

YOUR SAY

The best reader comments from print and online

Do we wait for someone to die from a croc first?



MY SAY
FRAZER PEARCE
EDITOR

THE LNP's controversial new policy to shoot crocodiles posing a danger to human life (Page 1) is in line with rising and community concern about the number of these deadly animals in popular fishing areas.

The feedback I'm getting from lifelong fishermen on the Fitzroy and coastal creeks is that they have never been so concerned about the situation.

The increased numbers of large crocs in the Fitzroy from their observations has reached a level where there is serious anxiety about personal safety.

These are people who have spent decades on the river so they are a serious barometer about the issue.

Shadow Environment Minister Dr Christian Rowan said the LNP had listened to the concerns of Far North Queenslanders and designed a policy to protect human life and empower communities living near crocodiles.

"This is a common sense approach (shooting) that puts the interests of humans ahead of crocodiles," Dr Rowan said.

"The LNP understands that in some circumstances safe and quick capture is not practicable, when crocodiles venture near beaches, boat ramps or open water."

Then of course there are those (Beau Greaves) who believe these amazing animals should be protected and cherished.

I too have enjoyed the rare sightings of a croc on the Fitzroy but I have been on a bridge and not the water.

As I have said before, where do you draw the line on crocodile population growth near a community?

Life is a numbers game and as risk increases (in this case more crocodiles) so must the potential for injury and death.

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Register now to join the Rocky River Run

SPORTING teams are urged to put their best foot forward and raise vital funds for charity in this year's 7 Rocky River Run.

The countdown is on to the popular annual community event to be held on Sunday, May 28.

More than 1000 people have already registered and organisers are hoping that number will swell to 2000.

The 7 Rocky River Run is celebrating its 10th year and has raised \$250,000 for youth issues including the prevention of youth suicide, and helping families who need to travel to gain medical attention and need accommodation at places such as Ronald McDonald houses.

Darryl Lapworth, general manager at CTC and chairman of the 7 Rocky River Run, said the event was an important one for the



THEY'RE OFF: Runners greet the start of the 5km event in last year's Rocky River Run.

PHOTO: FILE PHOTO.

Rockhampton and broader Queensland community and was a chance for teams to show their colours.

"Sporting teams can really make a splash with a big and colourful show of energy and enthusiasm," he said.

The sporting team with the most people registered in the run as a team (there is no maximum team size) will

receive \$500 to support their club, as well as the perpetual cup.

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Don't buy in to the 'dropkick' stereotype

MOST of us will be aware of the popular stereotype of a welfare recipient. Hang around all day drinking alcohol and smoking pot, living the high life on their \$250 a week. Of course the people we know ourselves, who have fallen on hard times are rarely like that. Maybe our family, friends are former co-workers are the exception?

Now the Federal Government wants to introduce random drug testing for welfare recipients. What has not been defined is what exactly they are trying to achieve and how they will assess the benefits and unintended

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— Robert Forsythe, Glenlee

consequences of such a move? Drug testing for welfare recipients is not a new idea. It has been tried before in several American states and is usually dropped a few years later due to lack of outcomes or

being struck down through the federal courts as unconstitutional.

The idea has several problems. Firstly, despite the popular stereotypes, there is no Australian evidence that people on welfare are any more likely than anyone else to be using illicit substances. Also, there is no evidence that income restriction or management through paying benefits in non cash forms has any effectiveness in helping people to clean up their act – that is of course if their 'habit' is having any influence at all in their inability to participate in the workforce. Saliva tests have for amphetamines, cannabis etc have around a 99% specificity rate. While this

sounds impressive, it means that 10 out of every 1000 people testing positive will be false positives. Are we prepared to accept 10 'innocent' people out of every 1000 being sanctioned or do we need some sort of appeals avenue? Who would administer that and how will we pay for it?

Good public policy has clear goals, evidence for solutions and a business case for cost effectiveness. Mr Morrison's policy has none of these things and it would appear this is just a cynical attempt for a government that is weak to appear tough. Putting the boot into the stereotypical 'dropkick' has been, of course, always popular with the righteous and ignorant.

With many times more the number of unemployed people than the number of available jobs it isn't going to do anything to reduce unemployment. Perhaps the government thinks that by shifting the 'blame' for unemployment back to the unemployed themselves, we will forget to notice that the economy has been going backward for four years?

— Robert Forsythe, Glenlee

Is it bias or turning a blind eye to DV?

BEING subject to the questionable value of yet another television "reality show" is bad enough for the viewing public but I am left puzzled by the lack of

CATCH UP WITH DAYS LIKE THESE COLUMNIST HAIDEE JENKINS AND HER

Not much substance in the



THE FRENCH LESSON
DAVID FRENCH

WELL, budget night Tuesday night and I can't see anything earth shattering, except to acknowledge the clever strategy in basically conceding something in almost every area that Labor has complained about.

Labor will find it very difficult to retain credibility

if it keeps blocking every bill that comes up, providing many opportunities to give Shorten a bollocking. I guess that's fine if it's your game but as to substance, few will be dissecting and analysing the repercussions of this budget 10 years from now (by way of comparison see The Doomsday Book, which scholars are still poring over, 931 years after it was written!).

The tax cuts for small business don't really exist. That's because when Australian businesses pay tax they get franking credits, which are distributed and taxed in the

“The issues around the cost of housing are deep seated, financial and cultural.”

same way as cash – so you pay the tax in the business, but get a credit for it when you receive a share of those profits as a dividend. For small business then, the cut in the small company tax will be of modest benefit to near-term cash flows, but of

very little overall economic benefit. In essence, it's a great headline but there is no way it's worth all the palarva (from both sides) leading up to its adoption.

The measures regarding housing affordability are similarly limp. The price of housing is, simply, set by the interaction between supply and demand.

People do not like moving, and there are massive tax and Centrelink benefits to owning your own home. Australia's banks will effectively only lend against real estate (part of that is enshrined in the way APRA regulates banks). The

population keeps growing. State Government's provide grants to first home buyers. Make no mistake, in Australia, housing is a truly unique asset class.

Against this, the supply of land is slow to grow, developers ride the cyclical wave and the cost to develop is expensive.

Development applications are administered by councils in, it often seems, a deliberately ad-hoc and arbitrary manner (hence the Town Planning profession). Many tradespeople live by a motto of "if it rains I can't work, and if it doesn't I'm going fishing" – but still