

# State Labor ignorance on Gocup Road 'death trap'

**FAILURE by the Labor State Government to invest in the upgrade of Gocup Road is showing blatant disregard for the safety of motorists travelling this road every single day.**

This road is a death trap. The potential for people – families, school children, workers, individuals – to lose their lives increases with every passing day this road is not fixed.

The near-miss stories which have been told about Gocup Road must surely set the alarm bells ringing for Labor's Federal and State Governments.

Their combined ignorance in continually overlooking the need for an \$88 million upgrade of Gocup Road is neglect of the worst kind.

The upgrade of this road, linking Tumut to the Hume Highway at Gundagai, is the number one priority for the Tumut region.

It is a vital link road for heavy transport vehicles servicing the timber industry in the region. – industries which support local jobs and generate revenue in local communities.

The focus here is on regional investment in infrastructure and its importance to industry growth across the region. It is clear the State Labor Government has total disregard for issues outside the major metropolitan centres.

It is never too late to act. What needs to occur is for the Labor Government to declare Gocup Road a State road and fund it accordingly.

## NSW first for Regional Oxygen Bank

**WAGGA Wagga's Kylie Davidson is the first person in New South Wales to receive a Portable Oxygen Concentrator.**

Kylie was diagnosed with a chronic lung disease four years ago.

The Regional Oxygen Bank is purchasing concentrators to enhance the mobility and quality of life for patients with respiratory illnesses.

The Regional Oxygen Bank is a

local charity established to assist the 300 to 400 oxygen-dependent people in the Riverina region.

The concentrator units cost \$6000 each with an initial target to raise funds to buy 10 of these units for the most needy.

The charity is seeking assistance to raise funds. More information is available from Regional Oxygen Bank Inc. chairman Marilyn Bragg 0402 254 710 or by emailing marilyn@wattleglen.com

## Funding boost for local projects

**SEVERAL projects across the Wagga Wagga Electorate have been part of a \$400,000 funding allocation in the Community Building Partnership.**

More than \$120,000 will go to projects in Lockhart while Tumut will benefit from more than \$113,000, most notably the restoration and development of the Tumut Heritage Railway Precinct.

Organisations which were unsuccessful with their applications are encouraged to reapply for the next round of funding.

GRANT RECIPIENT	PROJECT	FUNDING
Ashmont Pre-School	Kitchen facilities upgrade	\$12,933.80
Country Hope Ltd	Refurbish family support centre	\$15,000
Lockhart & District Progress Assoc. Inc.	Refurbish historical buildings	\$36,920
Lockhart & District Historical Society	Exhibit space at Green's Gonyah Museum	\$17,500
Lockhart Shire Council	New public toilets Lockhart, The Rock	\$30,000
Lockhart Shire Council	Playground equipment Walter Day Park	\$12,500
Lockhart Shire Council	Disabled access to Lockhart public toilets	\$7500
Riverina Kids Care Accommodation Inc	Ronald McDonald House extension	\$40,000
Rotary Club of Lockhart	Build bus shelter, Lockhart	\$4500
The Leisure Company Integrated Recreation Inc.	Maintenance of facilities	\$38,170
The Rock Show Society Inc.	Concrete floor to Lockhart pavilion	\$11,446
Tumut Pre-School Co-operative Society Inc.	Ceiling insulation in two classrooms	\$8500
Tumut Railway Precinct Committee	Restore & develop heritage railway precinct	\$104,579
Uranquinty Progress Assoc.	Construct multi-purpose centre	\$10,000
Wagga & District Greyhound Racing Club Ltd	Refurbish toilets, Wagga Showground	\$8060
Wagga Rugby League	Equex Centre amenities block	\$32,500
Wagga Wagga Rescue Squad Inc.	Squad building roof repairs	\$29,750

## Barry O'Farrell visits Wagga

IT was busy times for State Opposition Leader Barry O'Farrell during a recent visit to Wagga Wagga.

The chance to meet local constituents and business leaders to discuss issues close to the hearts of people living and working in regional areas is important to Barry.

The Liberal/Nationals Coalition understands many of the issues confronting rural and regional New South Wales and wants to put more emphasis on industry and investment outside of the major metropolitan centres.

## Governor at RDA opening

THE opening of the new administration centre at Riding for the Disabled in Wagga Wagga recently was a great milestone for this very worthwhile organisation.

Attending the official opening with New South Wales Governor Marie Bashir was a real honour and gave an insight into the good work RDA continues to achieve around the region.

The Governor, patron of RDANSW, told the opening how riding opened a world of activity and achievement for the young people involved, building their confidence and self-esteem.

## School visits welcomed



**YOUNG LEADERS:** It is always a great pleasure to meet some of our leaders of the future at Parliament House. Students from across the State are regular visitors to Parliament and getting the chance to show these young people around and listen to their ideas and opinions is a rewarding experience. I urge any school in the electorate which is considering excursions to Sydney to consider stopping off at Parliament House. It would be a great pleasure to assist local schools in achieving this so make contact with my electorate office in Wagga Wagga to assist in making arrangements.



**PUTTING PEOPLE FIRST:** With State Opposition Leader Barry O'Farrell during a recent visit to Wagga Wagga to talk local issues with local residents and business operators.

For too long the city-centric State Labor Government has failed to acknowledge regional areas.



**RAINY VISIT:** The much welcomed rain across the region in March did not dampen the high spirits at the opening of RDA's new centre which was an honour to attend with NSW Governor Marie Bashir.

The new \$200,000 centre will help these young people achieve their goals.



# Daryl Maguire MP

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May 2010

Taking in the Local Government Areas of **TUMUT, LOCKHART, WAGGA WAGGA** and all towns and villages within.

# Stand up and deliver on new hospitals

**THE long list of regional hospital upgrades promised by the State Labor Government – including the re-development of Wagga Wagga Base Hospital – must now become a reality.**

The Federal Government's multi-billion dollar lifeline to fix New South Wales' health system gives this failed State Labor Government no more excuses to delay the delivery of such critical services. At the last State Election in 2007 Labor promised to build new hospitals in Wagga Wagga, Tamworth, Bega, Forbes, Parkes, Northern Beaches and Narrabri and the fourth pod at Port Macquarie. None of these will be delivered by the State election on March 26 next year.

It's a sad reflection on the Government's incompetent form and a blatant slap in the face to communities of rural and regional New South Wales such as Tumut which has waited too long for a



critical upgrade to its hospital and essential services. Labor's "con job" on the State's public health system is no

longer acceptable. The Federal Government has seized control and delivered a \$6.6 billion package (over 10 years) to NSW.

Sadly, Labor's poor form in controlling the State's purse strings has been to the detriment of regional health reform for more than decade.

Residents are right in voicing their concerns at the Rudd Federal Government putting this large sum of money in the hands of State Labor.

The NSW Liberal/Nationals Coalition stands for a health system that is about quality care, timely treatment, is patient focused and led by clinicians. Patients must be put first, and demoralised medical professionals need to be re-engaged.

It is time to stand up and deliver on so many promises.



**BIG RIG ROLLING:** Climbing aboard for a tour of local roads during Truck Week recently.

## Transport issues in the hot seat

**CLIMBING** aboard a big rig recently was also a chance to address some of the issues facing the transport industry.

Safety, transport infrastructure, regional roads and expanding career opportunities in the industry were high on the agenda during Truck Week.

Ron Finemore Transport Asset Manager Paul Pulver was at the wheel during a drive through the Electorate and gave an interesting perspective on various issues facing people at the coalface of the industry.

As a member of the Stay Safe Committee, it was important to know many drivers' issues.

It was a worthwhile experience and gave a first-hand insight into the industry leading into talks with the Australian Trucking Association.

### INSIDE

**Energy overload:** Counting the real costs of electricity and gas price increases in NSW



# ENERGY OVERLOAD

Counting the real costs of electricity and gas price increases in New South Wales

## Energy price surge to have crippling impact

**ABSURD increases in energy prices during the next three years have hit a raw nerve with constituents across the Wagga Wagga Electorate.**

Years of neglect by the State Labor Government will result in sky-rocketing electricity prices from July 1 this year with a hike in gas prices also proposed in a draft report recently released by the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal (IPART).

And if the Rudd Federal Government's Carbon Pollution Reduction Scheme (CPRS) is ever implemented - now on hold for three years - prices will rise even higher.

This is a major slap in the face for residents in rural and regional Australia with working families, low-income earners, business operators - virtually every corner of society - being a target of inflated prices and being held to ransom by the Labor governments.

A 64 per cent rise is a massive increase in anyone's language - it's an outrageous scenario which has produced the most complaints over my desk in more than a decade.

IPART, in giving the green light to these grossly inflated figures, has admitted the increases "are large and will be felt by customers", particularly low-income earners.

The State Government must find an alternative solution to these price hikes. The Government is not compelled to implement IPART's recommendations.

Following is a snapshot of IPART's final report on regulated electricity retail tariffs and also its draft decision on regulated retail tariffs and charges for gas.

I have already raised this matter in State Parliament as a matter of urgency and encourage people to come forward with letters of complaint so I can help voice community concerns at the highest level.

"... these bill increases are large and will be felt by customers, particularly low-income households"

- IPART

### ELECTRICITY

This is a summary of the key points in IPART's fact sheet on the final report on regulated electricity retail tariffs for July 1, 2010 to June 30, 2013. The full report can be downloaded at [www.ipart.nsw.gov.au](http://www.ipart.nsw.gov.au)

Customers of the Standard Retail Suppliers in NSW who have not entered into contracts will see electricity prices increase substantially.

For the year beginning on July 1, 2010

### HOW WILL THIS AFFECT YOU?

The table below shows the impact on a typical annual bill for **RESIDENTIAL CUSTOMERS** and also includes the effect of a CPRS on energy price rises. It shows that by 2012-13, a typical residential customer of Country Energy will be paying an additional \$601 with the potential to pay an additional \$918 with a CPRS.

Indicative annual bill for typical residential customers in each standard supply area (nominal \$)

	Current (2009/10)	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	Cumulative increase without CPRS	Cumulative increase with CPRS
EnergyAustralia	1,257	1,383	1,605	2,012	448	754
Integral Energy	1,258	1,343	1,535	1,835	246	577
Country Energy	1,446	1,629	1,908	2,363	601	918

Totals have been rounded

Local business will also feel a major impact on electricity bills. The table below shows a typical annual bill for **BUSINESS CUSTOMERS**, with Country Energy customers by 2012-13 to pay an extra \$3070 (with CPRS) or \$2012 (without CPRS).

Indicative annual bill for typical business customers in each standard supply area (nominal \$)

	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	Cumulative increase No CPRS	Cumulative increase With CPRS
EnergyAustralia	4,035	4,438	5,148	6,456	1,433	2,421
Integral Energy	3,620	3,863	4,415	5,280	706	1,660
Country Energy	4,834	5,448	6,379	7,904	2,012	3,070

Totals have been rounded

average prices will increase by:

- ▶ 7% for Integral Energy customers,
- ▶ 10% for EnergyAustralia customers,
- ▶ 13% for Country Energy customers.

From July 1, 2010 a typical residential customer of Country Energy will pay a further \$183 annually or \$3.50 per week, EnergyAustralia customers \$126 (\$2.40) and Integral Energy customers \$85 (\$1.60).

Over the three years to June 2013, average prices will increase by a cumulative total of:

- ▶ 20% for Integral Energy,
- ▶ 36% for EnergyAustralia,
- ▶ 42% for Country Energy.

While the the Rudd Government has delayed the CPRS, the tables below show the potential effect such a tax would have on energy bills.

## Higher gas prices in the pipeline

**RESIDENTS and business owners across New South Wales face more rising energy costs under a draft decision recently released by the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal (IPART) to increase gas prices.**

Country Energy residential customers, under the proposed price increases, face a 17.5 per cent increase over three years while business customers can expect a 16.4 per cent hike in the same period.

IPART will make its final decision in June 2010 after receiving and considering submissions on the draft decisions.

By its own admissions IPART recognises the increase in gas prices will affect people living in regional areas more so than those in metropolitan areas and surrounds.

"Under our draft decisions, typical customers in Sydney, Newcastle and Wollongong would see only modest increases in their annual gas bills. Typical customers in some of the regional areas would face more substantial increases in these bills," the Tribunal noted in its summarised fact sheet.

Following is a summary of the key points in IPART's draft decision of regulated retail tariffs and charges for gas from July 1, 2010 to June 30, 2013. The full draft decision can be downloaded at [www.ipart.nsw.gov.au](http://www.ipart.nsw.gov.au) IPART has accepted the pricing proposals of AGL, Country Energy and Origin Energy. These proposed prices apply to regulated retail gas tariffs for customers of the NSW Standard Retailers who have not entered into contracts.

- ▶ AGL's average regulated tariffs increase by around 3% from July 1, 2010 and by a cumulative total of 10% over the 3 years to 2012/13.
- ▶ Country Energy's average regulated tariffs increase by around 8% from 1 July 2010 and by a cumulative total of 17% over the 3 years.
- ▶ Origin Energy's average retail tariffs increase by around 8% from July 1, 2010 and by a cumulative total of 16% over the 3 years.



▶ For ActewAGL, the draft decision is to reject its pricing proposal which was to increase its average retail component by CPI+2.5% over the 3 years. For this retailer, IPART considers that a real reduction of 3% in the retail component of these tariffs (which account for around 50% of a customer's bill) over the 3 years is reasonable, based on the analysis of its costs.

However, its customers are still likely to face increases in their gas bills as the network component of the customer's bill will increase. In nominal terms, this would mean that ActewAGL's average regulated tariffs increase by around 9% from July 1, 2010 and by a cumulative total of 17% over the 3 years.

### NON-TARIFF FEES AND CHARGES

**IPART has made the following draft decisions:**

- ▶ Agree to AGL's proposed increase in the late payment fee from \$8.80 to \$14, but requested that it implement this increase in stages.

### HOW WILL THIS AFFECT YOU?

The following tables provide an indication of the likely impact of IPART's draft decisions for AGL, Country Energy and Origin Energy on residential and business customers' annual bills. For ActewAGL, the tables indicate the impact on customers' annual bills of a revised pricing proposal that IPART would find reasonable and would be able to agree to.

Indicative annual bill for typical residential customers of each Standard Retailer (nominal \$)

	Current (2009/10)	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	Cumulative \$ increase	Cumulative % increase	Cumulative CPI increase
AGL	618	636	664	694	77	12.4%	7.7%
Country Energy	573	620	646	673	100	17.5%	7.7%
Origin Energy	380	414	432	446	66	17.2%	7.7%
ActewAGL	583	603	635	655	71	12.3%	7.7%

Indicative annual bill for typical business customers of each Standard Retailer (nominal \$)

	Current (2009/10)	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	Cumulative \$ increase	Cumulative % increase	Cumulative CPI increase
AGL	3,460	3,446	3,453	3,457	-2	-0.1%	7.7%
Country Energy	2,223	2,412	2,498	2,588	365	16.4%	7.7%
Origin Energy	3,048	3,126	3,226	3,330	282	9.3%	7.7%
ActewAGL	3,326	3,446	3,657	3,778	452	13.6%	7.7%

Totals have been rounded

- ▶ Agree to Origin's proposed increase in the late payment fee from \$9.70 to \$12, but requested that it implement this increase in stages.
- ▶ Agree to Country Energy's proposed non-tariff fees and charges, including its proposal to increase its late payment fee from \$7 to \$7.50.
- ▶ Agree to ActewAGL's proposal to increase its non-tariff fees and charges by CPI and remove the administration fee on network fees and charges.

### Energy rebates

THERE is some help available to consumers who may be vulnerable to increased energy bills. Conditions apply. From July 1, 2010, the Energy Rebate will be increased to \$145 per year. It will increase again to \$161 per year from July 1, 2011. There are other rebates available including the Medical Energy Rebate and Life Support Rebate as well as various schemes to help you plan your energy bill payments. Make enquiries to see if you are eligible. Further details can be sourced at [www.industry.nsw.gov.au/energy/customers/rebates](http://www.industry.nsw.gov.au/energy/customers/rebates) or by contacting your local energy retailer.