

# State's economy under the pump

## Fuel crisis to impact rise

Paul Starick

South Australia is forecast to be the nation's top-performing economy, despite debt pushing "just below Victoria's challenging level" and Australia "running on empty" because of the Iran conflict rocking the globe, a Deloitte Access Economics report finds.

The quarterly report, issued on Monday, says "an economic upswing" will likely position SA top at this financial year's end, but ongoing cost-of-living pressures will constrain growth after that.

Surging public infrastructure spending has underpinned SA's growth, Deloitte says, however many drivers of this expansion are temporary and position the state "for a slowdown in the coming quarters". "Major government projects will likely further increase public investment, pushing general government net debt towards \$37bn – approximately 23 per cent of state output, just below Victoria's challenging level," the Deloitte report says.

Public expenditure growth is projected to average 3.9 per cent annually during the next three years – a marked change from 7.3 per cent annually over the past three years that "played a significant role in supporting the state economy".

Deloitte warns strains are mounting as household spending slows, constrained by cost-of-living pressures and a 10 per cent house price surge in the past year alone.

Deloitte Access Economics Partner and report author David Rumbens said the jarring shock of petrol price pain would filter through to other

parts of the economy throughout the year.

"The conflict in the Middle East has rocked the global economy, sending inflation expectations soaring while growth forecasts plunge," he said.

"The Australian economy is running on empty. Higher fuel prices and a domestic economy that struggles to contain inflation at modest rates of economic growth are different dimensions of a supply crisis story."

The report says the Middle East conflict adds uncertainty to SA's export outlook, although elevated copper prices might help stoke government coffers.

"Over the medium to long term, economic growth is forecast to remain a little below the national average, primarily reflecting slower population growth as the state's ageing population constrains natural growth and migration returns to typical negative patterns," the report says.

The Deloitte forecast follows a Westpac Economics quarterly report which stated SA "has hit something of a sweet spot over the past year".

"Spending is accelerating and broadening, a strong labour market is securing households, and while inflation has ticked up, localised pressures are mostly absent," the Westpac report said.

"... Looking ahead, the risks from a broader based energy price shock, through spillovers into gas and coal prices, are likely to be more muted in SA, reflecting the state's relatively high share of renewable based energy production."



Daniel Bryant with partner Amanda Mountford and baby Mackenzie, 1, and in hospital being treated for testicular cancer. Picture: Supplied

## I came back from the dead

Evangeline Polymeneas

Clovelly Park teacher Daniel Bryant reckons he should be dead.

For months, he ignored an enlarged testicle, a decision that nearly cost him his life.

By the time he sought help, doctors found a 20cm metastasised tumour wrapped around his abdominal blood vessels.

He was eventually given six months to live after an aborted surgery.

"I believed I was dying, I was told I was dying, I wasn't well and I had to think about

the decision that I made to ignore an enlarged testicle and not go to the doctor was going to take my life in a few months time," the 47-year-old told The Advertiser.

Diagnosed in January 2017, Mr Bryant had initially attributed his unbearable stomach pain to the stress of a new teaching job.

Following the failed surgery in June 2017, he was moved to palliative care.

"They woke me up and told me they hadn't been able to remove any of the tumour, that it was inoperable" he said.

Mr Bryant, who was 38 at

the time, was told to choose a hospice for his last days.

But he had one last throw at the dice: the Peter MacCallum Cancer Centre in Victoria.

"Mum and dad drove me, I had to lie flat in the back of the car because it was too painful to sit up," he said.

In September 2017, surgeons successfully performed surgery.

Now, Mr Bryant and partner Amanda Mountford share a one-year-old daughter, Mackenzie.

"I feel very thankful, I think it's the little things that you appreciate more," he said.

## Winery on the brink of closure

Agnes Gichuhi

A well-known South-East winery faces last orders.

Financial hardship may lead to Bellwether Wines, which runs a cellar door and glamping campsite at Coonawarra, to close by next month.

A team member revealed the business has about "two weeks to be saved".

"Bellwether Wines really need your help," said the online message to the winery's supporters.

"Everyday we are seeing lay-offs in the industry. Sue Bell (owner) has held out for long time, in her usual way of ensuring everyone else is taken care of, bearing the brunt herself."

"The reality is this, if we don't raise a significant amount of money in the next two weeks, the business will have to close".

The team member, who has worked at Bellwether Wines for six months, hopes the community will rally around the winery.

"I know how much love there is out there for Sue and the amazing wines that she makes," they wrote.

"The reality is, if everyone purchased one dozen wines, you can get us out of foreclosure."

Friends of the winemaker Ms Bell shared messages of support for the industry pioneer, by asking people to buy her wine, Bellwether.

"The clock is ticking on her beautiful business and wine brand and while it's a vulnerable place to be, we have the collective power to shift it, one wine at a time," well-known wine writer Kate Spain wrote on the Instagram post.

"I can't imagine a world without Bellwether."

"She champions the Limestone Coast and everyone in it. She is a voice for the artists, the farmers, the vagabonds, the land, the voiceless. She also makes bloody great wine."

Dan Redman of Redman Wines said Ms Bell was "the heart and soul of Coonawarra", in another stirring message of support.



Sue Bell

## Body found in park

A person was found dead in the Adelaide CBD early on Monday morning.

SA Ambulance crews and SA Police were called to Whitmore Square in Adelaide's southwest corner just before 5am on Monday.

Police said a person had been found dead, but their death was not being ruled suspicious.

Earlier this year a person

was found dead near a busy public transport terminal in Adelaide's southern suburbs.

Emergency services rushed to Kenihans Rd at Happy Valley — near the Panalatinga Rd Park 'n' Ride — just before noon on January 17 after reports a person was found deceased near the bus stop.

Their death was also not ruled as suspicious.



Dr Kelly Sharp. Picture: Supplied

## Homecoming for new leader

Shashi Baltutis

Students at an elite Adelaide private school will welcome a fresh face joining its leadership from term 3 this year.

Scotch College in Torrens Park has announced Dr Kelly Sharp will commence as its new deputy principal.

Principal Trent Driver on Monday announced the "passionate and experienced educator" would return to the

college after she left in 2021 to develop Scotch Enterprises, including a sister school in Ho Chi Minh City teaching Vietnamese students SACE.

She will replace outgoing deputy principal Emma Grave, who will become the new head of the unaffiliated Scotch PGC College in Queensland.

Dr Sharp served as the head of middle school at Scotch College from 2013 to 2020.

"She has guided a gener-

ation of graduating students through their first years of secondary school," Mr Driver said.

"Prior to that, as head of special programs, she supported students with diverse needs and academic giftedness."

Since leaving Scotch College, Dr Sharp has travelled between Australia and Vietnam to help establish Scotch Australian Grammar School, which opened in 2022.