

YOUR SAY

The best reader comments from print and online

A year of stress is too long for anyone



MY SAY
KERRI-ANNE MESNER
SENIOR REPORTER

HAVE the Australian and Singaporean governments seen World War III in their crystal balls? Or have they started it in Rockhampton's backyard?

It is becoming clear from my observations dealing with those impacted by the proposed Shoalwater Bay Military Training Area expansion that it is having a detrimental impact on their mental health - some of their symptoms are akin to those that are sent to war.

For instance, their stress levels are high, they fear for their futures and how they will survive, and they are currently in a static state with their lives because of the unknown.

There are worried looks on the faces of those I meet face-to-face when they start talking about what is in store for their future if the land acquisition area goes ahead. It has been evident in one resident's voice when she fires off questions to politicians visiting the region. There is a quiver in her voice. That of a stressed woman.

How long will these people have to live this way? Stressed? Putting their lives on hold and projects on hold?

All because a government waits on a socio-economic impact study, a business case study and a master plan before they confirm what will happen.

Northern Australia Minister Matt Canavan told ABC radio: "Our current hope is that this economic and social impact assessment - which we should do before we make any compulsory acquisitions - should be completed by mid this year, and later this year the government will make a decision."

A year is simply too long for anyone to put their business and lives on hold.

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Juvenile crime needs proper deterrent

MY VEHICLE was stolen a couple of days ago by juveniles.

One of these persons I have been friendly with for quite some time so I am at a loss to understand his actions. Prior to this event an attempt was made twice before to steal my car. The same person was responsible in stealing another car close to my residence only a couple of months ago, and was completely wrecked. I was fortunate that even though my car was damaged it was driveable.

These stealing offences are done by young kids and who basically receive no penalty, that is a deterrent to commit further crimes. They know nothing will happen to them. Who gains by not penalising these juveniles to try to stop re-offending? Certainly not the police,

they do a wonderful job and are frustrated, knowing that as soon as these offenders are released they will ultimately reoffend.

The insurance companies lose by claims made. Of course the victims are the biggest losers.

In my instance the offenders came prepared with gloves and even a small torch.

It was well planned. People do what they can to stop thieves but it has come to the point that you feel you must lock every door as you close it and carry your keys with you. What has become of society?

Years ago you could leave doors and windows open knowing that all your possessions were safe.

Is it the fault of the magistrates for such lenient sentences? They are governed by rules made by



CAR THIEF: Soft penalties for juvenile crime are being highlighted. PHOTO:THINKSTOCK

the government, it would be interesting for everyone to know these rules. The

criminals seem to know. Something needs to be done, not just talking and no

passing the buck.
— Ron Lorraway
Rockhampton

Clean coal needs to be part of solution

PEOPLE living in North Queensland have every right to feel anxious about their State Government's 50% renewable energy target by 2030.

After all, they need only look to South Australia to see what happens when a State Government decides to "experiment" with an energy mix that includes overly ambitious renewable energy targets while discouraging coal-fired power generation.

The result: power prices go up and the lights go out.

And the last thing Queensland needs right now is higher energy prices.

Just this week, Australia's

“We've got to be able to afford to pay the bills, and it's got to be reliable

— Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull

largest aluminium smelter Boyne at Gladstone said it will cut jobs and production because of massive electricity prices hikes, accusing one generator of holding prices at 500 times the cost of generation.

Hopefully Premier Palaszczuk was listening this week when Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull said in Brisbane that clean

coal-fired plant must continue to be part of the mix as Australia transitions to a clean energy future.

"Our approach, and my approach, to energy is absolutely pragmatic and practical.

"This is not a matter for ideology," the Prime Minister declared.

"We've got to be able to afford to pay the bills, and it's got to be reliable.

"You don't want to be in the situation South Australia is, where they have the most expensive — and the least reliable — electricity in Australia."

The Prime Minister expressed his support for clean coal technology, which includes carbon capture and storage as well as so-called

supercritical and ultra-supercritical power plants which are much more heat efficient and require less coal to produce energy.

Picking up on this theme, in Queensland, Member for Dawson George Christensen has called for a new-generation super efficient coal-fired power station to be built near Mackay, using funds from Canberra's \$5 billion Northern Australia Infrastructure Facility.

It wouldn't be breaking new ground up north.

In 2001, the 810 MW Callide Power Plant was commissioned in Central Queensland, becoming the first super-critical coal-fired power station in Australia.

The original power station

at Callide, built in 1965 and refurbished in 1998, was also a clean coal pioneer after it was chosen for a \$245 million carbon capture and storage trial that saw most of its emissions captured and stored.

In south-west Queensland, another supercritical plant, Kogan Creek, powers up to one million homes and is one of Australia's most efficient plants.

The point is, the technology is here, it is already operating, and it is reducing polluting emissions into the atmosphere.

Around the world, clean coal technology is being embraced as the cost-efficient way to achieve

FIND OUT WHAT HAPPENS IN DAYS LIKE THESE WITH HAIDEE JENKINS

Success comes from taking



THE FRENCH LESSON
DAVID FRENCH

BEING innately positive is essential to running any business. You have to be like that to deal with the downs, which contrary to popular opinion can impact on a business much, much quicker than expected.

When I say positive however, I don't mean rah-rah, punch the air, I mean despite the hurdles,

being clear about where you are going and having confidence from understanding your business well enough to quickly set in alternative and salvaging arrangements. I mean being positive about taking risks, but knowing what the downside is and being clear about a way out. I mean being honest with yourself, in identifying what you are good at and in putting in the energy to see a project through.

And this applies to our community as much as it does to the businesses in it. Council is at long last putting in long overdue

“Some of the most badly affected are now seeing a ray of light

effort into investment in the community. The mayor will fall off her throne when she reads this, but the initiatives regarding the Kershaw Gardens playground, the mountain bike track, the new pool, the various riverbank initiatives and festivals, the IT incubator -

these are all excellent initiatives that help change our culture, and put our community on the front foot.

Far too many in our community don't get the importance of these sorts of initiatives. They say they want potholes patched, that council has no business in spending outside a 1950s idea of basic services. And they are right - council is tasked with delivering a wide range of functional services, and there is no excuse for not doing so. Likewise however, in 2017 there is no excuse, for council not taking a strong leadership role in our

community. A vibrant community that retains and attracts new residents is in everyone's interests. A languishing community is detrimental to businesses, schools, hospitals and council services.

People and communities only thrive when they play to their strengths and grasp opportunities. They don't thrive by putting up barriers, and by not making an effort. Businesses don't thrive by expecting people to buy outdated goods, when better alternatives are available at the click of a button. And they don't thrive by participating in