

Australia news live: Labor's preliminary refusal of Pep11 gas project 'an amazing step forward', Scamps says;
total fire ban announced for parts of NSW



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Body

block-time published-time 8.14am BST

Albanese says the government 'will have another crack at it' after housing bill delayed in Senate

Credit to the prime minister, Anthony Albanese. He's on Nova Drive at the moment, and doing the usual FM radio banter about a concert at Parliament House where Pauline Hanson was also in attendance, and managed a pivot from the banter to saying Hanson and the Greens and the Coalition had blocked the government's housing bill in the Senate today.

Asked what happens from here, Albanese says the government will "have another crack at it", noting three days of sitting of the Senate and nothing has passed. He says Australians deserved better and there should be a debate and vote on the legislation.

block-time updated-timeUpdated at 8.18am BST

block-time published-time 7.41am BST

[Australia](#) continues efforts to 'address concerns' with draft UN resolution regarding Israeli presence in Palestinian territories

The Australian government has not yet locked in its position on a Palestinian-drafted UN general assembly resolution, but is still pressing to pare back aspects of the draft wording.

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The resolution is in response to the international court of justice's ruling in July that Israel's continued presence in the territories it has occupied since the 1967 war was "unlawful" and must end "as rapidly as possible".

The advisory opinion – which Israel rejects – also said all other countries were "under an obligation not to recognise as legal the situation arising from the unlawful presence".

Guardian **Australia** understands that **Australia** has been working with several other like-minded countries to "address concerns with the draft resolution", which is due to go to a vote this week.

The Australian government's position is that it respects the ICJ and wants a resolution that reflects the court's opinion. But sources said the Palestinian mission did not yet appear willing to consider further amendments.

A spokesperson for the foreign affairs minister, Penny Wong, said this afternoon:

We want as many countries as possible to agree a practical path to a two-state solution and self-determination for the Palestinian people. We want this resolution to give Israel and the international community a practical way to respond to ICJ's advisory opinion.

We've engaged constructively in the hope of achieving that.

block-time updated-timeUpdated at 7.44am BST

block-time published-time 7.24am BST

Jane Hume says 'more needs to be done' as Meta announces new restrictions on teen accounts

Hume says she is "a little bit cynical" that Meta is moving on new restrictions for teens on Instagram, considering they've had plenty of time to do before governments are acting on it now.

She says more needs to be done and today's announcement is not enough.

Separately, the communications minister, Michelle Rowland, has responded welcoming the announcement from Meta, but saying that the government will still forge ahead with raising the age limit. You can read more below:

Related: [Albanese government forging ahead with social media age restrictions despite Meta's new Instagram teen accounts](#)

block-time updated-timeUpdated at 7.43am BST

block-time published-time 7.18am BST

Hume comments on help-to-buy bill delay after Greens vote

The shadow finance minister, Jane Hume, says the Coalition voted to delay the vote on the government's housing bills with the Greens because the Greens "were the ones that moved a motion to not have the bill go to a vote if that's what they want, if they've got more time to consider that's what the Senate is for".

Hume told the ABC she is questioning the urgency given the bill could have been brought back in February.

On whether it could result in a double dissolution election, Hume says the Coalition has been saying there should be an election for months.

block-time updated-timeUpdated at 7.22am BST

block-time published-time 7.09am BST

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Josh Taylor is going to guide you through the evening as we all go and take stock of three days of intense focus on the Senate. We might all need to go touch some grass and just stare at a wall.

We will be back for the ongoing housing wars (although that is now just a verbal-too-and-fro after the Greens won the Senate vote to delay the help-to-buy vote for another two months), Gerard Rennick's tax policy announcement (can't wait) and more on the secret ADF review which was published, pulled down, and then tabled as the government has to make an explanation on how that all happened.

Until tomorrow – take care of you.

block-time updated-timeUpdated at 7.16am BST

block-time published-time 7.00am BST

Estimated 16,400 people trapped in modern slavery in NSW, report says

AAP reports that temporary workers are still at risk of modern day slavery, according to a new report:

Migrant women escaping exploitative work conditions are delivering babies prematurely then being slugged with hefty medical bills, while their male counterparts are sleeping in tents in parks in regional NSW. A landmark report from the independent NSW anti-slavery commissioner, James Cockayne, found there are an estimated 16,400 people trapped in modern slavery in NSW.

The commissioner called for an urgent inquiry on Wednesday after the report, Be Our Guests: addressing urgent modern slavery risks for temporary migrant workers in rural and regional NSW, was tabled in state parliament by the attorney general.

The study looked at modern slavery risks that temporary migrant workers face in agriculture, horticulture and meat processing in more than 15 rural and regional NSW towns, talking with 80 Pacific [Australia](#) Labour Mobility (Palm) scheme workers.

Modern slavery includes everything from debt bondage, deceptive recruiting and forced labour to extreme cases such as sexual servitude and human trafficking.

block-time updated-timeUpdated at 7.10am BST

block-time published-time 6.43am BST

Mark Dreyfus questioned on the second pillar of Aukus

Earlier today the attorney general, Mark Dreyfus, was asked about the second pillar of Aukus – where other countries, including Japan, are invited to play a role in the security arrangement.

Dreyfus kept to the lines:

This is a partnership with the United Kingdom and the United States. Of course, as has been reported, there are some other discussions going on, but clearly this is a very, very important arrangement. It's going to provide submarine technology to [Australia](#). It's going to give access to [Australia](#) for technology in the future. We're looking forward in coming years to Aukus developing.

block-time updated-timeUpdated at 6.44am BST

block-time published-time 6.22am BST

Angus Taylor on 'Coalition's approach to financial services'

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So what does "back on track" and "back to basics" for the financial tech industry look like?

Angus Taylor says:

We will cut red tape by progressing the financial services regulatory grid to drive a deregulation agenda; We will accelerate the implementation of the Levy review, and regulating digital assets – ensuring Australia remains a competitive leader in the global economy; We will get Consumer Data Right on track and on target, boosting competition and empowering Australian consumers with more choice and better services; We will drive investment through lower, simpler, fairer taxes – and have announced that we would make the instant asset write-off permanent for small businesses as a downpayment on that agenda; We will have Paul Fletcher as a dedicated minister for the digital economy, to drive this agenda forward.

block-time updated-timeUpdated at 6.29am BST

block-time published-time 6.21am BST

Shadow treasurer Angus Taylor has addressed the FinTech conference with a speech titled:

"Back on Track and Back to Basics – The Coalition's approach to Financial Services"

If back on track sounds familiar, it is because it was a favourite Coalition slogan when it came to the budget in the Morrison treasurer years and is emerging as the Coalition slogan for the coming election.

block-time updated-timeUpdated at 6.26am BST

block-time published-time 6.05am BST

Jenny McAllister comes back to her first answers to Sarah Henderson about whether or not communications minister Michelle Rowland has asked for a briefing about what happened in regards to this story:

Related: [ABC admits video of Australian soldiers firing from helicopter in Afghanistan was 'incorrectly edited'](#)

The answer is "yes".

block-time published-time 6.03am BST

People First founder Gerard Rennick asks about tax reform

The founder of People First, former LNP senator Gerard Rennick, asks Katy Gallagher about tax reform. This is ahead of him announcing his tax policy tomorrow.

(Rennick apparently surprised former prime minister Scott Morrison with his knowledge of the "holey dollar" at a dinner Morrison threw for new LNP MPs at the Lodge, so his tax policy should be interesting.)

Rennick asks about Pfizer profits:

Will the Albanese Labor government lift withholding taxes to stop profit shifting by foreign multinationals?

Gallagher:

I think we have been clear about the tax arrangements we've put in place to address multinational tax and some of the changes this parliament has proposed – in terms of tax reform agenda, we dealt with the revised income tax arrangements which gave every taxpayer in the country a tax cut. And in a fairer and better way.

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We have also got our super tax that is before this parliament that we would like to do for those high-balance super accounts and we have moved some legislation – in fact this year the Treasury laws amendment making multinationals pay their fair share, integrity and transparency act passed the parliament which limited interest deductions for multinationals, and improving corporate disclosures on subsidiaries and delivering on a key part of the October budget multinational tax integrity package.

That is what the government has announced, that's what we've done. We don't have the plans as outlined by Senator Rennick.

block-time updated-timeUpdated at 6.48am BST

block-time published-time 5.58am BST

Independent Sophie Scamps welcomes preliminary refusal of Pep11 gas project

Ed Husic has issued a preliminary refusal of the Pep11 project.

Mackellar MP Sophie Scamps says it brings the community one step closer to victory:

Industry minister Ed Husic has formed a 'preliminary view' that the Pep11 permit should not be renewed.

Asset Energy, the company behind the project, now has an opportunity to make submissions to address the minister's concerns and I respect the need for due process.

But a preliminary decision to reject this project is an amazing step forward in this decade-long fight and vindication of the stance of community independents in fighting for communities.

Myself and the independent MP for Warringah, Zali Steggall have fought long and hard to ensure that the federal government understands why the community wants to stop oil and gas development off our pristine beaches.

This project was roundly rejected by the millions of people who live along the coast between Sydney and Newcastle, including the people of Mackellar.

This project poses unreasonable risks to the environment, to marine life and to other activities such as tourism that depend on our pristine coastline and now the federal government has acted.

block-time updated-timeUpdated at 6.56am BST

block-time published-time 5.48am BST

Total fire ban for parts of NSW

A total fire ban has been announced for parts of NSW tomorrow. The Rural Fire Service says:

The Total Fire Ban, commencing at midnight tonight, covers the following council areas:

Greater Sydney Region (EXTREME), The Hills; Blacktown; Blue Mountains; Burwood; Camden; Campbelltown; Canada Bay; Fairfield; Hawkesbury; Hornsby; Hunters Hill; Kogarah; Ku-ring-gai; Lane Cove; Liverpool; Mosman; North Sydney; Parramatta; Penrith; Randwick; Ryde; Strathfield; Sutherland; Sydney; Waverley; Willoughby; Woollahra; Bayside; Canterbury-Bankstown; Central Coast; Cumberland; Georges River; Inner West; Northern Beaches

Illawarra/Shoalhaven (HIGH) - Shellharbour, Kiama, Wingecarribee, Wollondilly, Wollongong, Shoalhaven

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Jacqui Lambie:

After more than 30 minutes yesterday debating this in this place where I was told I could not have the report it was found publicly available. 20 minutes later it turns out it was deleted. The government says it was accidentally uploaded and I said that was rubbish. Who gave the order to remove the report from the royal commission website yesterday?

Penny Wong:

Can I say, the time we were debating this we might have had conversations about the matter being tabled soon. I wasn't aware and I don't think any of us were that the report had gone on to the commission website. I am not familiar with a sequence by which that decision occurred and I assume these were decisions the commission made but I will get further advice on that about how that process came about.

block-time updated-timeUpdated at 5.52am BST

block-time published-time 5.44am BST

Jacqui Lambie asks about review of Inspector General of the Australian Defence Force

Jacqui Lambie asks Penny Wong:

Over one year ago I called for an audit of the office of the Inspector General of the Australian Defence Force, which would have been the first in 20 years. The audit was blocked but there was a review. A report was delivered to the defence minister in March this year and the minister has sat on it since.

... The government told me that report would be released once consultations were complete. After six months, how many consultations have been completed?

Penny Wong:

The advice to me is that the government had indicated it would release the report into the review soon after the release of the royal commission and that is what the government has done.

My recollection is the defence minister's ministerial statement in relation to the latter last week. The advice to me is that the reason for this was to respond to both reports in a holistic way and a desire to co-ordinate our response about what the future of the ADF looks like as we respond both to the review and the royal commission. Obviously the government tabled the report, as I discussed with you earlier today.

Lambie says she was asking about consultations. Wong says she will take advice on the consultations.

block-time updated-timeUpdated at 6.10am BST

block-time published-time 5.34am BST

Pauline Hanson is asking about migration numbers and trying very hard it seems to create some outrage, but Murray Watt is not biting.

block-time updated-timeUpdated at 5.38am BST

block-time published-time 5.31am BST

Greens senator Steph Hodgins-May tried asking Murray Watt whether the government would commit to scrapping the activity test as recommended by the Productivity Commission report today three times.

She received answers about the Greens holding up the housing bills.

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block-time updated-timeUpdated at 5.34am BST

block-time published-time 5.26am BST

Victorian electrical union threatens more action if EBAs not signed

At the Melbourne rally the Victorian Electrical Trade Union secretary, Troy Gray, reportedly threatened a 3-day strike from next Wednesday if employers don't stop an "attack" on working conditions.

Gray told Guardian **Australia** that some employers are refusing to allow union representatives onsite and to sign new pattern pay deals, which he labelled a "sustained, orchestrated attack" on workers pay and conditions.

He said:

I'm sick of hearing about John Setka and 1%ers. If there are employers who are going to use these circumstances to attack wages and conditions by not signing new [enterprise bargaining agreements] there will be a third rally called, and the rally can decide [on unprotected action]. It is in the hands of industry... We don't want a third rally or a third stoppage but we're not going to allow 100 years of unionism to go down the drain. The message today was a line in the sand: we've had enough... We'd prefer not to have a stoppage but the ball is in employers' court .

Asked what employers would have to do in the next week to demonstrate good faith, Gray said that so far only six pay deals have been sealed out of 800 who would normally sign up, partly due to employers refusing to sign, and partly due to delays at the Fair Work Commission.

Gray claimed credit for the Master Builders Association and CFMEU administrators speaking to Fair Work to speed up the pay deals. He suggested unions would "want 200-300 EBAs processed in the next six weeks or so".

block-time updated-timeUpdated at 5.41am BST

block-time published-time 5.26am BST

Anne Ruston continues the line of questioning, without referencing that the comments she is referring to were reportedly from someone who founded the group but is not running it.

Will the minister for home affairs intervene to ensure no taxpayers' money will go to an organisation promoting extremist antisemitic views. And will the minister counsel Mr [Julian] Hill over his extreme lack of judgment?

Murray Watt:

As I said, the United Muslims of **Australia** has a strong track record of helping many young Muslims in Sydney. This is a time when all government and political parties should be encouraging social cohesion within our community as I understand that the concept may be foreign to the Liberal party.

And we should be [acknowledging] organisations like United Muslims of **Australia** regularly bring [communities] back together to directly tackle prejudice and hate.

block-time updated-timeUpdated at 5.29am BST

block-time published-time 5.21am BST

Anne Ruston then continues, referencing the Daily Telegraph report, and asks "Minister, how does giving taxpayer money to a hate group improve social cohesion?"

The report centred around reported comments from the United Muslims of **Australia** founder, and not who is currently heading or involved in the governance of the group.

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Murray Watt :

I understand that the question that Senator Ruston is raising relate to objections that appeared in some media outlets last week. As I have said, the United Muslims of **Australia** organisation is run by Iman Shadi Alsuleiman. A well respected and regarded Muslim leader in our community. He has worked with security agencies and governments including Coalition governments for many years. Helping many young Muslims in **Australia**, in fact he wouldn't have to look far to find evidence of Mr Morrison, the former Liberal prime minister, meeting with [Shadi Alsuleiman] when he was prime minister.

block-time updated-timeUpdated at 6.11am BST

block-time published-time 5.18am BST

Murray Watt answers:

I am of course not aware of what senator Ruston has asked about. But if I have any further information I will provide that to the chamber.

What I do know, and what I think all Australians know, is that the terrorist attacks that were carried out by Hamas on October 7, including the murder of young Israelis peacefully attending a music festival, were absolutely abhorrent. And our government has repeatedly and forcefully condemn them.

This parliament unequivocally condemned them in emotion in October last year. The government has also condemned anyone celebrating those attacks, including the man in question.

The United Muslims of **Australia** has a long and successful history in helping many young Muslims in Sydney, providing a space for them to connect with community and practise their faith. The organisation is run by the president of the Australian National Imams Council [Imam Shadi Alsuleiman]. He has worked with governments and security agencies, including Coalition governments for many years, bringing Australians together in their local communities, helping build connections and tackle prejudice and hate, and our government supports activities that do seek to bring young Australians together in their local communities to build connections and build social cohesion.

block-time updated-timeUpdated at 5.25am BST

block-time published-time 5.17am BST

Liberal senator Anne Ruston on cohesion grants and United Muslims of **Australia** founder

Anne Ruston then asks about something which appears to have been first reported five days ago and then continued by News Corp throughout the week, featuring increasingly outraged Coalition MPs.

Can you confirm that the assistant minister for citizenship and multicultural affairs, Mr Julian Hill, has invited United Muslims **Australia**, a community group with ties to a sheik who praised the terrorist attack on Israel on October 7, to apply for a social cohesion grant from the commonwealth government?

[The report in the Daily Telegraph from 12 September says:](#)

A group invited by Labor to apply for a slice of \$2.4 million worth of community cohesion grants was founded by a controversial sheik who has previously called for 'Allah to destroy the enemies of Islam' and 'to give victory to Mujahideen all over the world' as well as suggesting that AIDS was 'divine punishment'.

Sheik Shadi Alsuleiman is the founder of United Muslims **Australia**, a group which also has ties to a sheik who celebrated the October 7 attacks and has been linked to the extremist group Hizb ut-Tahrir.

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Addressing a crowd at a pro-Palestine rally organised by Hizb ut-Tahrir in Lakemba less than 24 hours after Hamas launched its bloody attack on Israel, Sheik Ibrahim Dadoun of United Muslims **Australia** praised the terror fighters to an enthusiastic crowd.

... Dadoun later said that he does not condone innocent killings, and said he was referring to the Palestinians "breaking the blockade".

block-time updated-timeUpdated at 5.28am BST

block-time published-time 5.12am BST

Sarah Henderson:

Will the minister condemn the ABC for this outrageous breach of journalistic ethics?

Jenny McAllister:

It is for the ABC to determine how the editing which has been reported occurred and I understand that a number of comments have been made in relation to that. I will say this, that this government supports the ABC and we support its editorial independence. We support the act and the operation of the ABC under the act.

block-time updated-timeUpdated at 5.15am BST

block-time published-time 5.10am BST

Sarah Henderson thinks she is on to something here:

Given the ABC has admitted the footage was doctored, has the minister asked the chairman of the ABC for an explanation and I would remind Senator McAllister about section eight of the ABC Act which imposes very important obligations on the board to disseminate news and information impartially and accurately.

[A reminder over what this is for:](#)

ABC's news director, Justin Stevens, has admitted a video clip of Australian troops firing from a helicopter in Afghanistan was "incorrectly edited" and has been removed two years after it was posted online.

"Just last week it was brought to our attention by Channel Seven that a video clip in an online story from two years ago had an error," Stevens told the Melbourne Press Club. "A preliminary inspection suggests a section of audio was incorrectly edited.

"We removed the video and are still looking into how this happened. Once we have the full facts we will determine the appropriate response."

Jenny McAllister:

The minister is, of course, aware of the legislation which governs the ABC and all the obligations that arise from that. I do not have an answer to the particular question asked but I will seek advice and I have additional information I will give it.

block-time updated-timeUpdated at 5.15am BST

block-time published-time 5.07am BST

Senate question time begins with questions on ABC video

There is a lot of geopolitical uncertainty at the moment, a cost of living crisis, wider economic uncertainty and the potential for an escalating conflict in the Middle East.

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So what does the Coalition use its first question in Senate question time, its one time to question government ministers publicly and show the public its priorities?

This story, of course:

Related: [*ABC admits video of Australian soldiers firing from helicopter in Afghanistan was 'incorrectly edited'*](#)

Former (many, many moons ago) ABC reporter Sarah Henderson asks Jenny McAllister :

The ABC has been forced to remove from its website an online news story that it now admits contains doctored audio involving our immune soldier who the ABC claimed was firing at unarmed civilians in Afghanistan. Inclusion of the doctored audio made it appear as if Australian Defence Force personnel had fired six shots instead of just one. The former Australian special forces soldier Heston Russell who was at the centre of these false claims has asked to meet with ABC chairman Kim Williams to discuss this matter. Does the minister believe the ABC chair should meet with Mr Russell and will she directed him to do so?

Let's keep in mind that the ABC has already said there is an investigation into what happened with the clip. Publicly. At a Melbourne press club event. In front of other journalists.

McAllister:

The government believes that the ABC is editorially independent and the government believes that the ABC should continue to be so.

block-time updated-timeUpdated at 5.16am BST

block-time published-time 4.52am BST

We are now just a hop, skip and jump away from the third Senate question time of the week.

There hasn't really been much of a theme to these question times (unless you count yelling as a theme) so prepare for anything.

block-time updated-timeUpdated at 4.57am BST

block-time published-time 4.49am BST

'Australians in Lebanon should leave immediately while commercial flights remain available'

The travel advice for Lebanon remains do not travel, with an extra level of warnings:

[*From the official travel advice:*](#) There were thousands of pager explosions in Lebanon on 17 September which have resulted in deaths and serious injuries. Hospitals are reportedly treating high numbers of casualties, and some may be overwhelmed. Australians in Lebanon should leave immediately while commercial flights remain available. The security situation could deteriorate rapidly throughout Lebanon with little or no notice. Some airlines have postponed or cancelled some flights. Further flight cancellations and disruptions could occur with little or no notice. You should take the first available flight and not wait for a preferred route. Beirut airport could close, and you may be unable to leave for an extended period. Airlines may cancel more flights or set high ticket prices for any remaining flights. There may also be other travel disruptions. The Australian government may not be able to assist you to leave in such circumstances. Since 19 October 2023, our advice has been Do Not Travel to Lebanon. Daily military action has increased in southern Lebanon, including rocket and missile fire, as well as airstrikes. The conflict could continue to escalate quickly or spread to other areas in Lebanon, including Beirut, with little notice. This could affect your ability to move to safety. Avoid areas where military activity is ongoing. See our advice on 'Armed conflict' in 'Safety'.

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The official advice says that if people choose not to leave "be prepared to shelter in place for an extended period".

Make sure you have enough supplies including food, water, medicine, radio, torches and batteries. Know where your identity documents are, including your passport. Terrorist attacks could occur anytime and anywhere, including in Beirut. If you're an Australian citizen or permanent resident in Lebanon, you can register with the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade's crisis registration portal. See the 'Safety' section for details on how to register. Keep your registration details up to date so we can contact you.

block-time updated-timeUpdated at 4.56am BST

block-time published-time 4.45am BST

Greens David Shoebridge calls on government to condemn 'incredible escalation of violence' in Lebanon

At the Greens press conference, senator David Shoebridge called on the Australian government to condemn the incident in Lebanon where pagers used by Hezbollah members exploded overnight, killing at least nine people and wounding almost 3,000.

Shoebridge :

No one yet has claimed responsibility for these appalling incidents, this incredible escalation of violence in Lebanon.

But our government should be making it very clear that this is indiscriminate application of violence, overwhelmingly against civilians, that it is unlawful under international law, and that our government should be condemning it and working with the Australian Lebanese diaspora and community to ensure whoever was responsible for this act of mass, indiscriminate violence is held to account.

Shoebridge also urged [Australia](#) to back a resolution at the United Nations, due tomorrow, calling on Israel to withdraw from Gaza and the West Bank.

block-time updated-timeUpdated at 4.51am BST

block-time published-time 4.44am BST

Adam Bandt says Greens getting 'nothing but good feedback' on their opposition to housing bills

Greens leader Adam Bandt says the government needs to restart negotiations on its stalled housing bills, defiantly saying his party is getting "nothing but good feedback" from its opposition to the proposals as they stand - and accusing Labor of "bad memes" in attacking the minor party.

As Amy covered off earlier, the Senate has deferred the government's housing legislation for two months. The Greens say they want to use that time to continue negotiating and amending the bill, to do more for renters and young people - Labor has countered by branding the Greens and Coalition as a "No-alition", accusing them of blocking progress.

Asked about how the Greens would combat that full-court press of criticism from the government, which is playing out in parliament as well as across social media, Bandt said his party would continue to "fight for renters and first home buyers and stressed mortgage holders".

The feedback I'm getting is that people can see that finally, they've got a voice in parliament... I'm getting nothing but good feedback from people who are saying, 'yes, keep pushing labor to take the housing and rental crisis seriously'.

People can see through those kind of the social media posts and the memes, because every time the prime minister puts on a high-vis vest and says that he's tackling the housing prices, people go back home and find that

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they've just got another massive rent increase from their landlord they can't afford, and that their mortgage payments have gone up.

But it is not washing with people, because people can see through when a prime minister offers nothing more than tinkering around the edges and Band-Aid solutions that are about ticking a box.

Bandt challenged Labor to "put out all the bad memes that it wants".

What people are telling me is, keep fighting for renters, keep fighting for first home buyers and keep fighting for stressed mortgage holders,' he said.

block-time updated-timeUpdated at 4.48am BST

block-time published-time 4.29am BST

Canberra summit on high-risk weather season to prepare for 'all circumstances and all emergencies'

There is a high risk weather season summit happening in Canberra over the next couple of days which brings together all levels of government, emergency response teams and coordinators, telcos and others involved in emergency responses to see what needs to be done.

The national emergency management agency coordinator-general, Brendan Moon, said there were four main objectives:

We're going to get a seasonal outlook provided by the Bureau of Meteorology so we have a common understanding of what we may face as a nation for this high-risk weather season. Bearing that in mind and reflecting on the lessons of last year's season, we'll also prepare for all circumstances and all emergencies. Secondly, we are going to stress-test our arrangements in terms of how we respond and also recover.

We have looked at a scenario that covers multiple hazards over multiple states so that we can have those detailed plans and understand the capabilities that we can mobilise to support communities, no matter where they are in **Australia** and no matter what type of event, it impacts them. And then finally, we are spending some time reflecting on the lessons of last year's events, and we are listening to those communities and to those sectors that were impacted particularly hard as a result of those needs, and we're now going to incorporate those lessons in our planning for this season.

block-time updated-timeUpdated at 4.36am BST

block-time published-time 4.26am BST

BoM climate manager: 'we're preparing for a lengthened high-risk weather season'

The minister for emergency management, Jenny McAllister, has said it is time for Australians to start preparing for summer – and the potential natural disasters it can bring.

The Bom's climate manager Karl Braganza said:

If we look at the number of record-breaking events over the last 20 years, they significantly dwarf our experience in the 1980s and 1990s so we're really preparing for a lengthened high-risk weather season, with more extreme events generally proven.

Now we're entering this year without some of the extreme conditions in the landscape that we've seen in some previous years, and we're fortunate for that.

But we've seen in Tasmania recently, with the floods, just how quickly those conditions can change. We've got some increased fire risks in parts of the south-east. We've got some increased fire risks in the northern parts of the

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continent. We've also got an outlook that shows [conditions] that ... could elevate flood risk in some of the eastern areas, particularly close to New South Wales and Queensland.

So just to reiterate, this is the time to prepare. We don't provide this information to alarm people but to really allow the emergency services, government and communities to think about, plan and be aware of what's coming. And we really encourage people to look at forecasts very regularly over the coming season and checking with what we're saying.

block-time updated-timeUpdated at 4.38am BST

block-time published-time 4.12am BST

Notion of payday super 'sound' but implementation 'falls short', ACCI says

The Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry says it is OK with the principle of super on paid parental leave but isn't happy with the implementation.

It doesn't come into effect until July next year but chief executive officer, Andrew McKellar, said "the notion of payday super is sound, but the delivery and implementation as announced by the federal government falls short of the mark".

The business community supports the move to payday super and sees benefits for both the employer and the employee in better aligning superannuation to wages.

However, we are concerned the government has not given enough consideration to the pressures small businesses are facing right now.

The chamber is not happy with the proposed removal of the ATO's small business superannuation clearing house:

While this facility is not operating as it should, it is a valuable tool for many small businesses who simply do not have the time or resources to process superannuation payments any other way.

block-time updated-timeUpdated at 4.16am BST

block-time published-time 3.52am BST

Thousands join Melbourne and Sydney protests in support of CFMEU

Thousands of workers and supporters of the CFMEU and unions are marching, as AAP reports:

More than 10,000 arrived at Trades Hall in Melbourne at 10.30am before marching down LaTrobe Street, closing the major thoroughfare and causing tram disruptions.

Marchers chanted "union strong" and sported merchandise with slogans including "God forgives but the CFMEU doesn't".

Electrical Trades Union representative Troy Gray accused politicians of trying to stop workers getting pay rises.

The same politicians that fist-pumped the air when they put the CFMEU into administration just gave themselves a pay rise.

Most of them wouldn't last a week [on a construction site]."

Victorian workplace relations minister Gabrielle Williams urged those protesting to do so constructively.

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While we respect your right to protest, we would urge you to do it lawfully and to do it peacefully while you have and we all enjoy a right to protest. We don't have a right to put others at risk and I would urge anyone participating today to make sure they're doing so lawfully and safely.

A few thousand demonstrators also descended on Belmore Park in Sydney from 11am.

block-time updated-timeUpdated at 4.37am BST

block-time published-time 3.42am BST

Retailers accused in court of selling 'unnecessary and worthless' extended warranties

Outside politics for a moment to take a look at the latest consumer law case:

AAP reports another retailer has been accused in court of selling "unnecessary and worthless" extended warranties:

Echo Law announced on Wednesday that it was launching the class-action federal court lawsuit on behalf of Harvey Norman, Domayne and Joyce Mayne customers who purchased the warranties from September 2018 to the present day.

In December, Maurice Blackburn Lawyers launched a similar lawsuit in the supreme court of Victoria on behalf of JB Hi-Fi customers who bought extended warranties on products between 1 January 2011 and 8 December 2023.

Both lawsuits allege that the retailers' "product care" extended warranties were of little or no value because customers already had the same rights for free under Australian Consumer Law, which generally entitles consumers to a repair, replacement or refund if they buy a defective product.

JB Hi-Fi [has said](#) it takes its compliance with legal obligations seriously, believes it has complied with the law and intends to vigorously defend the claim. Harvey Norman has been approached for comment.

block-time updated-timeUpdated at 3.55am BST

block-time published-time 3.36am BST

Former defence force chief providing advice on Israeli action after Zomi Frankcom death

Senator Malarndirri McCarthy revealed that the former Australian defence force chief Mark Binskin would continue to play a role in advising the government on the next steps of Israeli action. McCarthy told the Senate:

Senator Wong has asked Air Chief Marshal Binskin to provide additional advice to the government following the military advocate general process.

The government also wants to ensure that the tragic deaths of Zomi Frankcom and her World Central Kitchen colleagues are not in vain and not repeated.

McCarthy said **Australia** was "working with the United Nations and the international community to press Israel to reform" its arrangements to coordinate with humanitarian organisations. She told the Senate:

This was not a one-off incident. Civilians and humanitarian workers continue to be killed, and **Australia** is disturbed by reports emerging that 18 people, including six United Nations Relief and Works Agency staff, were killed in a recent Israeli airstrike on an Unrwa school in Nuseirat refugee camp. The government reiterates this cannot continue.

See more on that incident here:

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Related: [Six UN aid workers among 18 killed in Israeli strike on Gaza school](#)

block-time updated-timeUpdated at 3.52am BST

block-time published-time 3.35am BST

'We condemn the Israeli strikes that caused [the deaths of Zomi Frankcom and her colleagues]', Labor senator says

The Labor frontbench senator Malarndirri McCarthy responded to the Greens' Zomi Frankcom motion on behalf of the Australian government.

McCarthy said the motion "demonstrates nothing is exempt from point-scoring".

McCarthy told the Senate:

The deaths of Ms Frankcom and her colleagues were inexcusable. We condemn the Israeli strikes that caused them. It is clear that these deaths were a consequence of a failure of Israeli Defense Force controls, errors in decision making and misidentification, a failure to comply with senior command direction and a violation of Israeli Defense Force procedures and rules of engagement. This incident should not have occurred.

But McCarthy said the Greens failed to "recognise the real work this [Australian] government has done and continues to do to ensure accountability and to ensure humanitarian workers are protected".

She told the Senate the government would "continue to press for full accountability, including any appropriate criminal charges". She added:

As the minister for foreign affairs has said, we continue to advocate to Israel on behalf of the Frankcom family. The military advocate general of Israel is still to decide on further action.

Australia's expectation remains that there be transparency about the military advocate general's process and decision. The minister for foreign affairs, Senator Penny Wong, has raised this directly with her Israeli counterpart.

block-time updated-timeUpdated at 3.46am BST

block-time published-time 3.35am BST

More on Mehreen Faruqi's failed motion on the killing of Australian aid worker Zomi Frankcom

Let's return to the Senate debate where the deputy leader of the Greens, Mehreen Faruqi, tried but failed to obtain adequate support to suspend standing orders to debate the need for an independent investigation into [the killing of the Australian aid worker Zomi Frankcom and her World Central Kitchen colleagues by Israeli drone strikes](#) in Gaza on 1 April.

Faruqi told the Senate the motion was urgent "because Zomi Frankcom and her family deserve justice".

Faruqi accused the Australian government of offering "hollow words of sympathy, but no real accountability of the perpetrators". She told the Senate:

Well, let me remind you that the government has a duty to seek truth and justice for an Australian, your job is to hold Zomi Frankcom's killers to account, not dish up pathetic reports to protect your genocidal friends in Israel. The barbaric killing machine of Israel has slaughtered nearly 300 aid workers since it began its genocide in Gaza in October - among them, at least 212 UN workers ...

Just a few weeks ago, the World Food Programme had to pause its movement in Gaza because Israeli forces opened fire on one of its vehicles. This systematic targeting of humanitarian workers is [likely to make 2024 the](#)

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[deadliest year for aid workers](#). We should all be horrified at this. Yet the world is sitting on its hands. The Australian government is sitting on its hands.

South Africa has brought a proceeding before the international court of justice accusing Israel of committing genocide in Gaza. The court is yet to make a substantive ruling on the genocide claim but Israel denies the accusation and says it is targeting Hamas and not civilians.

The Israeli embassy in Canberra has previously said the Israeli government "takes with utmost seriousness the grave incident" involving World Central Kitchen, and that the Israeli military had "taken full responsibility for the grave mistakes that led to the tragic incident of the night of April 1".

Faruqi ended her Senate speech with the following appeal to the Australian government:

Call for an independent investigation into the murder of Zomi Frankcom. If there is nothing to hide, let's openly call for an international criminal court investigation into the killing of aid workers. Zomi and her family deserve justice, as does every single aid worker slaughtered by Israel. So for goodness sake, show an ounce of humanity, if you have any in you at all.

block-time updated-timeUpdated at 3.42am BST

block-time published-time 3.28am BST

'Early years education is a fundamental right and should be completely free,' Greens senator says

The Greens' Steph Hodgins-May has responded to the Productivity Commission final report into early childhood education, saying it is now time for the government to act:

The Albanese government has had the draft report in its hands since 28 June. Every day that Labor delays implementing these critical early childhood education reforms, kids miss out on early education and parents miss out on important paid work.

The Australian Greens welcome the report's calls for all children aged 0-5 years to have at least 30 hours of care per week, increased access for the most disadvantaged and remote communities, removal of the punitive childcare subsidy activity test, and greater inclusivity. These are essential steps towards universal early years education, which the government could implement today.

But let's be clear - early years education is a fundamental right and should be completely free, just like primary and secondary school.

block-time updated-timeUpdated at 3.30am BST

block-time published-time 3.15am BST

Regulator has issued 118 warnings to advertisers illegally promoting vapes

The medicines regulator has issued 118 warnings to advertisers illegally promoting vapes, the health minister also announced today.

Since the start of the year more than 8,000 requests have been made to digital platforms to remove unlawful advertisements and a further 58 websites have or will be blocked from public view for non-compliance.

Health experts have pushed for additional policy reforms saying that social media platforms self-regulation does not work:

Related: [New Australian laws banning vaping ads 'toothless' without social media enforcement, experts say](#)

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block-time updated-timeUpdated at 3.31am BST

block-time published-time 3.15am BST

More than 3,500 vapes seized in South [Australia](#) since new laws came into effect

Since [new vape laws came into effect making their sale outside pharmacies illegal](#), more than 3,500 vapes have been seized in South [Australia](#) as a result of more than 200 inspections, 450 tip-offs and a series of raids conducted.

These have been supported by the SA state government's investment in a \$16m taskforce within their Consumer and Business Services Department, designed to detect and disrupt the supply of unlawful vapes.

The seizure of vapes already within the country comes at the same time as action to stop them at the border, with more than 5.2m seized so far this year, including more than 2m since the new laws came into effect in July.

South [Australia](#)'s health minister, Chris Picton, said:

I am really concerned about the impact on young people, with new research showing the rate of 15 to 29-year-old South Australians vaping has nearly doubled in a year, from 8.4% in 2022 to 15.1% in 2023.

block-time updated-timeUpdated at 3.22am BST

block-time published-time 3.14am BST

In the Senate, Anne Ruston is moving the Coalition's amendments on the super on paid parental leave legislation, which would allow parents to withdraw about \$3,000 from their own superannuation or have an additional two weeks off work in lieu of paid super.

There are not enough votes to support the amendments in the Senate, so these will fail.

block-time updated-timeUpdated at 3.35am BST

block-time published-time 2.50am BST

Former LNP senator Gerard Rennick launches own political party

The People First party has been launched ahead of the next election, where Rennick is up for re-election. His split from the LNP came after he lost the third place Senate ticket preselection (and subsequent attempts to have the vote re-held).

He'll be holding a press conference later to discuss the People First's tax policy.

block-time updated-timeUpdated at 3.05am BST

block-time published-time 2.45am BST

Coalition insists powers to break up supermarkets are not 'anti-business'

The federal opposition is maintaining its push for last resort supermarket break-up powers is not anti-business, following criticism from a major lobby group, AAP reports :

Opposition finance spokesperson Jane Hume said the sector-specific divestiture powers would only be applied if anti-competitive behaviour was found.

"That's not an anti-business policy ... it's a policy putting everyone on an even playing field," Senator Hume told Sky News on Wednesday.

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She said big business obligations were not just to shareholders but also customers, employees and supply chain partners.

The Greens have also been calling for powers to break up supermarket businesses found to be misusing their market power.

The sector has come under intense scrutiny as consumers have struggled to pay for groceries and farmer prices were undermined while the big players reported profits.

The Business Council of **Australia** took shots at divestiture policies at a dinner on Tuesday, with president Geoff Culbert arguing it had become "popular to bash big business".

"Why would anyone want to invest in a country where a 4 or 5% profit margin gets you an accusation of price gouging and a call for divestment?" he asked at the group's annual dinner.

block-time updated-timeUpdated at 2.52am BST

block-time published-time 2.24am BST

The Senate is moving through the debate on superannuation on paid parental leave (from 1 July 2025).

It will pass with the Greens and cross-bench.

block-time updated-timeUpdated at 2.29am BST

block-time published-time 2.17am BST

Anne Aly speaks from Brisbane

The early childhood education minister is with Jason Clare for an educators' conference. Commenting on the release of the final Productivity Commission report into early childhood education, Aly says:

We have had many conversations, many conversations, over to last two years, two and a half years or so, with everybody here. We share that vision. That every child in **Australia**, no matter who they are, no matter where they live, no matter what their background, should have access to affordable, inclusive early childhood education and care. We're on that path. We have chartered that path and we're on that pathway. As Jason mentioned, this is long-term reform.

This is – as the Productivity Commission recommends as well, this is a 10-year reform.

block-time updated-timeUpdated at 2.26am BST

block-time published-time 2.15am BST

Greens senator's motion on Israel's killing of aid workers fails

Mehreen Faruqi's motion to suspend standing orders to debate a motion calling for an independent investigation into the killing of World Central Kitchen workers after an Israeli attack on their convoy as it travelled through Gaza, has been defeated 23 to 12.

block-time updated-timeUpdated at 2.24am BST

block-time published-time 2.04am BST

The Senate has moved on

The Greens have won a motion to delay the help-to-buy (the shared equity bill) vote for another two months.

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Mehreen Faruqi is now moving a motion to suspend standing orders to debate a motion calling for an independent investigation into the death of World Central Kitchen aid worker Zomi Frankcom and other aid workers.

Faruqi said that it has "been more than five months since Israeli forces killed Zomi Frankcom, an Australian citizen and aid worker, along with six other World Central Kitchen aid workers, and there has been no credible investigation into the killing" and "nearly 300 aid workers have been killed since Israel began its genocide in Gaza, including at least 220 United Nations workers, making it likely that 2024 will be the deadliest year for aid workers".

Faruqi's motion also says:

Humanitarian organisations have accused Israel of systematically targeting aid workers in Gaza, and last month another World Central Kitchen aid worker was killed while the World Food Programme had to briefly halt its movement after Israeli forces fired at one of its vehicles, and a request by World Central Kitchen to the Australian government, made three days after Zomi's murder for an independent investigation into the Israeli attack, noting that "the IDF cannot credibly investigate its own failure in Gaza"

In calling on the government to call for "an independent investigation into the Israeli attack on 1 April 2024 that killed Zomi Frankcom along with six other World Central Kitchen aid workers".

The government is not supporting the suspension of standing order motions.

block-time updated-timeUpdated at 2.09am BST

block-time published-time 1.46am BST

Defence minister's explanation on IGDAF review

As mentioned on the blog earlier, the government has now tabled the review into the office of the inspector general of the ADF. The defence minister, Richard Marles, gave an explanation of the situation in a covering letter also tabled in the Senate. In the letter, Marles said the review "was wide-ranging in respect of the IGADF's structure, operations and functions" and that was why the government had taken time to respond to previous Senate orders to produce documents.

Marles wrote:

In considering the Review, the Government has been consulting widely across stakeholders - including Defence, other agencies, and the families of Australian Defence Force personnel who have lost their lives while serving - and the Government required more time to respond to the Order while this work was completed.

The Royal Commission into Defence and Veterans Suicide (the Royal Commission) requested and was provided the Review on a confidential basis. The Review formed part of the Royal Commission's consideration and final recommendations. The Royal Commission's Final Report was delivered to Government on Monday 9 September 2024.

The Government sought to take into consideration the recommendations of the Royal Commission in developing its response to the Review to ensure a holistic and pragmatic approach to any proposed reform. Chapter 12 of the Royal Commission's report directly relates to IGADF and military justice reform.

As the Government works at speed to respond to the recommendations of the Royal Commission, we do so with the view to respond to all recommendations, including those which refer to the IGADF and the military justice system.

To respond to one report in isolation of the other is impractical and ineffective.

Accordingly, the Government is now in a position to release the Review publicly and I enclose a copy to this letter to comply with the Orders

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block-time updated-timeUpdated at 1.51am BST

block-time published-time 1.42am BST

Motion on explanation of report's release

The government is also supporting the motion to have the explanation on what happened – which is as graceful as you can be in defeat, because every non-government senator is in support – so it passes on the voices.

There will be an explanation on how a confidential report was published, discovered and then upon being told of its discovery, removed from the royal commission website, from the government.

The report is now officially public, having been tabled in the senate.

block-time updated-timeUpdated at 1.51am BST

block-time published-time 1.39am BST

Greens want amendments to Lambie's motion

Greens senator David Shoebridge is now asking to amend Jacqui Lambie's original motion calling on Richard Marles to explain what happened with the publication (in error) of the 20-year report which had previously kept confidential on the royal commission website, and then who asked for it to be removed after it's publication was discovered.

Shoebridge wants the motion amended to have the explanation deadline moved to tomorrow (the government tabled the report in the Senate just before Lambie moved her first motion).

Simon Birmingham says the Coalition supports the motion (which gives it the numbers)

Birmingham:

We support this motion now because the chaos and the mishandling and the on again, off again responses from the government and the accidental publication of the report, all deserve to be explained

block-time updated-timeUpdated at 1.52am BST

block-time published-time 1.33am BST

Labor senator Malarndirri McCarthy is giving an explanation

She says the 20-year review of the Inspector General of the ADF was published:

in error, which I believe is where Senator [David] Shoebridge has accessed this document and in contravention of the understanding regarding confidentiality, evidence, procedures and understood conventions.

I am advised, the office of the royal commission removed the document from its website after becoming aware of the error, but it is now public, as I've just tabled it, prior to Senator [Jacqui] Lambie getting to her feet.

Lambie moved to suspend standing orders to have Richard Marles explain what happened.

block-time updated-timeUpdated at 1.37am BST

block-time published-time 1.28am BST

Government tables the 20-year review of the Inspector General of the ADF

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The review had been published on the royal commission into veteran and defence suicide website and then removed, after Jacqui Lambie moved to suspend standing orders asking Richard Marles to explain what happened.

Lambie and Greens senator David Shoebridge had given out copies of the report at a press conference this morning.

block-time updated-timeUpdated at 1.36am BST

block-time published-time 1.22am BST

Anne Aly and Jason Clare respond to report into early childhood education:

The final report considers how to build an affordable, accessible, inclusive, high-quality, universal early learning system.

The report includes 56 recommendations across three volumes to achieve this.

It says every child should be able to access at least 30 hours or 3 days a week of high-quality early education and care by 2036.

The report also highlights that quality early education can improve outcomes for children, especially those from disadvantaged backgrounds, but it's those from disadvantaged backgrounds who are also the most likely to be missing out.

The report says one of the first things we need to do to build a bigger and a better early education system, is build a bigger ECEC workforce. That's why last month, the government announced a 15% wage increase for ECEC workers.

block-time updated-timeUpdated at 1.28am BST

block-time published-time 1.12am BST

The Productivity Commission is making a few things very clear:

To achieve the long-term goal of a universal ECEC system, the Australian Government should first act to ensure that cost is not a barrier to access for children from low-income families. The report recommends abolishing the activity test and increasing the rate of the Child Care Subsidy for families on incomes of up to \$80,000 to 100% of the hourly rate cap. The report finds that the activity test, which links the amount that a family works, studies or volunteers with the amount of Child Care Subsidy they receive, is a barrier to access for low-income families and does little to incentivise labour force participation and should be removed. The report also recommends that governments introduce new measures to support the ECEC workforce – giving those who are starting in the sector access to tailored training options and creating better mentoring, professional development and career pathways for those who already work in the sector.

These measures, coupled with the recently announced improvements to pay, should alleviate some of the recruitment and retention challenges the sector has been experiencing for a long time.

block-time updated-timeUpdated at 3.39am BST

block-time published-time 1.11am BST

Final Productivity Commission report into childcare released

It is not that different to the interim report which was released late last year, but it does provide more detail into what the government may address in a second term.

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Key among those issues is the scrapping of the activity test. Under the current system, the amount of subsidised care a child receives is linked to their parent's activity – paid and voluntary work.

The Productivity Commission makes the point that a child's access to early childhood education should not be determined by whether or not their parent works.

As advocates have long argued, there are a lot of reasons why a parent or carer may not work, including that they have other children or care responsibilities which make it impossible. Parents and carers of twins or other multiple births have also struggled under the rules, because finding care places for two or more children at once can be a challenge, meaning work decisions are being made around care options.

block-time updated-timeUpdated at 1.20am BST

block-time published-time 12.59am BST

Mehreen Faruqi makes statement on Lebanon pager attacks

The Greens senator has also responded to what happened in Lebanon, with a statement on social media.

"The horrific pagers attack that killed nine people, including a young child, and left thousands wounded across Lebanon is exactly the type of sickening warfare people in Naarm Melbourne were protesting against. The perpetrators must be held to account."

block-time updated-timeUpdated at 1.11am BST

block-time published-time 12.54am BST

James Paterson addresses media on Lebanon pager explosions

The shadow home affairs minister is a known security hawk, so he was asked about the Lebanon pager explosions, which have killed at least nine people, including a 10-year-old girl, and injured thousands.

Related: [Lebanon pager explosions: what we know so far](#)

Paterson:

Well, this is a highly sophisticated and very patient attack. It highlights a couple of interesting things. Firstly, that supply chain security is very important. Connected devices are highly risky. And probably every intelligence agency in the world is waking up this morning and asking themselves, how do we stop this happening to us?

And if we chose to, how do we make this happen to our enemies? If it is confirmed that Israel is behind this operation, it wouldn't surprise me and I think they'll be well within their rights, given what Hezbollah has done to them in return.

And this is just another example of why we have a very serious situation in the Middle East. Hezbollah is a terrorist organisation, is listed in its entirety in [Australia](#) and we should stand with our friends and allies in Israel in defending themselves against this attack.

Q: Israel still hasn't accept responsibility, but as you say, it is a likely prospect. A ten year old girl is dead though. Do you think it's an adequate action?

Paterson:

Look, it's not for me to pass moral judgment from 12,000km away about the choices that Israel has to make to defend itself while it's under attack simultaneously by three terrorist organisations who deliberately target civilians.

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But the truth is, in military operations it is impossible to conduct them without any civilian casualties at all. And the decision that all military commanders and governments have to make is, is it justified given the nature of the threat that they face?

The nature of the threat that Israel faces from Hezbollah is a very serious one.

We saw only a few months ago Israeli children killed on a soccer field because they were hit by strikes from Hezbollah and anything they can do to disrupt Hezbollah to make their business model more difficult, I understand why they're doing.

block-time updated-timeUpdated at 1.21am BST

block-time published-time 12.48am BST

James Paterson's team stepped up their game for the second transcript of the day – the subject line in this one reads: "Labor's secret visa changes risks community safety, AUKUS Pillar Two expands, Instagram's belated action to protect teenagers, Hezbollah pagers, Labor's ineffective housing bill, PM's empty DD threat, CFMEU is unreformable".

It is so difficult to know where Paterson stands on issues.

block-time published-time 12.36am BST

Defence minister Richard Marles is headed to Vanuatu

Marles will arrive in Vanuatu today and will meet:

The prime minister of Vanuatu, Charlot Salwai TabimasmaDeputy prime minister, Matai Seremaiah NawuluMinister of Internal Affairs, Andrew NapuatMinister of Finance and Economic Management, Johnny KoanapoMinister of Lands and Natural Resources, Marco Rick Mahe.

Marles will be opening the re-developed Cook Barracks in Port Vila with Salwai Tabimasma, which is part of **Australia**'s security partnership with Vanuatu and will "enhance the capability" of the nation's police force.

block-time updated-timeUpdated at 12.53am BST

block-time published-time 12.31am BST

Greens announce candidate for inner-Melbourne electorate

The Greens have announced "local teacher, unionist, renter and proud trans woman" Tara Burnett will contest the Melbourne electorate of Cooper, now held by Labor's Ged Kearney.

Kearney holds the seat with about an 8% margin. The Greens plan on targeting the electorate's tenants – rentals make up 38% of Cooper's households – to win the seat. Max Chandler-Mather and Elizabeth Watson-Brown both won their Brisbane electorates by overcoming higher margins.

Burnett said in a statement:

I'm thrilled to be leading my community to continue to build the green movement, and to make history as the first ever trans MP of any parliament in this country.

The climate and the marginalised communities we stand up for can't afford for us to sit on the sidelines.

Renters in Cooper are fed up, and know they can't keep voting the same way and expecting different results.

block-time updated-timeUpdated at 12.42am BST

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block-time published-time 11.57pm BST

Lambie says report on Inspector General of ADF was quietly released – then removed from website

The independent Tasmanian senator Jacqui Lambie has been running a campaign to have the 20-year review of the Inspector General of the Australian Defence Force report released. It came up at the royal commission into veteran and defence suicides, but Lambie said she had been hitting brick walls in her attempts to have it made public.

Lambie released this statement to say the report had been released – quietly. And was then removed again.

I have been running radio ads and asking defence minister Marles to release this report for six months!

I was on my feet again today in the chamber still battling to get this report out there.

Then, Senator David Shoebridge's office told me that the report was sitting on the royal commission's website and there it was – just sitting there!

Lambie said she had downloaded the report and printed it, but soon after her staff contacted the royal commission to ask when the report was uploaded to the website, the report was removed.

block-time updated-timeUpdated at 12.19am BST

block-time published-time 11.41pm BST

US talking to Canada, NZ and Korea about possible collaboration on Aukus 'pillar II'

The White House has released a joint leaders statement on the third anniversary of the signing of the Aukus agreement.

Right down the bottom is a little more information on 'pillar II' which is where other countries get involved:

In April 2024 our Defense Ministers announced principles for additional AUKUS Pillar II partner engagement on specific projects where new partners could contribute to, and benefit from, AUKUS.

Following initial consultations this year and leveraging Japan's deep technical expertise, AUKUS partners and Japan are exploring opportunities to improve interoperability of their maritime autonomous systems as an initial area of cooperation.

Recognising these countries' close bilateral defense partnerships with each member of AUKUS, we are consulting with Canada, New Zealand, and the Republic of Korea to identify possibilities for collaboration on advanced capabilities under AUKUS Pillar II.

block-time updated-timeUpdated at 11.55pm BST

block-time published-time 11.40pm BST

Bandt questions whether Labor's housing bills will push up rents and do nothing to lift supply

Told that is a "political point" and that if the situation were that bad then wouldn't the Greens do anything to increase supply, Adam Bandt says:

Let's look at the measures that the government is proposing.

In the middle of a housing crisis, a housing and rental crisis where people are being pushed to breaking point, the government's got two bills before the parliament, which is the sum total of their approach to housing between now and the election.

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One of them pushes up rents by giving more tax breaks to developers to build expensive apartments that'll be unaffordable.

Host: "There is no evidence it will increase rents."

Well, they're giving, they're giving tax, public money to developers to build apartments with no limit on how much they can ...

Host: "To increase supply, and the experts, Adam Bandt, are saying supply is a massive problem. Why shouldn't they be increasing supply?"

Not one expert fronted up to the government Senate inquiry to say that the government's bill would increase supply.

block-time updated-timeUpdated at 11.54pm BST

block-time published-time 11.27pm BST

Bandt on housing crisis: 'The government is just bringing a bucket of water to a house fire'

The Greens leader Adam Bandt spoke to ABC RN Breakfast earlier this morning, where he was asked why the Greens were not passing the government's housing legislation:

This housing and rental crisis is seeing people skip meals because they can't afford to pay the rents, which have soared 30% under Labor people.

We've got people who have jobs and mortgages coming along to the Greens free community dinners, because they're telling us that any night that they can skip paying a meal helps them with their mortgage payment.

Food bank queues are growing. It is massive, and meanwhile, the government is just bringing a bucket of water to a house fire bill.

Bill Kelty, a Labor luminary, said earlier this week that this Labor government is mired in mediocrity, and he's right, and nowhere do you see that more than the government's approach to the housing crisis.

block-time updated-timeUpdated at 12.10am BST

block-time published-time 11.22pm BST

James Patterson says business community 'finally speaking up' about 'costly' policies

But even James Paterson is forced to admit that for the past couple of years, during which Labor has passed industrial relations reforms, the business sector has stayed largely quiet.

He told Sky News:

It is welcome to see the business community now finally speaking up about the ridiculous and costly policies of the Albanese government, particularly on industrial relations, but also energy and tax and other issues, which is holding **Australia** back.

It is only as the polls show the Albanese government dropping in popularity and proximity to the next election that the business council is now making some noise.

By the by, the ASX 200, which is the biggest 200 Australian companies listed on the stock market, posted record highs yesterday, beating the previous record set in August.

block-time updated-timeUpdated at 11.44pm BST

Australia news live: Labor's preliminary refusal of Pep11 gas project 'an amazing step forward', Scamps says; total fire ban announced for parts of NSW

block-time published-time 11.19pm BST

What's in a subject line?

The Liberal senator James Paterson's staff are taking a leaf out of Sussan Ley's staff book and headlining their press releases with the tone they would like journalists to read the answers through.

Subjects: Albo's war on business, Labor puts community at risk by repealing Direction 63, AUKUS pillar two expands.

Labor's Patrick Gorman's staff have also started to do this, but so far, none have managed to challenge Ley's transcripts subject lines for sheer creative brilliance.

block-time updated-timeUpdated at 11.42pm BST

block-time published-time 11.07pm BST

NFF president: 'It's time to push back against those who seek to diminish Australian agriculture'

The National Farmers' Federation president David Jochinke has released a statement thanking members who attended last week's farmers rally outside the parliament.

There were a variety of causes promoted at the rally, and our reporter who covered it thought there were between 500- 700 people or so. Coalition MPs addressed the rally (David Littleproud spoke over a farmer who was questioning his record as water minister), but in the wash up, and the welcoming of a new free trade deal with the UAE, the NFF seems to want to turn the temperature down a little.

Related: [*Tuesday's rally for Australian farmers lists seven priorities – but the biggest two are nowhere to be seen / Gabrielle Chan*](#)

Jochinke says the rally "wasn't about politics; it was about policy".

We want forward-thinking solutions that will allow Australian agriculture to thrive, not ideological battles driven by out-of-touch activists and detractors who would like to see less food and fibre grown in **Australia**. These groups often push agendas that would undermine our ability to feed and clothe the nation, without understanding the realities of farming or the vital role we play in the economy and regional communities.

We're ready to work with all sides of politics to develop policies that support sustainable farming practices, enhance productivity, and ensure a bright future for rural communities. It's time to push back against those who seek to diminish Australian agriculture and instead focus on solutions that will keep farmers farming.

To those who attended or supported us from afar, thank you. Your presence and solidarity sent a powerful message that cannot be ignored. This rally marks the beginning of our campaign to ensure farmers' voices are heard and that we can continue to produce the food and fibre **Australia** relies on.

block-time updated-timeUpdated at 11.41pm BST

block-time published-time 10.54pm BST

Watt says gender pay gap at lowest level on record

As Paul Karp reported a little earlier, workplace relations minister Murray Watt will be addressing the National Press Club later today.

He'll be speaking about the positive changes the government says it has made to IR laws, which includes increasing early childhood educators' pay.

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Watt will say that it's been part of a drive to lower the gender pay gap:

These pay rises are just a couple of ways that our government has deliberately prioritised economic equality for women, in addition to reviving multi-employer bargaining and lifting the minimum wage.

We also did it by making gender equality an objective of the Fair Work Act. We banned pay secrecy clauses, which disproportionately hurt women, and introduced paid family and domestic violence leave – so no one has to choose between their safety and pay.

And we strengthened the right to flexible work. And the result? The gender pay gap in Australia is now at its lowest level on record at 11.5%. Down from 14.1% when the Coalition left office.

That is making a material difference in the lives of women across the country.

If the gender pay gap stayed at the Coalition average of 15.4%, women would overall be \$78.70 per week worse off than they are now.

That's an extra \$4,092 in the pockets of women every year under this government.

For this I pay particular tribute to the minister for women Katy Gallagher who has driven a lot of reform from within our government.

Sometimes, having one Gallagher in your band is more than enough.

(That final line is a reference to the band Oasis, in case you weren't making the connection. Gen X ministers are gonna Gen X.)

block-time updated-timeUpdated at 11.22pm BST

block-time published-time 10.48pm BST

A look at Hanson-Young's choice of words

You may have noticed Sarah Hanson-Young referred to being "bullish" – that is not an accident.

Hanson-Young has begun referring to Anthony Albanese as a "bulldozer" or attempting to "bulldoze" the Senate in a deliberate reference to Scott Morrison's self-evaluation. As we get closer to the election, you are going to see more and more attempts from all sides of politics to redefine MPs in the eyes of the electorate.

Related: [*'Bulldoze your way through': Anthony Albanese compared to Scott Morrison in climate trigger stoush*](#)

block-time updated-timeUpdated at 11.09pm BST

block-time published-time 10.43pm BST

Hanson-Young on PM's double-dissolution threat: 'Why be so bullish?'

On the double-dissolution threat floated by Anthony Albanese yesterday, Sarah Hanson-Young says:

Again, why, why be so bullish about this? The Australian people don't need a panicked prime minister who wants to press the exit button because he can't get his own way.

They want a government that's willing to work across the parliament. Now, a third of Australians voted for parties other than Labor or Liberal at the last election. And they did that because they want a parliament that works for them.

That requires negotiation, that requires compromise.

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And it requires more than just bulldozing your way through.

block-time updated-timeUpdated at 11.24pm BST

block-time published-time 10.42pm BST

Hanson-Young says PM 'just wants to do it all his way'

And on why the Greens didn't let the government bring the Help to Buy legislation to a vote yesterday, Sarah Hanson-Young says:

We want to fix it. We want to give the government the opportunity to fix it. I'm not just interested in saying no to things. I want to get outcomes. I guess that's my concern.

This prime minister seems to have such a chip on his shoulder, doesn't want to work with anyone. Just wants to do it all his way. I don't think this is a very good sign for the future. Come on, come on, prime minister, you know, let's put – put aside the politics and get on with getting some outcomes.

block-time updated-timeUpdated at 11.39pm BST

block-time published-time 10.41pm BST

Labor's housing bill 'doesn't deal with the real crises', Hanson-Young says

The Greens senator Sarah Hanson-Young has spoken to ABC News Breakfast about why the Greens won't just pass the government's housing bills:

Because we want to work with the government to actually make this a policy that works for people. The millions of renters out there who are struggling to pay their rent, and let alone get in the housing market. Many people, particularly younger people, who are just looking at the housing market and thinking there's no way they will possibly be able to afford to save up for a deposit or pay those soaring mortgages.

This bill doesn't deal with the real crises. We want to work with the government to do that. We have given the government an extra two months to negotiate with us on this piece of legislation.

And frankly, again, the prime minister needs to ... put his pride aside for a moment and work with the parliament in a constructive way.

block-time updated-timeUpdated at 11.39pm BST

block-time published-time 10.33pm BST

Early childhood education report expected to be step towards universal system

Education minister Jason Clare and early childhood education minister **Anne Aly** are in Brisbane today, to talk about the final Productivity Commission report into early childhood education.

The report is expected to be another step towards the government's stated goal of creating a universal system, with heavily subsidised or free care for families.

block-time updated-timeUpdated at 10.42pm BST

block-time published-time 10.28pm BST

Yesterday, the prime minister decided to throw in the possibility of a double dissolution election.

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Related: [*Greens urge Labor 'stop bulldozing and start negotiating' on housing as PM refuses to rule out double dissolution*](#)

Don't expect the issue to go away today.

block-time published-time 10.08pm BST

Good morning

Hello and welcome to day three of the Senate only week: Return of the Senate.

Thank you to Martin for catching us all up on some of the news this morning.

You have Amy Remeikis with you for most of the day as we move to politics. Ready? Coffee number two looks lonely, so let's get into it.

block-time updated-timeUpdated at 10.16pm BST

block-time published-time 10.01pm BST

The turmoil in federal politics has brought talk about a double dissolution of parliament to break the deadlock.

Our political editor Karen Middleton looks at what that could mean in her analysis piece here:

Related: [*A double dissolution could create a Hunger Games contest – and Albanese knows it*](#)

And this is all you need to know about double dissolutions:

Related: [*What is a double dissolution and how does it work?*](#)

block-time published-time 9.55pm BST

Murray Watt says IR policies have helped economy: 'I haven't seen anyone dressed in chain mail'

The workplace relations minister, Murray Watt, will address the National Press Club on Wednesday, arguing that Labor's industrial relations policies have lifted wages, particularly in the childcare sector which got a 15% pay rise.

"Just imagine how much worse things would be for families if Peter Dutton had had his way and these pay rises had never happened," Watt says, in an advance copy of the speech, seen by Guardian **Australia**.

He says:

Now, there are some who continue to run scare campaigns about the impact of our changes on employers or the Australian economy. These are the same people – hello Michaelia Cash – who claimed our changes would "close down **Australia**" or take us back to "the Dark Ages". Well, **Australia** looks pretty open to me. And I haven't seen anyone dressed in chain mail, wheeling catapults down Northbourne Avenue any time lately.

I hate to disappoint the fearmongers, but there is no evidence the economy has collapsed due to our workplaces. To the contrary, the facts show that many employers are benefiting from our emphasis on cooperation and rewarding employees.

Again, employment is up, not down. More businesses are reaching agreements with their workers and unions. Further, under the Albanese government, more businesses are being created. The ABS estimates that there was a net increase of 122,500 trading businesses between the September quarter 2022 and the June quarter 2024. Not exactly "closing down **Australia**."

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And most surprising to some, industrial action has actually fallen under Labor. On average, from 2.4 working days per 1,000 workers over the Coalition's decade in office to around 1.8 working days per 1,000 employees under Labor. So much for the warnings of nationwide strikes.

block-time updated-timeUpdated at 10.23pm BST

block-time published-time 9.42pm BST

Construction workers set to march again in support of CFMEU

Construction workers and their supporters are set to stage mass rallies across the nation for a second time as the CFMEU'S administrator promises to crack down on bikie infiltration, AAP reports.

Thousands of workers and their comrades from unions, including electrical trades, maritime and manufacturing, are expected to down tools today and march through major cities to express their displeasure over the federal takeover of the Construction, Forestry and Maritime Employees Union.

The union is facing allegations that the construction and general division was involved in criminal and corrupt conduct, as uncovered by Nine newspapers earlier in 2024.

Demonstrations are due to begin from 11am at Trades Hall in Melbourne and Belmore Park in Sydney.

More than 60,000 workers assembled across the nation in August, when up to 50,000 CFMEU members gathered outside Melbourne's Trades Hall.

A further 8,000 attended in Sydney, with around 4,000 in Brisbane.

block-time updated-timeUpdated at 10.17pm BST

block-time published-time 9.27pm BST

Welcome

Good morning and welcome to the live politics blog. I'm Martin Farrer and I'll bring you the best overnight stories before Amy Remeikis comes along.

Anthony Albanese launched a [defence of his government's economic policies](#) last night in a speech to the Business Council of **Australia**. The prime minister said Labor was both pro-business and pro-worker as he attempted to navigate a path between attacks on mining matters from the Coalition and environmental issues from the Greens.

Construction workers and their supporters are due to stage mass rallies across the country for a second time today to express their displeasure over the federal takeover of the CFMEU. The construction wing of the CFMEU is [facing investigations into alleged corruption and criminal links](#) in its Queensland, New South Wales and South Australian branches and a further inquiry in Victoria backed by new coercive powers, after its interim administrator accepted the findings of an initial investigation in full. More coming up.

The Scottish government [has agreed a rescue deal](#) for a scaled-down version of the 2026 Commonwealth Games to be hosted by Glasgow after **Australia** offered a "multimillion-pound commitment" to save the event. Victoria had to pay \$380m in compensation to the Commonwealth Games Federation (CGF), \$200m of which will now be directed to Scotland to cover their hosting costs. However, it could just be a [temporary fix for the troubled event](#).

Load-Date: September 18, 2024

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