

Goulburn Post

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Good morning, and welcome to the Southern Inlands Brekkie Blog. Each morning we'll keep you up to date with what's happening around the region, including the latest local news as it breaks and the best of what's happening around Australia and around the world.

Keep refreshing the page to see updates.

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9.00am YASS: Local farmer Richard Buckmaster said it's a [miracle no stock was lost during the Sawyers Gully Road fire](#). The blaze, sparked by a lightening strike, destroyed 1216 hectares of land near Cavan and started at around 2pm on Tuesday. It was declared fully contained around 24 hours later and downgraded to 'patrol' yesterday morning. Land near Mountain Creek Road and Glenrock Road copped the brunt of the damage, and both were closed not long after the fire started.

8.45am YOUNG: Criminals in parts of the state's south - including Young - will no longer be able to eavesdrop on police radio transmissions under arrangements aimed at improving officer safety. The [encryption of the police digital radio across Wagga Wagga, The Hume and Cootamundra local area](#) commands represents a major boost for police in the field, according to Southern Region Commander, Assistant Commissioner Gary Worboys.

8.30am QUEANBEYAN: Councillors have now deferred two Ellerton Drive Extension (EDE) funding items in two months after pushing back a request from Council planners at their Wednesday night meeting for Council to enter into a bank loan worth \$25 **million** or more to fund the EDE on behalf of developers CIC Australia and Mirvac. The report from Council's city infrastructure manager Phil Hansen before Councillors listed the current cost estimate for the link road at \$75 **million**, with \$50 **million** of that already secured in federal and state government funding. [Read more](#).

8.15am GOULBURN: A random drug-testing operation conducted in the Goulburn area has resulted in [more than 1,500 truck drivers being tested with 16 returning positive results](#). Officers from the Traffic & Highway Patrol Command's Random Drug Testing Unit conducted an operation at the Marulan Heavy Vehicle Checking Station on the Hume Highway earlier in the week.

8.00am YASS: Wednesday night's council meeting attracted many concerned members of the public, with [questions being raised regarding asbestos contamination at Hume Park and Allen Park](#). Director of Planning & Environmental Services Chris Berry's report to council outlined the timeline of council's action since 2008. He stated that although there seems to be a lack of action from council since 2009, it was important not to dwell on the past and look at how we are to fix the issue in the future.

7.45am QUEANBEYAN: The principal of the new Anglican School at Googong, Ian Hewitt, has labelled a [recent break-in where \\$70,000 of tools and school fittings were stolen](#) as an "opportunistic" attack. Approximately \$70,000 worth of tools and school fittings were stolen from four shipping containers at the school **site** over the weekend according to Queanbeyan Police. The perpetrators gained access by cutting the paddocks on the containers, before stealing 27 ceiling fans and electrical and construction tools. The robbery was estimated to have occurred sometime between 2pm on Sunday, December 14 and 7am on Monday.

7.30am YOUNG: Councillors and police have called for a whole community approach to [tackle the prevalence and use of the drug ice in Young](#). Councillor Brian Ingram - who has taken the front foot on

the issue - addressed Wednesday's monthly meeting, reiterating his concerns which reflect that of many people in the community.

7.15am COOTAMUNDRA: Cootamundra is not immune to crime related to the drug "ice" - an issue that has ravaged communities across the state, according to Cootamundra Local Area Command Sergeant Matt Packham. "Unfortunately ice has pretty much infiltrated the whole community," Sergeant Packham said. Nine firearms were stolen from a Back Brawlin Road **property** last Friday, and police have located five of the guns and arrested three suspected culprits from Cootamundra. [Read more](#).

7.00am GOULBURN: [The Lilac Festival will go on "in some form" next year](#), organisers are vowing. Their pledge follows Council's decision on Tuesday night to call for expressions of interest in a spring festival on the October long weekend, the traditional Lilac fixture. It would be held in Belmore **Park** and adjacent streets. It means it's open slather for a new event to hop onto the annual calendar.

Need a [national news](#) snapshot first thing - well, we have you covered.

" Check out the front pages from Fairfax Media publications across Australia, [here](#).

" ALBURY-WODONGA: Victoria and NSW police will ride the XPT between Melbourne and Sydney in a new operation to discourage illegal behaviour on the trip. The joint operation will see VIC police **board** the train in Melbourne and NSW police **board** from Sydney. [Read more](#).

" BENDIGO: [Police have charged a 34-year-old Ascot man with drug trafficking, possession of firearms and possessing proceeds of crime](#). The charges come after raids at a business and a home in Arrawalli Avenue in Ascot where police found a loaded gun, drugs, ammunition and large amounts of cash. Police are seeking to submit a remand application to keep the man in custody rather than release him until his appearance in court. VIDEO.

" CANBERRA: It's shaping up as a winning Christmas for **Hong Kong billionaire** entrepreneur father and son Tony and Justin Fung, with approval of their bid for Canberra's ailing casino expected to be announced early next week. The ACT Gambling and Racing Commission will likely deliver the pair's second return in as many weeks after their Aquis Resorts **company** was granted environmental approval for its proposed \$8.15 **billion** resort and casino development in far north Queensland on Thursday. [Read more](#).

" GLOUCESTER: Potentially contaminated wastewater used to frack AGL's Gloucester **coal** seam gas project has been dumped unlawfully into the Hunter's sewer system by the private **company** hired to treat it. Transpacific, one of the nation's largest wastewater management firms, has been fined \$30,000 by Hunter Water for releasing treated "flow-back" fluid from the gas project into the region's sewer network. [Read more](#).

" LAUNCESTON: Emergency patients at the Launceston General Hospital are [waiting as long as 20 hours for a bed](#), but new research has found a surprising 27 per cent of patients occupying beds do not need to be there. The research, commissioned by the University of Tasmania as part of a Commonwealth-funded clinical redesign program, has also revealed that LGH patients are potentially waiting hours for beds that were empty when they arrived at the hospital.

" MANDURAH: [Police seized about 70 cannabis plants and hydroponics equipment](#) during a drug warrant search in Madora Bay on Thursday. About 7.30am officers attended the home after they received anonymous information that cannabis was being grown on the **property**. Drug paraphernalia and dried cannabis was also found.

" MORUYA: A Moruya family is reeling after [two of their own were taken as hostages and subsequently injured in Monday's Lindt Caf- siege](#). Robin Hope (nee Quinn), 74, and her daughter, Louisa Hope, 52, are both former Moruya residents and now live in Sydney. It is understood Louisa, who has MS and uses a walking stick, was used as human shield by the gunman, and was dragged around each time he moved his position.

" WARRNAMBOOL: WHILE most two-year-olds will be enjoying the thrill of opening Christmas presents in their family home, [Remy Roberts will be in a hospital isolation ward awaiting a life-saving operation](#). She has severe aplastic anaemia " a rare condition that causes bone marrow failure " and is being kept alive by blood transfusions. Her future depends on being able to receive a compatible bone marrow transplant.

" WHYALLA: [QantasLink has officially announced it will start flying to Whyalla next year](#). QantasLink will offer a double daily service on its 50-seat Q300 aircraft from April 13, 2015, providing 1300 seats per week or more than 65,000 seats a year between Whyalla and Adelaide. QantasLink chief

executive officer John Gissing said the new route would expand business and tourism opportunities for the Whyalla community.

" Woolworths buyers have told suppliers their products could be pulled from shelves just days before Christmas if they refuse to fund the supermarket giant's new Cheap Cheap advertising campaign. [Read more.](#)

" A GP of 20 years, Charlotte Hespe fears for the future of her profession. "Under these incentives, what junior doctor would want to come and work in primary care?" she asked. "You'd be better off going and working as a barista than as an expert GP." [Read more.](#)

" The NSW government is [planning to sell the first of the state's electricity distributors as soon as it can](#) if it receives electoral support at the March state election, and has already begun work to prepare for the **sale** before the vote. The first asset to be **sold** will be the high-voltage network **company** Transgrid, which will be fully privatised.

" The bodies of the Martin Place siege victims will be laid to rest before Christmas. Cafe manager Tori Johnson, 34, and barrister Katrina Dawson, 38, were killed at the end of a 16-hour siege staged by gunman Man Haron Monis, who also died. The NSW Coroner announced that the victims' bodies had undergone autopsies and would be released to their families at 7pm on Thursday. [Read more.](#)

" [The ABC has lost three Canberra reporters less than a week before Christmas.](#) 7.30 ACT presenter Chris Kimball and long-time producer Patricia Barraclough are leaving the public broadcaster after the state editions of the current affairs program were axed amid budget cuts. Parliament house reporter Lyndal Curtis has also announced her resignation.

" It's easy to become jaded about modern-day sportspeople, especially some cricketers. [Thank heavens for Brad Haddin.](#) Details have emerged of how Steve Smith became the 45th Test captain of Australia, and while Haddin would be embarrassed about what's about to follow, it needs to be said. When he learned that the selectors and Cricket Australia **board** would require a long-term solution, because Michael Clarke's hamstring and back problems meant he would be sidelined indefinitely, Haddin felt Smith would be a wiser choice.

" Like most Australians, former Australian Idol contestant Wes Carr found himself dealing with a powerful mix of thoughts and feelings as a result of the Martin Place siege in Sydney. In Wes' case, he put those thoughts and feelings into words, and uploaded the song to Youtube. Called "I Pray", here it is.

" What is extraordinary about this [brutal CIA report into assassination operations](#) is how the spy agency failed to anticipate the devastating cost to US prestige from extrajudicial killing. The report sets out to judge the effectiveness of what is euphemistically called "high value targeting" - **operations** radically expanded as deadly drone attacks under Barack Obama.

" As [funerals began for the 148 victims of the Pakistani Taliban attack on a school in Peshawar](#), Pakistani Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif vowed to crush the insurgents and lifted a moratorium on the death penalty. With Pakistan reeling from the attack that left 132 students dead, Mr Sharif said all political parties had agreed to draft within a week a national action plan to combat the Taliban, which would be acted on immediately.

" President Barack Obama has opened the door to [restoring full diplomatic relations with Cuba](#) after 50 years of sanctions and embargo, announcing that the US would seek to open an embassy in the coming months and to relax economic and travel restrictions. The announcement was made after an exchange of jailed spies was negotiated struck and, separately, an American imprisoned in Cuba named Alan Gross, was released.

Terry Richardson from Henty has fulfilled one of his lifetime goals by having his novel, Justice for Constable Cook, published after years of writing and years of contacting literary agents.

Mr Richardson attempted to go the traditional route to get his book onto shelves but literary agents in Australia weren't interested.

He then sent it to America and got the offer to have his book published by "Rosedog" who print it on a demand basis.

"I am very proud and very happy," Mr Richardson said.

"I would love to bring it to Australia (to be published) if I got the chance." [Read more.](#)

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