

As 1 July is the beginning of the new financial year, this newsletter reports on many of the changes, including those reforms in skilled migration visas, settlement grants programs to help both migrants and refugees, and government funding for new projects in every State. It introduces the emerging renewables program, and new moves to enhance the education sector.

Change to the skilled migration pass mark

The pass mark for the new SkillSelect visa subclasses 189, 190 and 489 will be 60 points. Intending migrants will first need to submit an expression of interest (EOI) and be invited to make an application for these visas.

A Department of Immigration and Citizenship spokesman said the change to the pass mark was in the context of the series of reforms to the skilled migration program undertaken by the Australian Government since 2008.

"These reforms have ensured the skilled migration program is a responsive and demand driven program," the spokesman said. "The cornerstone of this migration reform package will be the introduction of SkillSelect from **1 July 2012**."

SkillSelect is a new electronic service for managing the skilled migration program. Intending migrants without an employer sponsor wanting to live and work in Australia will need to complete an online EOI, then based on claims of their skills and attributes, will be allocated a score against the points test. SkillSelect will rank intending migrant's scores against other EOIs.

The highest ranking migrants across a broad range of occupations may be invited to apply for a skilled visa.

"Delivery of a balanced migration program requires careful management," the spokesman said. "SkillSelect will provide greater control over who can apply for a skilled visa and when they can apply."

The pass mark for existing general skilled migration subclasses 175, 176, 475, 487, 885 and 886 will remain at 65 points.

http://www.newsroom.immi.gov.au/media_releases/1063

Boost to settlement services for new migrants and refugees

The Federal Government's latest round of settlement grants reinforces its commitment to help newly arrived migrants and refugees become self-reliant and successfully settle in Australia.

Minister for Immigration and Citizenship, Chris Bowen MP, said the services funded under the program focused on assisting new arrivals to gain employment and access to education and training, but also included sporting activities, help to increase knowledge of Australian culture and navigating the rental market.

"This is about getting people ready for work, getting kids into school, and making sure they have every opportunity to make a success of life in Australia, further

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enhancing the productivity of our migration program.'

From 1 July 2012, a total of 97 new projects worth \$39 million – and delivered through 95 organisations – will be funded under the in 2012-13 Settlement Grants Program (SGP).

'These services help people to make the transition into Australian life by building on their existing skills and, at the same time, help them to learn valuable new ones,' Minister for Multicultural Affairs Senator Kate Lundy said.

'They provide practical assistance for people starting new lives in Australia, help them create valuable links to the wider community and empower migrants and refugees to become self-reliant so they can forge a better life.'

www.minister.immi.gov.au/media/cb/2012/cb187703.htm

New services to help migrants and refugees in New South Wales

The Minister for Immigration and Citizenship, Chris Bowen MP, and Minister for Multicultural Affairs, Senator Kate Lundy, recently announced 34 new projects in New South Wales will be funded in 2012-13 under the Settlement Grants Program (SGP) to assist newly arrived migrants and refugees settle in New South Wales.

From **1 July 2012**, New South Wales settlement agencies will receive a total of \$6.55 million in additional funding to deliver new services that will help new arrivals become self-reliant and acquire skills and knowledge to fully participate in the community.

As part of the funding allocated to New South Wales this coming financial year, the Service for the Treatment and Rehabilitation of Torture and Trauma Survivors (STARTTS) will receive a grant to help refugees in the Fairfield and Auburn areas overcome and recover from their experiences and build a new life in Australia.

'As part of this service STARTTS will provide unique one-on-one consultancy services across the Fairfield and Auburn areas of Sydney to provide intensive assistance ... These activities will promote self-reliance within newly arrived communities which will help to build a greater sense of belonging,' Mr Bowen said.

'These grants help people to make the transition into Australian life by building on their existing skills and, at the same time, help them to learn valuable new ones ... The community sector plays a vital role in supporting newly arrived refugees and I commend all organisations in New South Wales for their contribution to the successful settlement of migrants and humanitarian entrants.' Senator Lundy said.

The Australian Government will spend \$39 million in 2012-13 to deliver services to humanitarian entrants and new migrants to acquire skills and knowledge to fully participate in the community as soon as possible after arrival.

<http://www.minister.immi.gov.au/media/cb/2012/cb187727.htm>

Similar new projects in other States and Territories will receive government funding from **1 July 2012**. For more information on these projects see:

New services to help migrants and refugees in Queensland

<http://www.minister.immi.gov.au/media/cb/2012/cb187711.htm>

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New services to help migrants and refugees in Western Australia
<http://www.minister.immi.gov.au/media/cb/2012/cb187755.htm>

New services to help migrants and refugees in South Australia
<http://www.minister.immi.gov.au/media/cb/2012/cb187759.htm>

New services to help migrants and refugees in Tasmania
<http://www.minister.immi.gov.au/media/cb/2012/cb187763.htm>

New migration and refugee tribunal appointments

The Minister for Immigration and Citizenship, Chris Bowen MP, recently announced a series of new appointments, including a new principal member, to the Migration Review Tribunal (MRT) and the Refugee Review Tribunal (RRT).

Mr Bowen said the new principal member Kay Ransome would head the independent review tribunals while three senior members and 33 other new members have also been appointed.

'Ms Ransome has an excellent knowledge of administrative law and having previously worked as a member at the RRT she has a sound understanding of migration law,' Mr Bowen said.

'The combination of her extensive administrative law practice, executive experience and background in relevant tribunals, makes her an ideal appointee for this position.

The MRT and RRT provide an independent and final merits review of decisions made in relation to visas to travel to, enter or stay in Australia. The MRT reviews decisions made relative to general visas (for example, visitor, student, partner, family, business, skilled visas) and the RRT deals with decisions made about protection (refugee) visas.

Members have been appointed on a part-time or full-time basis for periods of either three or five years commencing **1 July 2012**. All senior members have been appointed for five years full-time starting 1 July. Ms Ransome has been appointed for five years, starting in August.

The new appointments are partially in response to an independent internal departmental review by Professor Michael Lavarch to reduce system-clogging delays and improve the efficiency and effectiveness of both the MRT and RRT. The review is available on department's website.

<http://www.minister.immi.gov.au/media/cb/2012/cb188001.htm>

New advisory council on skilled migration

The new Ministerial Advisory Council on Skilled Migration (MACSM) will provide the Government with expert advice on the role of skilled migration in the

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Australian economy, the Minister for Immigration and Citizenship, Chris Bowen MP, announced recently.

'Skilled migration plays a valuable role in addressing current and future skill shortages, as well as lessening the impact of Australia's ageing population, and it's important that we have fresh perspectives on how to best address these issues,' Mr Bowen said.

'This new ministerial advisory council will provide the government with independent advice to help develop our migration policies and programs.'

Mr Bowen said the council members have been drawn from a wide range of backgrounds, experience and professional expertise.

Each state and territory will be represented by a government official nominated by its state premier or territory chief minister.

The meetings of the council are currently taking place in Canberra.

<http://www.minister.immi.gov.au/media/cb/2012/cb188019.htm>

4.5 million people have joined Australian family

The Minister for Immigration and Citizenship, Chris Bowen MP, recently announced that 4.5 million people had become Australian citizens since the first citizenship ceremony in 1949.

He said hitting the 4.5 million mark was a significant milestone and an opportunity for all Australians to reflect on what it meant to be a citizen of this great country.

'Citizenship is the bond that holds our culturally diverse population together. This milestone also serves as a reminder of the role citizenship plays in building a strong and unified Australia.'

'Australian citizenship is unique. It carries responsibilities and grants privileges. It represents commitment to our country, to our people and to the values we all share.'

'The first seven people to become Australian citizens in 1949 came from Spain, Greece, Denmark, Czechoslovakia, Norway, France, and Yugoslavia,' he said.

More recently people from China, New Zealand, India, Vietnam and South Africa are becoming citizens.

<http://www.minister.immi.gov.au/media/cb/2012/cb186668.htm>

Visa holder subject to visa cancellation process

The Department of Immigration and Citizenship will be notifying Ali Al Abassi (also known to some as Captain Emad), upon his return to Australia, that it is considering the cancellation of his visa.

Section 109 allows for visa cancellation where incorrect information has been provided in relation to a visa application.

The action to notify Ali Al Abassi of the intention to consider cancelling his visa is based on recent evidence gathered by the Immigration Department.

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Resources

APB Education

The cancellation powers are long-standing and allow action to be taken to protect the integrity of Australia's visa system.

These provisions have applied over the last two decades for holders of protection visas, permanent visas, temporary skilled migration visas, tourist visas and student visas.

<http://www.minister.immi.gov.au/media/cb/2012/cb187539.htm>

First court finding against 457 visa sponsor

The Department of Immigration and Citizenship (DIAC) recently welcomed a Federal Magistrates Court decision against a Victorian 457 visa sponsor who underpaid a worker by \$10 000.

The court issued a pecuniary penalty of \$35 000 plus costs of almost \$11 000 and put significant weight on the need to deter other employer sponsors from breaching their obligations.

A departmental spokesman said that, for the first time, an action had been brought before the courts under the Migration Legislation Amendment (Worker Protection) Act 2008. He said the court found 457 sponsor Sahan Enterprises Pty Ltd had failed two of the obligations: the obligation to pay equivalent terms and conditions, and the obligation to keep appropriate pay records.

"DIAC will not tolerate abuse of the skilled migration program and this finding should send a strong signal to sponsors that they must fulfil their sponsorship obligations ... This is a timely reminder that Australian workplace laws apply universally to all. Sponsors found to be doing the wrong thing by the department's inspectors may be subject to administrative sanctions, an infringement or civil litigation, as in the case of Sahan Enterprises," the spokesman said.

www.newsroom.immi.gov.au/releases/First-court-finding-against-457-visa-sponsor

Mobile applications are not the way to go

The Department of Immigration and Citizenship (DIAC) has reminded users of mobile applications to be aware of providers offering unregistered advice and false guarantees of a migration outcome.

"Tablet PC and smartphone apps are another avenue that scammers and unscrupulous operators have explored to take advantage of vulnerable people, in a similar manner to unsolicited phone calls and hoax emails," a DIAC spokesman said yesterday. "These applications should be ignored and deleted."

The department said that only registered migration agents are qualified under Australian law to provide advice regarding migration or visa applications.

"We are aware of a number of mobile applications that offer guides to the unwary about applying for a visa where the applicant might not have sufficient evidence; or tips about how to speed up visa applications."

"Not only would the information provided be potentially false or misleading, but may also jeopardize a genuine application.

"The department warns that the risks are high for those who seek to defraud the system," the spokesman said.

http://www.newsroom.immi.gov.au/media_releases/1057

Call for solidarity to handle refugee problem

The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) has called for solidarity in solving the world's refugee problem in its flagship publication, *The State of the World's Refugees: In Search of Solidarity*. The publication provides an in-depth look at the situation of the world's displaced and is the first edition on the state of the world's refugees since 2006.

The report predicts the number of displaced persons worldwide will increase substantially over the next ten years due to factors such as climate change, population growth, urbanisation, food insecurity, water scarcity and resource competition. The report stresses that international unity and solidarity is essential in addressing this issue.

"Pressures on the international system are clearly growing", said UN High Commissioner for Refugees, Antonio Guterres, upon the release of the publication. "In some industrialised countries in particular we see fortress mentalities that serve only to shift responsibility and compassion elsewhere. In a world where societies are becoming multicultural and multiethnic, it is essential to promote the values of tolerance and to fight the manifestation of xenophobia."

For more information about the report, visit the UNHCR publications page at www.unhcr.org.

Cocos centre upgraded to cater for asylum seekers

Australian authorities are rushing to upgrade quarantine facilities at the remote Cocos Islands, confirming fears that people smugglers from Sri Lanka and southern India have chosen the island group as a new frontier in the asylum seeker trade.

A jet load of stretchers, washing machines, dryers, antiseptic and other supplies has been flown out of Christmas Island, bound for the Cocos Islands, almost 1000 kilometres across the Indian Ocean to the west.

A boat carrying 67 Sri Lankan Tamils arrived at the Cocos cluster of islands, also known as the Keeling Islands, recently. The Cocos group is much closer to Sri Lanka and southern India, where thousands of Tamils are in refugee camps.

The new quarantine facility will be established at an old station used in the past to house imported animals requiring isolation before receiving quarantine clearance for transport to the Australian mainland.

Informed sources say there is no intention to turn the quarantine camp into a new detention centre, and that all asylum seekers will still be taken to Christmas Island for processing.

www.smh.com.au/national/cocos-centre-upgraded-to-cater-for-asylum-seekers-20120701-21b37.html

ASIO founders as refugee rate rises

The spy agency vetting asylum seekers for potential security threats is struggling with the "sharp increase" in boat arrivals, rudimentary computer systems and 30 per cent fewer staff than needed, an audit has found.

The investigation into the Australian Security Intelligence Organisation followed criticism of lengthy backlog and delays in security assessments before asylum seekers are granted a visa.

The Immigration Department was also criticised over the delays, often providing ASIO with "incomplete" or "poor quality" information about the people it wanted checked.

More than 50 recognised refugees are presently held in indefinite detention in Australia's detention network with adverse assessments - unable to return home, unwanted by other countries, but not permitted release into the community.

The audit said it did not seek to second guess the ASIO judgments but wanted to be sure of the quality of assessments. It said the assessments were "broadly effective".

www.smh.com.au/national/asio-founders-as-refugee-rate-rises-20120625-20yn2.html

Indonesia ill-equipped to rescue asylum boats

The Indonesian search and rescue agency Basarnas is hopelessly under-equipped for ocean rescue and needs help from Australia if it is to save asylum seekers from dying at sea, its chief has told the *Herald*.

Vice Marshal Daryatmo, the head of Basarnas, has confirmed his agency has only one small fibreglass-hulled rescue boat, based in Jakarta, to deploy in the ocean between Java and Christmas Island.

"What we have now in search and rescue ... in Jakarta is not a big capability ... it means there is a lot of restriction," he said.

The Australian Maritime Safety Authority recently left Basarnas in charge of the search and rescue operation for a leaking asylum seeker vessel making its way in heavy seas to Christmas Island.

That boat eventually sank at the halfway mark of the passage, claiming an estimated 90 lives, without the Indonesians ever having located it.

www.smh.com.au/national/indonesia-illegally-equipped-to-rescue-asylum-boats-20120626-210hw.html

Asylum seekers transferred to Yongah Hill

The first detainees were recently transferred to the new Yongah Hill Immigration Detention Centre in Western Australia.

This centre, about 80 kilometres east of Perth and five kilometres outside the town of Northam, will accommodate up to 600 single adult males who are at various stages of visa processing.

A total of 84 Afghans and Pakistanis were moved into the Yongah Hill centre.

A Department of Immigration and Citizenship (DIAC) spokesman said, "Yongah Hill is a secure facility with perimeter fencing, internal fencing, electronic security measures and security staff, as well as appropriate arrangements in place with emergency services.

"DIAC is also ensuring appropriate support services are available to people accommodated at Yongah Hill. As a matter of course, this includes departmental case managers, mental health support teams, medical staff, interpreting services and education staff."

<http://www.newsroom.immi.gov.au/releases/Asylum-seekers-transferred-to-Yongah-Hill>

Government extends Scherger contract

The existing immigration detention centre at Scherger RAAF base in Far North Queensland will continue to be used for another two years, the Minister for Immigration and Citizenship, Chris Bowen MP, said recently. He added strong community support for the centre had played a significant role in the decision, combined with the ongoing requirements of the overall detention network.

He said the Department of Defence had confirmed the site was not required for operational purposes during that period.

'This facility has wide support among the local Weipa community, who have in fact sought the department's commitment to extend its use ... The use of the centre during the next wet season will help alleviate the traditional economic slowdown that occurs in the region during those months,' Mr Bowen said.

www.minister.immi.gov.au/media/cb/2012/cb187347.htm

An update on community detention

The Federal Government continues to move children and vulnerable families out of detention facilities, with almost 2000 people currently residing in or transferring into community-based accommodation.

The Minister for Immigration and Citizenship, Chris Bowen MP, said he had approved 4008 people for residence determination - 2145 adults and 1863 children - since the government announced the new community detention program in October 2010.

Mr Bowen said there were currently 1966 people in or transferring into community detention, with 635 of those children. 'We now have 71 per cent of all children in the immigration detention network living in community-based arrangements - that is 635 minors in the community and 281 remaining in detention facilities.'

'This government recognises the importance of the community detention program and is proud of the success the program has had in delivering appropriate care for people - especially children - accommodated in the community while their asylum claims are assessed.

'As always, I would also like to thank organisations such as the Australian Red Cross for the ongoing work they do with my department in maintaining these programs.'

All eligible unaccompanied minors who arrived in Australia prior to 22 February 2012 have now been moved into community arrangements. All eligible accompanied children who arrived in Australia prior to 11 February 2012 have now also been granted community placement.

<http://www.minister.immi.gov.au/media/cb/2012/cb186759.htm>

Significant Recent Court Decision

SZQGA v Minister for Immigration & Citizenship [2012] FCA 593 (7 June 2012)

This appeal concerns a Sri Lankan national who in 2010 entered Australia by boat at Christmas Island and unsuccessfully claimed refugee status after doing so.

The Federal Court noted that proper attention to what the appellant said may possibly have caused the reviewer to take a different view on the other issues and therefore, the Court held that the Independent Merits Reviewer failed to accord the applicant a fair hearing by failing to take into account the applicant's answer to questions, posed by the reviewer.

<http://www.austlii.edu.au/au/cases/cth/FCA/2012/593.html>

Federal Attorney-General

Families on notice: net widens on domestic violence

The definition of domestic violence has been expanded under controversial changes to family law.

The changes, which have become law, for the first time broaden the definition of violence beyond physical abuse to other damaging actions, including:

- Emotional manipulation;
- Withholding money;
- Cruelty to the family pet;
- Allowing children to see, hear or be exposed to family violence
- Stalking;
- Repeated derogatory taunts;
- Intentionally damaging or destroying property; and
- Preventing someone having contact with family and friends.

Under the changes, the Family Court will be required to ask parents if there was abuse or a threat of abuse in the relationship.

The federal government believes this change will encourage more victims to raise the problem as many are too scared to bring it up, worried they would be unable to prove abuse.

As well, the court would be required to ask whether children were exposed to abuse from a parent, and this would be taken into consideration when hearing custody cases. The Family Law Act has been amended to say: "A child is exposed to family violence if the child sees or hears family violence or otherwise experiences the effects of family violence."

The federal Attorney-General, Nicola Roxon, who has lobbied for the changes, said much family violence remained "invisible to the legal system" and she wanted to send a message that it had no place in Australian society.

www.smh.com.au/opinion/political-news/net-widens-on-family-violence-20120602-1zoku.html

Safety of the child must be put first

In an article published in the *Sun-Herald* recently, Federal Attorney-General Nicola Roxon stressed the importance of protecting children from family violence. Below are excerpts from this article:

"Violence against children is damaging and devastating. We know that when children are exposed to violence they are more likely to suffer behavioural problems, anxiety and lower self-esteem than their peers. Some children exposed to violence have higher levels of aggression. Some go on to abuse substances, such as alcohol, as adults. This is why the government has changed family laws to help the court to do more to protect children who are exposed to family violence.

"These reforms mean that, where violence or abuse is an issue, the safety of children will be put front and centre when deciding access, parental responsibility or other disputes. The changes do this by removing disincentives for parents to report family violence.

"Our laws and courts need to send the strong message that any form of family violence is unacceptable."

"Safety of the child must be put first," *The Sun-Herald*, June 3, 2012, page 7.

People smuggling convictions review completed

Indonesian nationals who may be minors have been released from prison and returned to Indonesia, following the conclusion of the review into convicted people smugglers who claimed to be minors.

"Minors don't belong in adult gaols, which is why the Government has conducted this review as quickly as possible," Attorney-General Nicola Roxon said. "This is not a pardon. These individuals crewed people smuggling vessels that came to Australia, all of them went to court and were convicted of that offence. This is a decision to give these individuals the benefit of the doubt about their age when intercepted, after considering further information that was not earlier available."

The final outcomes of the review were:

- 15 crew were released early from prison on licence as there was a doubt they may have been minors on arrival in Australia
- two crew were released early on parole
- three crew completed their non-parole periods
- eight crew remain to serve their sentences, as there was no evidence supporting suggestions they were minors at the time of their arrival.

“These people were all legally represented, 17 of them pleaded guilty, and only three contested their age in court proceedings,” Ms Roxon said.

The Department of Immigration and Citizenship now assesses the age of people smuggling crew on arrival and quickly removes those found to be minors to Indonesia.

<http://www.attorneygeneral.gov.au/media-releases/pages/2012/second%20quarter/29-june-2012---people-smuggling-convictions-review-completed.aspx>

Smarter laws for the sea

A smarter and simpler approach to Australia’s laws at sea will be the result of the Maritime Powers Bill 2012 introduced into Parliament recently.

Attorney-General Nicola Roxon said that the Bill provides a smarter and simpler approach to maritime enforcement through one single comprehensive law.

“Under the current inefficient legislative structure, operational agencies use powers contained across at least 35 separate Commonwealth Acts. What we’re doing is making it easier for our Customs, Australian Federal Police and Australian Defence Force officers to do their jobs. This legislation brings together enforcement powers specific to the maritime domain, recognising the inherent difficulties and dangers in conducting enforcement operations at sea. The unique nature of the maritime environment necessitates a tailored approach to maritime powers which in turn assists officers to deal with changing circumstances and difficult and dangerous situations. A single comprehensive set of powers and uniform procedures will help agencies such as Customs and the Navy in enforcing laws related to illegal fishing, customs and migration.” Ms Roxon said

The Bill ensures Australia can fulfil its obligations and exercise its rights at international law, including under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea.

www.attorneygeneral.gov.au/media-releases/pages/2012/second%20quarter/e0-may-2012---Smarter-laws-for-the-sea.aspx

Promoting the experience and expertise of older Australians

An Australian Law Reform Commission (ALRC) review of Commonwealth legislation and policies that create barriers for older people participating in the workforce or other productive work has kicked off.

“Older Australians have much to offer our workforce and this review will look at how we can best utilise their expertise, enthusiasm and energy,” Attorney-General Nicola Roxon said.

“The Government believes that people of all ages should be able to participate in Australian life and that people of any age should not be prevented from contributing in the workforce or elsewhere.

“Age discrimination has a significant social impact on older people so I look forward to this review providing recommendations on how we can support older Australians to continue participating in society.

“In undertaking this reference, the ALRC will consider all relevant Commonwealth legislation that either directly or indirectly imposes limitations on older persons from participating including superannuation, employment, insurance, compensation and social security law.”

www.attorneygeneral.gov.au/media-releases/pages/2012/first%20quarter/13-March-2012---Promoting-the-experience-and-expertise-of-older-Australians.aspx

Department of Resources and Energy

Emerging Renewables Program

The Australian Government’s new \$100 million Emerging Renewables Program will support the development of renewable energy and enabling technologies in Australia.

The new Program will implement the key recommendation by the Australian Centre for Renewable Energy (ACRE) Board in its *Strategic Directions* to consolidate the Australian Government’s \$40 million election commitment with ACRE’s existing unallocated funds. Under the Program, at least \$40 million will be available for developing technologies with potential to provide large-scale base load power generation, such as ocean and geothermal.

This initiative forms part of a total \$690 million in funding administered by ACRE. The Program is part of the Government’s \$5 billion Clean Energy Initiative (CEI) and an important part of the Government’s long term strategy to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and provide energy security. It will operate as part of an integrated approach alongside the \$100 million *Renewable Energy Venture Capital Fund* (REVCF), to support the development of renewable energy and enabling technologies in Australia.

The ACRE Board’s *Strategic Directions* recommends a new and innovative approach to the design of renewable energy funding programs in Australia, to be reflected in the design of the Government’s Emerging Renewables Program.

The Board recommends a flexible and integrated approach to funding renewable energy technology across the innovation chain. The key design features recommended include:

- The program should offer funding to support:
 - renewable energy and enabling technology projects to progress technologies to the next stage along the innovation chain and to lower the cost of renewable energy in Australia; and
 - renewable energy measures that may involve renewable energy industry skills development, capacity building, knowledge sharing and collaboration.

http://ret.gov.au/Department/Documents/budget_2011-12/Emerging_Renewables_Program_Fact_Sheet.pdf

WA project to harness ocean's energy

The ocean swell off Perth’s Garden Island is set to power a world-first grid-connected demonstration of the promising Australian CETO wave energy technology.

Minister for Resources and Energy, Martin Ferguson AM MP, recently announced close to \$10 million in funding for Carnegie Wave Energy’s Perth Wave Energy Project at the company’s Fremantle facility.

“With the Government’s assistance through the Emerging Renewables Program, this \$31 million pilot project will demonstrate the potential for Carnegie’s Australian invented and owned CETO technology to provide up to two megawatts of energy to the electricity grid,” Minister Ferguson said.

"This technology not only has the potential to increase investor confidence in wave projects and help unlock Australia's untapped wave energy resource, but it could also produce zero emission desalinated seawater, which on a dry continent such as Australia, is a significant additional attraction."

The Western Australian Government is providing \$5.5 million to this stage of the Perth Wave Energy Project on Garden Island.

The Emerging Renewables Program is designed to support the development of innovative renewable energy technologies for commercialisation and deployment.

<http://minister.ret.gov.au/mediacentre/mediareleases/pages/waprojectoceanenergy.aspx>

Port MacDonnell wave project gets Federal funding

A new \$7.2 million project aimed at harnessing the energy off waves on Adelaide's south-east coast is being partly funded by the Federal Government.

New South Wales-based Oceanlinx, which has spent the past year collecting local data for its project near Port MacDonnell, received close to \$4 million in funding under the Emerging Renewables program of the Australian Centre for Renewable Energy.

Oceanlinx claims to have spent close to \$100 million in the past 15 years developing its patented Oscillating Water Column technology.

South Australia's coastal waves were some of the best in the world with "more consistent, predictable and continuous waters", Oceanlinx chief executive Ali Baghaei told *The Advertiser*.

The 1MW Commercial Wave Energy Demonstrator, weighing approximately 2000 tonnes, will be a concrete box-like structure sitting on the ocean-bed, 4 kms off the coastline, at a depth of 10 metres. Three-fourths of the unit will be submerged, with a single turbine, transformers and electrical equipment sitting on top.

Fabrication, construction and installation work is likely to take 12 months with grid connection expected in late 2013, where it is anticipated it will power 1000 households.

"We are close to proving technology that could be 200 per cent cheaper, eventually competing with fossil fuels in terms of the cost of generating power."

www.adelaidenow.com.au/business/port-macdonnell-wave-project-gets-federal-funding/story-e6frede3-1226417122390

Education

University doors now open to more of population

Record numbers of students from low socio-economic status (SES) backgrounds are flocking to Australian universities, many of them the first in their families to take up tertiary education.

Figures provided to the *Sydney Morning Herald* show the number of university places offered to students from low SES backgrounds have leapt by 18.9 per cent since 2009, with 40,203 students from low SES backgrounds offered places this year.

The government, which defines low SES backgrounds by students' postcodes, is claiming victory in its goal to attract more low SES students to universities.

In 2009, then-education minister Julia Gillard said the government would aim to have low SES students represent 20 per cent of enrolments by 2020.

The number of students from low socio-economic status backgrounds offered university places is now just shy of the 20 per cent target, with 40,203 students from low SES backgrounds enrolled in universities, of the total 202,346.

The Tertiary Education Minister, Chris Evans, said uncapping university places had benefited disadvantaged students.

"With the cap now removed, young people from rural and regional Australia, from migrant backgrounds, indigenous people and those from low socio-economic suburbs, are now taking up the opportunity to get a university qualification."

www.smh.com.au/national/education/university-doors-now-open-to-more-of-population-20120423-1xhgl.html

New student accommodation on old brewery site

More than 800 new beds will go some way to alleviating Sydney's student housing shortage, with the unveiling of more government-subsidised accommodation as part of a massive redevelopment of the Broadway precinct.

The construction of a new residential complex at Central Park, on the old Carlton United Brewery site, will include 828 beds for students.

The increase on an earlier estimate of 250 beds was in part due to the government's National Rental Affordability Scheme (NRAS), which would subsidise the cost, deputy vice-chancellor of resources, Patrick Woods, said. "There was always a plan for housing, but it was helped along with the NRAS money," he said.

Many universities are building or buying residences, or entering commercial agreements with private operators, as they struggle to meet the demands of surging student populations.

Last year, UTS opened Yura Mudang, its first on-campus residence of 720 beds, while the University of NSW announced a redevelopment plan for its residential colleges, including the construction of a new on-campus college. This year, the University of Newcastle announced plans to provide a further 780 beds, while the University of Wollongong bought a hotel to convert into 144 beds, to add to the construction of self-catered units for 360 students.

www.smh.com.au/national/education/cheers-to-new-student-accommodation-on-old-brewery-site-20120611-2060t.html

Growing philanthropy pool boosts universities' coffers

Corporate donors or wealthy individuals are stepping in to boost funding for the tertiary sector. One university has attracted almost \$80 million in the past financial year.

The biggest source of revenue for most universities is government grants - about half their operating income - but donations, endowments and benefactions are important contributors to the revenue stream.

The latest annual reports show that Sydney University reaped the most from donors, netting nearly \$80 million in 2011. The University of NSW was given more than \$21 million, the University of Technology \$18 million and Macquarie University \$2.9 million.

The reclusive Chinese Australian businessman Chau Chak Wing made a rare appearance at UTS last week to inspect the site of the building that will bear his name and to hand over \$5 million for Australia-China scholarships at the business school. The school will be housed in the new Frank Gehry building, named for Dr Chau.

Dr Chau's \$25 million donation has been delivered over several years through the design and construction process. "It is very important to support the education sector," Dr Chau said. "In every country it is crucial for development to have national, corporate and enterprise to have great talent. Without talent you can't talk about development."

www.smh.com.au/national/tertiary-education/growing-philanthropy-pool-boosts-universities-coffers-20120611-2060y.html

Foundation for Australian Studies in China

Australian Studies in China will receive a significant boost courtesy of the newly established Foundation for Australian Studies in China (FASIC).

The Foundation is an independent non-profit foundation established to support Australian Studies Centres located in leading universities across China and to provide funding and other assistance to the BHP Billiton Chair of Australian Studies at Peking University in Beijing.

The BHP Billiton Chair of Australian Studies was formally announced by Prime Minister Gillard on 27 April 2011 in Beijing.

The Foundation will play a significant role in the promotion of Australian Studies in China and will further grow and strengthen research and teaching alliances and exchanges between Australian and Chinese universities.

The Australia-China Council is a key partner and supporter of the newly established Foundation.

The Chair of the Australia-China Council, the Hon Warwick Smith AM said, "We are pleased to launch these initiatives in 2012 — the year when Australia and China celebrate the 40th Anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations."

Visit the Foundation website for further information: www.fasic.org.au

<http://www.dfat.gov.au/media/releases/department/2012/dfat-release-20120516.html>

Inaugural Austrade China Careers Fair generates national media attention

The inaugural Austrade China Careers Fair in Shanghai in April generated broad national media attention and enthusiastic responses from around 1200 participants. The pilot event pioneered a shift in education promotion from 'before' to 'after' to enhance and differentiate the brand positioning of Australia as a study destination in the China market.

Global Education News (eNewsletter of Australian Trade Commission), 27 June 2012

Resources

"The State of the World's Refugees: In Search of Solidarity"

Paperback and hardback book published by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, 31 May 2012.

For a synthesis of this publication, see: www.unhcr.org/4fc5ceca9.html

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