

Prospect Annual Report

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Welcome to the 3rd Annual Prospect Report



As your representative in the Federal Parliament, it's important that I communicate regularly with you about the issues in our area.

This *Annual Report* is another one of those forms of communication: a chance for us to look back on the year that's gone by and the issues we've faced both as a community and as a nation as a whole.

It's an opportunity for me to report to you my activities over the last year as your federal MP, and for you to provide feedback to me. Since the last *Annual Report* we've seen the election of a Rudd Government and my appointment as Assistant Treasurer and Minister for Competition Policy and Consumer Affairs.

In the 2008-09 report we have exciting local news about the **Welcoming the Babies Ceremony** as well as the **Prospect Charity Ball**.

We also deal with policies which I have been involved with such as **FuelWatch**, **Education Revolution** and the **2008 Budget**.

As always, if you have any Federal Government matters you would like help with or advice, give my office a call on 9726 4100 or send me an email at chris.bowen.mp@aph.gov.au

Chris Bowen MP
FEDERAL MEMBER FOR PROSPECT

Welcoming the babies to the community

■ It was wonderful to see so many babies, mums and dads at our third annual 'Welcoming the Babies into our Community' family fun and information day at Stockland Wetherill Park.

Families in our area deserve a big thank you for the contribution they make in raising the children of our community.

Our family fun day was a perfect way to publicly recognise and welcome babies, as well as saying 'thanks' to Mum and Dad.

It was also a great opportunity for community groups to let families know about services that are available.

Every baby that registered received a certificate to welcome them to the community, a native tree and a show bag filled with information about services for families.



➤ Parents and babies enjoying another great Welcoming the Babies ceremony.

FuelWatch Report

FuelWatch will give consumers the information that service stations currently keep to themselves about where to find the cheapest fuel.

■ **The FuelWatch scheme will help ensure motorists are not paying a cent more than they have to at the bowser.**

Petrol stations in metropolitan and major regional centres will be required to:

- Notify the ACCC of their next day's prices by 2pm the day before;
- Maintain this advised price for a 24 hour period; and
- Apply the scheme to unleaded petrol, premium unleaded petrol, LPG, diesel, 98 RON and biodiesel blends.

The petrol price information collected from these petrol stations will be made available to consumers through:

- An email and SMS alert service informing subscribed consumers

details of the cheapest fuel in their area;

- A national toll free number where motorists can locate the cheapest petrol in the area they are looking to purchase fuel; and
- A National FuelWatch website with station by station, day by day and suburb by suburb petrol price information.

By giving motorists highly detailed and up to date information about local petrol prices, FuelWatch will help motorists avoid being ripped off. No longer will a motorist drive past a petrol station in the morning only to return in the afternoon to find a 10 cent per litre jump in the price of petrol.



Importantly, FuelWatch will also see an end to driving around on a Tuesday or Wednesday searching for the cheapest petrol.

Rather than guessing the best time and the best place to buy petrol consumers will know where and when to buy the cheapest petrol in town.

While not being a silver bullet it is something that will readily help motorists and put downward pressure on petrol prices.

Battle for Australia Day recognised

■ **Chris Bowen welcomed the Government's announcement to officially recognise The Battle for Australia Day.**

Battle for Australia Day will now be marked on the first Wednesday in September each year as a day of national observance.

Battle for Australia Day will commemorate the service and sacrifice of all those who served in defence of Australia in 1942 and 1943 when we faced the gravest threats to our nation.

There were direct attacks on the Australian mainland, particularly in Darwin, and battles in the Coral Sea and Papua New Guinea, including Milne Bay and the Kokoda Track.

In particular, Chris would also like to recognise Smithfield RSL in their contribution to making this event a reality. Smithfield RSL was one of the first to recognise the significance of Battle for Australia Day and have held services commemorating the occasion for several years.



➤ Chris Bowen with veterans from Smithfield RSL.

Education Revolution: Computers for our schools



> Chris talking to year 5 and 6 students at St Clair Primary School.



> Celebrating Federal Funding for Fairfield West Public School.



> Chris with participants in the 2020 summit at Emmaus College, Kemps Creek.

NAME OF SCHOOL	NO OF COMPUTERS
Emmaus Catholic College	223
Erskine Park High School	253
Fairvale High School	356
Greystanes High School	231
Prairiewood High School	239
St Clair High School	242
Westfields Sports High School	418
Mamre Christian College	33
TOTAL 1995	

■ Local school students are now better off thanks to the Rudd Government's allocation of over \$1.9 million to fund the purchase of 1995 computers. This is all part of the \$1.2 billion digital Education Revolution.

During Chris' visits to local high schools, principals, teachers and parents tell him of their struggles in putting together the resources to get computers into their childrens' classrooms.

Through this funding, the Government is answering this urgent need of the local community.

Grants of \$1,000 per computer have been provided and any bulk purchasing arrangements will deliver savings that schools can use for any associated costs such as uploading power supplies, the installation of wireless connections or ICT equipment.

Providing students this unprecedented access to computers will revolutionise teaching and learning in our schools. It will enhance student's education outcomes.

This is just the first phase of the Government's investment. In the next stage our aim is to ensure that even more secondary schools with students from Years 9-12 benefit from the fund.

The Government's Education Revolution is now underway.

Budget 2008 Election commitments delivered for working families and seniors

Honouring our election commitments, the Rudd Government has delivered a budget which helps working families and invests in Australia's future.

■ The Rudd Government has delivered a \$55 billion support package including tax cuts, child care and education rebates and cost of living initiatives to help them cope with rising costs.

THE TAX CUTS MEAN:

- Families on a single income of \$40,000 will be \$20.19 a week better off for \$1,050 a year ahead;
- Families on a single income of \$80,000 will be \$21.15 a week better off or \$1,100 a year ahead; and
- Families with a combined income of \$100,000, where the primary earner's income is \$60,000, will be \$31.73 a week better off or \$1,650 a year ahead.

These tax cuts will help local families who are doing it tough and working harder than ever before and help deal with rising petrol prices and interest rates.

In addition to the tax cuts, the Working Families Support Package also includes:

- Introducing our Education Tax Refund to help parents with the costs of childrens' education – at a cost of \$4.4 billion;
- Increasing the Child Care Tax Rebate from 30 to 50% and paying it quarterly – an investment of \$1.6 billion;
- Tackling the housing affordability crisis with a \$2.2 billion package including our First Home Saver Accounts, a National Rental Affordability Scheme and a new Housing Affordability Fund.



➤ Chris Bowen outlines some of the Rudd Government's first Budget which includes tax cuts and help with education and childcare costs.

In addition, the Government realises that older Australian's and carers are doing it tough – that's why we have provided \$2.4 billion in additional support in 2008-09 to help both groups.

SENIORS WILL BENEFIT FROM:

- Utilities Allowance payments have increased from \$107.20 a year to \$500 a year for singles or couples combined;
- Telephone Allowance has gone up from \$88 to \$132 a year; and
- A one-off \$500 bonus to support senior Australians.



Chris in Canberra

These are the speeches that Chris has made in Parliament in 2008:

- **Tax Laws** – 26 June
- **Trade Practices** – 26 June
- **Governance Review Implementation (AASB & AUASB)** – 24 June
- **Tax Laws** – 23 June
- **Tax Laws** – 18 June
- **Income Tax** – 18 June
- **National Product Safety Reform** – 18 June
- **Economy** – 18 June
- **Appropriation Bill** – 18 June
- **Tax Laws** – 5 June
- **National Fuelwatch** – 5 June
- **Commonwealth Securities & Investment** – 4 June
- **Tax Laws** – 4 June
- **Income Tax** – 4 June
- **Excise Tariff** – 2 June
- **Fuel Prices** – 29 May
- **Tax Laws** – 29 May
- **National Fuelwatch** – 29 May
- **Medicare Levy and Medicare Levy Surcharge** – 27 May
- **Excise Legislation** – 25 May
- **Excise Tariff** – 15 May
- **Tax Laws** – 14 May
- **Economy** – 14 May
- **Economy** – 18 March
- **Economy** – 11 March
- **Tax Laws** – 21 February
- **Economy** – 20 February
- **Economy** – 14 February
- **Apology to Australia's Indigenous Peoples** – 14 February
- **Tax Laws** – 13 February

If you would copies of any of Chris's speeches please phone 9726 4100.

Charity Ball raises much needed funds



➤ Federal Treasurer Wayne Swan, local MP Chris Bowen and local parents enjoying the Prospect Charity Ball.

■ Chris Bowen recently hosted the 2nd Annual Prospect Charity Ball to raise funds for Learning Links.

The Ball was held at Club Marconi on Saturday 30 June.

'This was an opportunity for the community to assist Learning Links, a worthwhile local charity, and they responded magnificently,' Chris said.

Over 380 people attended the Enchanted Evening. They were treated to an inspirational speech by Federal Treasurer Wayne Swan and enjoyed a night of hot winter jazz.

Close to \$40,000 was raised on the night, with every dollar going to Learning Links' new facility that will service the Fairfield-Liverpool region.

Learning Links first came to Fairfield in 1999 and provided weekly specialist services 52 children struggling to learn. Since then their services have grown and now include early childhood intervention, specialist education support, therapy, family counselling, case management, professional development and group programs.

The same location that helped 52 children in 1999 is now trying to squeeze 250 children through the doors.

'I want to thank all the gold and silver sponsors - clubs, and donors on the night. Special thanks also to WoW Factor Events for concept and project management,' said Chris Bowen.



➤ Wayne Swan, Chris Bowen, Jaylee and her mother.

Debt Relief Kit launched

■ **Chris Bowen and fellow Western Sydney Federal MP Jason Clare have released a *Debt Relief Kit* for residents in the area.**

The *Debt Relief Kit* is designed to provide useful information about services and organisations that can help people manage their debt.

People facing financial pressure need to be aware of all the options available to them.

Homeowners, particularly those in Western Sydney, need to be aware that there are options available to them, this kit will give them these options.

More homes are repossessed here than anywhere else in Australia. That is why we have put together this kit.

The *Debt Relief Kit* provides a practical guide for those under severe financial stress that outlines important steps that can be taken to avoid further financial difficulty.



➤ Local MPs Chris Bowen and Jason Clare launching the new Debt Relief Kit.

The *Debt Relief Kit* gives people the information they need to help themselves. The mistake many people make is they wait until it's too late to get financial help – when the banks are about to foreclose or the sheriff is at the door.

If you are under financial pressure, it is important you seek help immediately.

If you would like a copy of the Kit please phone Chris' office on 9726 4100 .

Local MP becomes Minister

■ **Chris Bowen was honoured to be asked by Prime Minister, Kevin Rudd to be the new Assistant Treasurer and Minister for Competition Policy and Consumer Affairs.**

This portfolio gives Chris the opportunity to help reduce some of the cost of living pressures being experienced by families and businesses across Western Sydney. Chris will be working on a whole range of tax, competition and consumer policies, including:

- Appointing a full-time national petrol commissioner;
- Giving the ACCC the power to monitor supermarket prices;
- Helping to make Australia the funds management hub of the Asia-Pacific;
- Introducing gaol terms for serious cartel behaviour; and
- Developing further trade practices reform.



➤ Chris Bowen is honoured to be Assistant Treasurer and Minister for Competition Policy and Consumers Affairs in Kevin Rudd's Government.