



The Bullroarer - Tuesday 20th January 2009

Posted by [Big Gav](#) on January 20, 2009 - 8:25am in [The Oil Drum: Australia/New Zealand](#)

Topic: [Miscellaneous](#)

SMH - [Plunging prices ring recovery alarm bells](#)

After dogging the economy for most of last year, the inflation threat disappeared in the final three months of last year, according to a monthly survey of consumer prices compiled by TD Securities and the Melbourne Institute.

Instead, prices fell for three months in a row, dropping 0.2 per cent last month, 0.6 per cent in November and 0.2 per cent in October. This was the first three-month decline in prices since the survey began five years ago.

Petrol price falls were largely responsible, down 15 per cent last month and 25 per cent over the year. But prices rose for holiday travel and accommodation, rents and household supplies.

SMH - [Green products facing a black future: study](#)

SHRINKING family budgets and growing scepticism about environmental claims made by companies are set to hit sales of green products, researchers say.

Environmentally friendly products and services are often more expensive than conventional lines and could be the first to go as families review their household budgets, they say.

Research has found that concern over the environment is not translating into sales, and is less likely to do so as consumers worry about how the deteriorating economy will affect them.

The Age - [Mind the gap: in some cities the differences may be huge](#)

As thousands of Melbourne commuters endured disruption to their daily travel patterns last week, many were asking whether their public transport system is capable of improvement. The Age asked each of its resident foreign correspondents to go on a typical day's commute in their city and relate what they found.

The Age - [Crisis talks fail to fix train chaos](#)

EMBATTLED Public Transport Minister Lynne Kosky's attempt to put the city's train system on a crisis footing had little impact yesterday, with another 55 trains cancelled, most due to temperatures in the mid-30s. In an unusual step, the Government's train operator Connex yesterday handed out thousands of free ice creams and bottles of water, to pacify frustrated passengers at Flinders Street Station.

The Age - [Australian 'culture' blamed for train chaos](#). *Unlike the infallible British train system. Maybe he wishes Mussolini was running the show ?*

Mr Betts' critics say that privatisation has cost taxpayers billions more than if public transport had remained in public hands, and instead of delivering efficiencies has made matters worse because no one is ultimately accountable. Mr Betts, who worked for the British government in the 1990s when it privatised that nation's rail system, was made Director of Public Transport in 2004 by the Bracks government.

In early 2007, he advised then new Public Transport Minister Lynne Kosky not to take back control of Melbourne's trains and trams, telling her that public transport should be kept in private hands. "Do I want to run a train system? I don't think so," she told The Age. Last week, Ms Kosky attempted to shift the blame for the hundreds of cancelled trains, pointing the finger at Connex. A poll of 7000 Age readers showed it didn't work; 75 per cent blamed the Government.

SMH - [\\$1.3b Sydney subway chief named](#)

The Roads and Traffic Authority chief executive officer, Les Wielinga, has been appointed to the head of the new Sydney Metro Authority and charged with the responsibility of developing a \$13 billion subway network for Sydney.

The Australian - [Origin Energy falls after Contact profit warning](#)

CONTACT Energy warned today that "extreme hydrological conditions," together with higher gas prices and transmission constraints, would hurt earnings this financial year, sending the power company's shares tumbling.

ABC - [GWM looks to cut energy use](#)

Grampians Wimmera Mallee Water (GWM) says making reductions to its power use will be important as Australia moves towards a carbon trading scheme. The water corporation's overall carbon emissions are expected to treble once the Wimmera-Mallee Pipeline is fully operational.

ABC - [Clean coal project 'will fail' under emissions trading scheme](#)

Opposition environment spokesman Greg Hunt says a major clean coal project in central Queensland will fail unless the Federal Government changes its emissions trading scheme.

SMH - [Darwin tipped as cooler place to be](#)

TRAVELLING north may soon mean more than just a comfortable Queensland retirement - it could be a way to dodge the worst effects of climate change. A global study that combed fossil records dating back to the last ice age suggests northern Australia is relatively well placed to resist the scorching temperature predicted for the coming decades and beyond.

ABC - [Canberra to be hit hardest by climate change](#)

Canberra will be hit harder by climate change than any other capital city according to new research from the Australian National University (ANU). The study which maps global warming trends suggests that the ACT will become drier and warmer than previous estimates.

ABC - [Antarctic ice shelf set to collapse](#)

A huge Antarctic ice shelf is on the brink of collapse with just a sliver of ice holding it in place, the latest victim of global warming that is altering maps of the frozen continent. "We've come to the Wilkins Ice Shelf to see its final death throes," David Vaughan, a glaciologist at the British Antarctic Survey (BAS), said after the first - and probably last - plane landed near the narrowest part of the ice.

The flat-topped shelf has an area of thousands of square kilometres, jutting 20 metres out of the sea off the Antarctic Peninsula. But it is held together only by an ever-thinning 40-kilometre strip of ice that has eroded to an hour-glass shape just 500 metres wide at its narrowest. In 1950, the strip was almost 100 kilometres wide.

ABC - [Dengue fever epidemic hits Cairns](#)

Queensland Health is setting up an incident management team in Cairns to combat the spread of type 3 dengue fever across the city.

Peak Energy - [We need a licence to print our own money](#)

Peak Energy - [Germans Claim New Solar Cell Breakthrough](#)

Peak Energy - [Smart Fridges, Part 2](#)

Peak Energy - [Sweden's Green Roofed Hillside City](#)

Peak Energy - [Recharging Lead Acid Batteries](#)

Peak Energy - [Banana 3.0](#)

Peak Energy - [How the city hurts your brain](#)

Peak Energy - [Wing Suit Base Jumping](#)



This work is licensed under a [Creative Commons Attribution-Share Alike 3.0 United States License](#).