer, probably not.”

Based on job ads, Davis is among the higher paid workers most in demand.

IT roles - like data scientists and cybercrime experts -are in high paying jobs most in demand followed by construction managers.

Then there are those in business development and banking compliance who are earning six-figure salaries.

“When you talk about information technology ... that's had one of the highest wage growths we've seen over the last 12 months,” said Stephen Tuffley from Seek.com.au.

Top six figure salaries

1. IT programming
2. Software engineering
3. Construction management
4. Business development
5. Banking Compliance

When it comes to the jobs experiencing the biggest rises, advertising and media stand out.

The money on offer is up seven per cent, followed by the banking, community services and recruitment industries.

Construction jobs might be booming but it's in property, housing where the opportunity is falling away.

There have been fewer jobs advertised for real estate, home building and architecture.

“But the job market is being propped up by the public sector,” said Tuffley.

Boom sectors

The number of job ads in education is up 14 per cent, while there are plenty of jobs advertised in the health and agriculture sectors.

And while the mining boom's behind us, there's been a return to jobs growth. The number of jobs advertised up five per cent.

Overall, in all states - except the ACT - job ads are down.



Hear Beyoncé's Resilient New Song 'Spirit'



Beyoncé has unveiled new song "Spirit," which will appear on her forthcoming album, *The Lion King: the Gift* as well as on the soundtrack and in the film for the live-action remake of *The Lion King*. "Spirit" opens with resonant voices trading call and responses. Over rich piano, orchestral and choir-tipped choruses, Beyoncé sings her uplifting verses about resilience. "Rise up to the light in the sky, yeah," she sings. "Watch the light lift your heart up/Burn your flame through the night." For the Beyoncé-executive produced and curated *The Gift*, the singer said the album features some of her favorite artists. "This is sonic cinema," Beyoncé said in a statement. "This is a new experience of storytelling. I wanted to do more than find a collection of songs that were inspired by the film. It is a mixture of genres and collaboration that isn't one sound. It is influenced by everything from R&B, hip-hop and Afro Beat." Beyoncé voices lioness Nala and Donald Glover portrays the older Simba in the remake of the 1994 Disney animated film. The pair also teamed for a rendition of Elton John/Tim Rice's "Can You Feel the Love Tonight," which appears on the film's soundtrack.

The Lion King: the Gift will be released on July 19th, while *The Lion King* original motion picture soundtrack arrives on July 11th. *The Lion King* hits theaters on July 19th.

What Tammy Hembrow REALLY looks like

She is one of the world's most-followed Instagram models.

But it seems Tammy Hembrow may be relying too heavily on filters and Photoshop, as candid pictures reveal she looks like a completely different person in real life.

On Sunday, an Australian tourist shared an unairbrushed photo to Instagram of himself posing with Tammy at a luxury resort in Bali, Indonesia.

The fan's photo was taken just minutes after Tammy uploaded her own snap, in which she looked far more tanned and polished.

In her post, Tammy flaunts her shapely derriere in a pair of tiny denim hotpants while arching her back and turning her shoulders to achieve a more flattering angle.

But the fan's photograph shows her with broader-looking shoulders, a paler skin tone and an imperfect complexion.

In the unfiltered image, which has since been 'hidden' from Tammy's tagged posts on Instagram, her breast implants are also more noticeable.

A deep line is visible at the bottom of her left breast, a clear indicator that she's had cosmetic surgery.

By contrast, this area of skin is perfectly smooth in Tammy's own photo.



The real Tammy: But the fan's photograph shows her with broader-looking shoulders, a paler skin tone and an imperfect complexion

Tammy is believed to have undergone a breast augmentation in 2017, after giving birth to her two children, son Wolf and daughter Saskia.

Melania Trump

'Smurfette' sculpture unveiled in Slovenian home town to mixed reviews



The figure was cut from a living tree planted in a riverside field.

A life-size, rough, wooden sculpture of United States first lady Melania Trump has been unveiled near her hometown of Sevnica in south-eastern Slovenia, to mixed reviews.

Commissioned by Berlin-based American artist Brad Downey and carved with a chainsaw by local folk artist Ales Zuperc, the statue serves as a perhaps wry accompaniment to Downey's exhibition in the capital Ljubljana exploring Ms

Trump's roots in the small Alpine country.

The blocky, rustic figure was cut from the trunk of a living linden tree — whose base forms a tall plinth — in a field beside the Sava River in the village of Rozno, 8 kilometres from Sevnica. There was no attempt at an accurate likeness, to the point where the gallery in Ljubljana was left uncertain about how seriously to take the statue.

'Nightmare' Meghan

is accused of breaching Wimbledon etiquette by wearing jeans

Meghan has been accused of falling foul of Wimbledon etiquette on her surprise visit to cheer on Serena Williams last week - because she was wearing jeans in a members' only area.

Palace officials claimed the Duchess of Sussex, 37, attended the All England Club in a 'private capacity' last Thursday, telling fans not to take photos of her.

She sat in an exclusive area of the crowd on Court 1 to watch her friend Serena, 37, beat Kaja Juvan in the second round.

But club sources say she was a 'nightmare' to accommodate, with her casual attire and 'self-regarding paranoia'.

An official tasked with organising the event told The Times: 'It was a nightmare, she was a nightmare.'

An England Club insider told the newspaper she was not supposed to be wearing jeans in the members' areas of the tennis club. They said: 'She's not allowed to wear jeans.'

Another Wimbledon official told the paper: 'She wanted to come incognito but there were problems. 'They couldn't invite her into the royal box because she was wearing jeans but that didn't really matter because all she wanted to do was come and watch Serena.'

The source claimed it was fortunate Andy Murray was playing on the same court after Serena, as she would not have been allowed in the Royal Box on Centre Court with jeans on- despite being a member of the royal family.

The former Suits actress sparked a huge row after her bodyguards told fans not to take pictures of her during the match.

She was branded 'childish' and a 'control freak' after former world champion Sally Jones, 64, revealed she was warned about taking pictures.



Meghan fell foul of Wimbledon etiquette on her surprise visit to cheer on Serena Williams last week

Kourtney Kardashian

and ex Scott Disick celebrate daughter Penelope's seventh birthday with fun-filled Disneyland outing

Their daughter Penelope is turning seven, and Kourtney Kardashian and Scott Disick celebrated the best way they knew how - with a day at Disneyland.

The reality star, 40, and her ex, 36, were spotted treating the birthday girl to a fun-filled adventure at the Happiest Place on Earth on Monday.

Penelope was having the time of her life celebrating her birthday at the theme park, a visit included a ride on Goofy's Sky School with her father.

The youngster couldn't have looked happier as she rode around in the sky.

Penelope was still having a blast as she sat upon her father's shoulders while strolling through the theme park.

Kourtney, meanwhile, was also busy watching over several other kids.

Kourtney kept it casual for the long day, and rocked a long white T-shirt, trainers, and a pair of flat edge sunglasses, while Scott wore a teal sweatshirt and jeans.

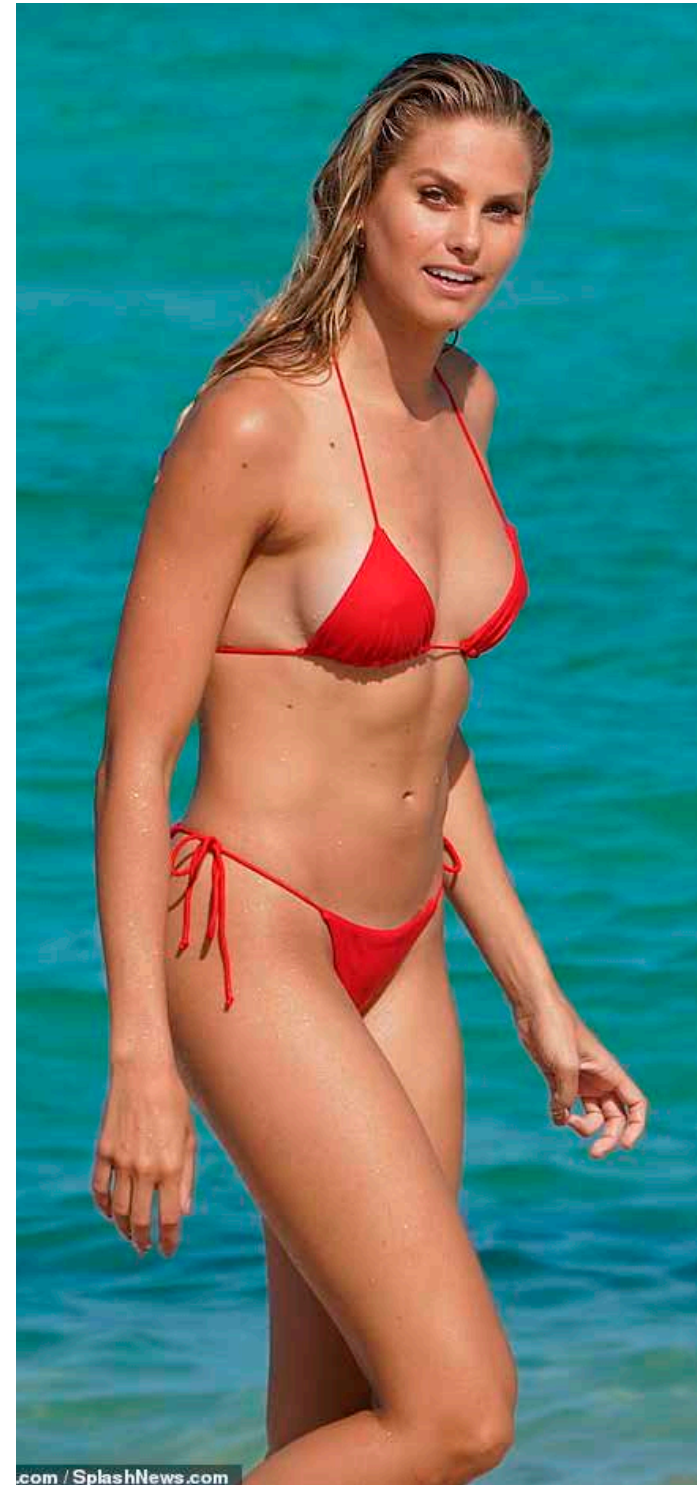


So sweet: The exes were overflowing with love for their only daughter together, and took to Instagram to express their fondness for Penelope

Things are heating up!

Natalie Roser

strips down to a TINY red bikini at the beach



com / SplashNews.com

Sizzling hot! On Tuesday, Natalie Roser stripped down at Miami Beach for a sunbathing session

She is preparing to walk the runway at Miami Swim Week, the annual showcase of the world's hottest swimwear designers.

And on Tuesday, Natalie Roser gave locals at Miami Beach a preview of what's to come when she stripped down for a sunbathing session.

The 29-year-old Australian model flaunted her toned stomach and pert derriere in a tiny red string bikini.

Natalie, who hails from Newcastle, NSW, looked every inch the beach babe as she went for a refreshing swim in the ocean.

She opted for minimal makeup, allowing her striking natural beauty to shine through, and styled her long, blonde hair loosely.

Natalie was joined by at the beach with her model friends Bree and Shannon, whom she later sunbathed with.

Natalie keeps fit by training five times a week, and chooses to mix up her workouts to help her body respond better to exercise.



Bitcoin investment scam steals tens of thousands from couple as cryptocurrency losses grow

Nick Yeomans and his wife Josie thought they had hit the jackpot when a Bitcoin investment they made tripled in six months.

To the amateur investors, the cryptocurrency trader they had found, Coinexx.org, seemed too good to be true.

Slowly, they poured more money into their account, and were met with greater returns. They convinced a family member to match their investment of more than \$20,000.

But once they had no more money to give, their fees grew, their returns shrank, and roadblocks were placed between them and their money.

Then they got a message.

“Let me save you the stress, cus (sic.) you’ve been through a lot already. Coinexx is a scam. Everything and everyone involved are the same,” it said.

“Don’t bother about trying to get back your money. Just focus on getting money to take care of your family.”

Immediately afterwards the company ceased all communication with them.

“I doubled over, and I just felt sick. I was like, ‘we’re f***ed. That’s it. That’s all I thought,’” Mr Yeomans said.

“We’re left here with nothing, with no income, and with lots of debt, the debt has high interest, I thought ‘how are we going to get out of this?’

“I just wanted to cry.”

The Canberra couple are among a growing number of Australians falling victim to investment scams lurking behind the volatile cryptocurrency market.

According to the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission (ACCC)’s Scamwatch, investment scams involving Bitcoin and other cryptocurrencies have increased markedly in 2019.

By May 31 Australians had reported more losses to investment scams mentioning cryptocurrency than they had for all of 2018.

Everything seemed fine at first

Mr Yeomans said he was initially sceptical when introduced to Coinexx.org (not to be confused with Coinexx.com) through a Facebook group.

He decided to risk money on what he was “expecting to be a scam”.

But, to his surprise, Coinexx took a \$1,400 payment and delivered more than \$3,700 within six months.

After creating an account, Mr Yeomans was given a login to the company’s website, where he could ostensibly monitor his investment’s growth.

While at first glance the website appears legitimate, closer inspection raises red flags — pricing plans contain grammatical errors, and the small investment company lists the building that houses the London Aquarium as its headquarters.

But over several months the couple became reliant on payments from the company, Mr Yeomans quit his job, and they restructured their finances



around Coinexx.

“From previous experience and what you expect to see or recognise as a scam, a lot of things weren’t there,” Ms Hamill Yeomans said.

“I really didn’t expect it to happen for such a long period of time.

“In terms of energy, just putting so much into it. Having the energy to speak to you every day, let you know what’s going on, especially when nothing really is going on. It’s such an incredible amount of detail to go into.”

‘It’s hard to believe it’s a scam if they’re paying you’ As it turned out, the Yeomans family were likely caught up in one of the oldest scams in the book: The Ponzi scheme.

“The description of the scam and text message exchange provided by the victims have the appearance of a Ponzi scheme,” a spokeswoman for the ACCC said.

However, she said the ACCC had received no complaints about Coinexx.org.

Instead of taking their money and growing it legitimately by trading Bitcoin, Coinexx.org instead would likely have paid them a share of other people’s investments.

“They build up trust by doing the right thing — by keeping their word up to that point, but it was just such a long period of time,” Mr Yeomans said.

“It’s hard to believe that it is a scam if they’re paying you.”

Like many similar schemes, Coinexx.org’s account manager encouraged them to join up friends and family members, with the goal of sourcing more money to flow through the scam.

But the couple said, to them, it appeared as though an emerging business was simply trying to generate more customers.

“We were living this lifestyle, that this investment

had given us, of course, why wouldn’t you want to be able to share that?” Mr Yeomans said.

Once the couple were bled dry, the scam stung. The couple and a family member had invested more than \$43,000 with Coinexx.org, and become reliant on its payments by the time they were suddenly blocked from their money.

It started with a request for an additional withdrawal fee “to comply with regulations”.

“It all sounded above board, they said ‘so that we can comply with the law’, and I thought ‘that sounds fine, you’re complying with the law, I respect that,’” Mr Yeomans said.

The couple, having already sunk their savings into the investment, took out a loan, believing they could pay it back instantly once the fee was paid.

It was the first of several excuses provided by Coinexx.org, and the first of several requests for additional payment — many of which were met.

“When it has become your main source of income, and it’s been so reliable as well, you’re just trying to think of how you can solve this problem that you’re faced with, because you’re trying to provide for your family, you’re just trying to secure your income,” Ms Hamill Yeomans said.

By the time they learned they had been sucked into a scam, the family had sold possessions, were behind on their rent and bills, and taken out short-term loans.

They were notified of the scam after the couple sent an email, begging for their funds to be released.

“She sent me a message and said look, ‘I just want to save you the stress, this whole thing’s a scam, you’ve been scammed, you’re not getting your money back, just try and look after your family,’” Mr Yeomans said.

“It’s not just the money that we lost ... it’s the whole future that we had built on this thing.



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She was faking it all along: The truth about the world's most famous smile

For a number of years, there's been a rumour that the Mona Lisa – the version sitting in the Louvre in Paris – is actually a fake.

Now, US and Italian researchers say they have evidence that Lisa Gherardini del Giocondo, wife of a Florentine slave trader, was faking it with that famous, enigmatic smile when she sat for the Leonardo da Vinci portrait that made her immortal.

How do they know this?

For a start, says University of Cincinnati neurologist Luca Marsili, there is no upper-face muscle activation in the Mona Lisa painting.

A genuine smile, says Dr Marsili, lead author of the study, “causes the cheeks to raise and muscles around the eyes to contract,” and is called a Duchenne smile, after 19th century French neurologist Guillaume Duchenne.

La Gioconda – as the Mona Lisa is also known, and which roughly, ironically translates as happy and jocular – has an asymmetric smile, or a non-Duchenne smile, which “reflects a non-genuine emotion and is thought to occur when the subject lies”.

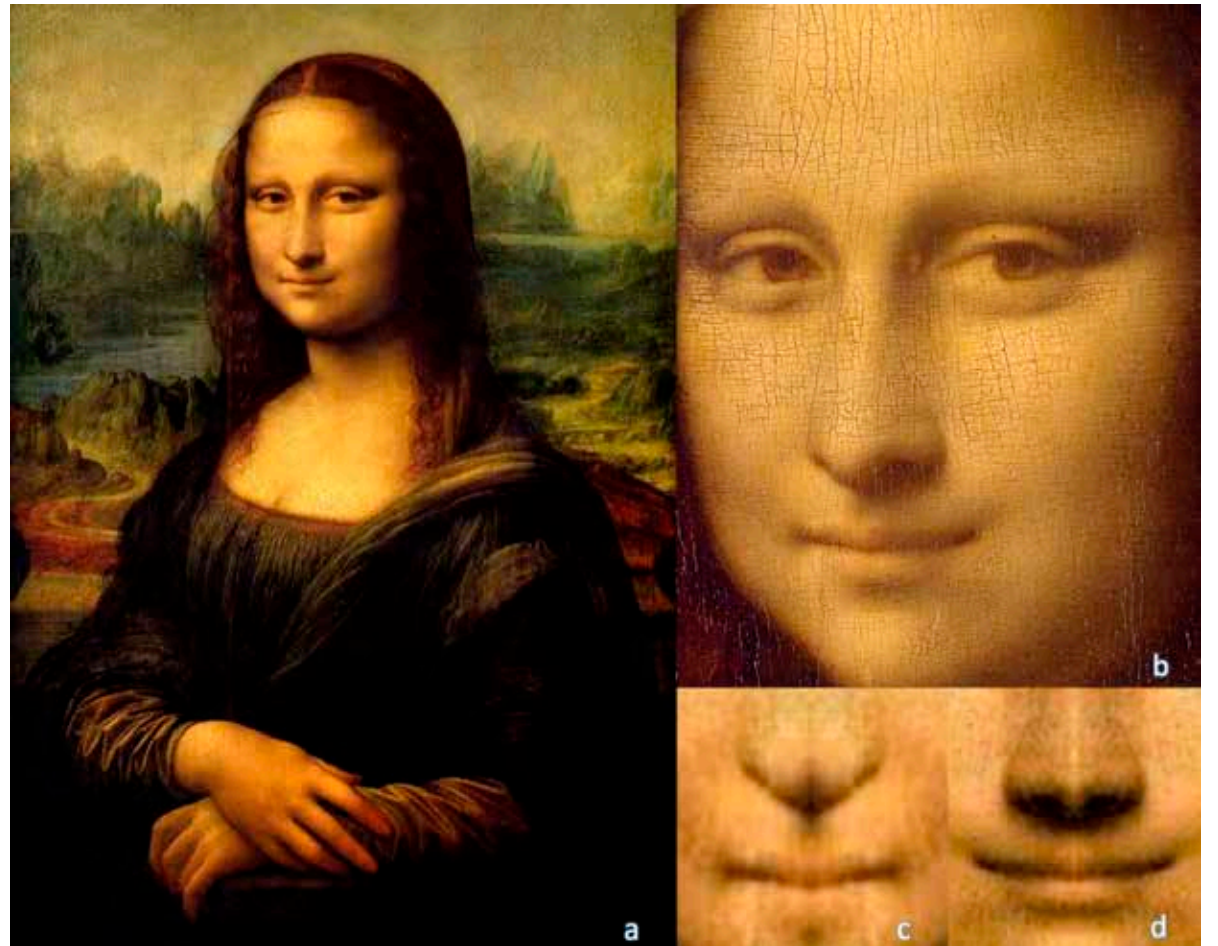
How did they know hers was an asymmetrical smile?

Dr Marsili and his colleagues asked 42 people to judge which of six basic emotions were expressed by two chimeric images of the left and right sides of Mona Lisa's smile.

A chimeric image is a mirror image of just one side of the smile.

Thirty-nine, or 92.8 per cent, of the volunteers indicated the left half of the smile displayed happiness, while none indicated the right side showed happiness.

Instead, 35 said the expression was neutral, five



said it was disgust and two indicated sadness.

“Our results indicate that happiness is expressed only on the left side. According to some influential theories of emotion neuropsychology, we here interpreted the Mona Lisa asymmetric smile as a non-genuine smile, also thought to occur when the subject lies,” the authors write in their study published recently in *Cortex*.

None of this means Lisa was a font of dark deception

As the researchers write: “Considering it is unlikely that a person who sits motionless for

hours to be painted is able to constantly smile in genuine happiness, the simplest explanation is that the Mona Lisa asymmetric smile is the manifestation of an ‘untrue enjoyment’ in spite of all the efforts that Leonardo's jesters used to make in order to keep his models merry.”

Three years ago, art historian Silvano Vinceti – following infrared analysis of the painting suggested da Vinci's masterpiece is an amalgamation of two models: Lisa Gherardini, and da Vinci's apprentice Gian Giacomo Caprotti, known to the artist as Salai, or Little Devil.

Federal Court imposes \$2.3 million penalty on Birubi Art for selling fake Aboriginal art

A company has been handed a \$2.3 million fine by the Federal Court for selling thousands of pieces of fake Aboriginal art.

The court found Birubi Art breached Australian consumer law and misled customers by promoting its products as genuine Aboriginal art, when in fact they were painted in Indonesia.

The company sold more than 18,000 boomerangs, bullroarers, digeridoos and message stones over 2.5 years.

In a landmark ruling, Justice Melissa Perry imposed a \$2.3 million penalty, saying the fine aimed to deter other operators from undercutting the genuine Aboriginal art industry.

Director of the National Indigenous Art Fair Peter Cooley said the ruling was a “great start” in the campaign to protect the genuine Indigenous art industry from counterfeit products.

“We need those consumers to be confident when they are out there ... that the piece they're buying is actually authentic and it's made by Aboriginal people,” he said.

“It's lessening the value of that authentic art and it's swaying people to be nervous about purchasing

and ultimately they stay away from buying and that's not what we need as Aboriginal artists and businesses.”

Gabrielle Sullivan from the Indigenous Art Code said the penalty was “some deterrence,” but it did not mean better protection for artists.

“I don't want to downplay it, but I don't think we should be confident it will address the real issues: there is still no protection around Indigenous culture and intellectual property,” she said.

She said this judgement was a win for consumers, who were less likely to be misled in the sale of Indigenous art.

“This is about Birubi being misleading and deceptive on their packaging and labelling and presentation of products, it wasn't about fake art or unfair licensing agreements,” Ms Sullivan said. Justice Perry said there was “powerful” evidence Birubi's conduct caused great social, economic and cultural harm to Indigenous communities and artists.

In her judgement, she said while it was unlikely the company would ever pay such a fine, it was in the interest of general deterrence that such a hefty

penalty be handed down.

“The duration of the conduct, the number of outlets across the country to which the products were supplied, and the number of products sold, it is clear that the objective seriousness of the conduct is considerable,” she said in her judgement.

“There was is a need for robust penalties to strongly discourage conduct of this kind.”

Company unlikely to pay fine

Birubi Art is now in liquidation and it is unable to pay the fine.

The Australian Competition and Consumer Commission (ACCC) commissioner Sarah Court said the company's actions were “extremely serious”.

“This penalty sends a strong message to anyone considering selling fake Australian Aboriginal-style art as the genuine article,” she said.

She said the consumer watchdog would go after any other dodgy operators.

“The ACCC will be monitoring traders of Indigenous Australian-style art and souvenirs to ensure confidence in the Indigenous Australian art industry.”