



Steve Wettenhall MP

Member for Barron River
Members Update

May 2011



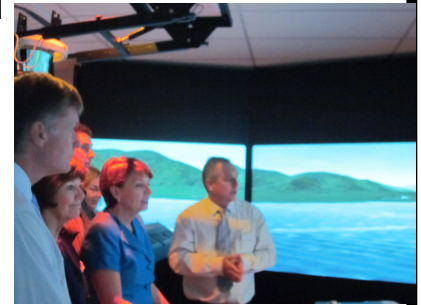
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Great Barrier Reef International Marine College officially opened

Premier Anna Bligh officially opened the nation's first comprehensive international marine training centre in Cairns last month. The Great Barrier Reef International Marine College offers world class facilities across the spectrum of marine industry careers – from deckhands to emergency response specialists. It is a one-stop-shop training facility will mean more jobs and more international and students from other states heading to Cairns.

The Marine Centre's facilities include:

- A two-level emergency response training simulator incorporating fire and gas detection and confined space and flood training
- A large immersion pool for training in sea survival, life-raft and helicopter underwater escape training
- Ship and tug boat bridges
- A navigation laboratory and
- An engineering workshop



Steve & Premier at International Marine College Opening

The College will help meet the growing demand for marine industry workers such as deckhands and means students will no longer have to travel Sydney or Hobart for specialised water-based safety training.

Queensland Government Service Centre opens in Cairns

A new one-stop-shop for State Government services has opened in Cairns. The new centre at William McCormack Place is providing a range of government services through one central point of access for local residents.

It means residents will be able to make enquires in the one location without having to visit an individual State Government department or agency. They'll be able to lodge documents, search for vehicle information and access housing and community services as well as a range of other government services.

The new centre also has a self-help kiosk and free phone line people can use to directly contact government agencies. The Cairns centre is only the second of its type in the State and the first in regional Queensland.

Interested in what is happening with our coastline?

Please join me for an enjoyable and informative Sunday at the beach for expert presentations and discussions on:

- **Shore erosion/beach replenishment management**
- **Cyclone resilience**
- **Role of mangroves in ecosystem**
- **Marine life of Trinity Bay**
- **Water turbidity and role of dredging**
- **To open/or not to open beach mouths**

Date: Sunday 15 May

Time: 10am to 3pm

(come for all or just part of the day)

Location: Holloways Beach Environment Centre

Cost: Absolutely free



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To RSVP (for catering purposes) or for further information please phone 4038 2800 or Email: barron.river@parliament.qld.gov.au

It's time to once again nominate an "Inspirational Local"

Next month we celebrate Queensland Day and I am again calling for nominations for the **Barron River Queensland Day Awards**. For these awards I ask locals and community groups to nominate 'inspirational locals' who dedicate their time and effort as volunteers in the community. **If you know of someone you feel deserves recognition**, please phone my office on 4038 2800 or download a form from www.stevewettenhall.com.au.

Bligh Government Bolsters Child Sex Offender Laws

New child sex offender laws passed by State Parliament last month will result in stricter reporting requirements and tougher penalties for offenders who fail to comply with their reporting obligations. Under our new laws, failure to advise police of changes to personal details, or giving false and misleading information, will now attract a maximum penalty of five years' jail or a \$30,000 fine, up from two years or \$15,000. The laws enhance the ability of police to monitor offenders in the community and enables police to intervene at a much earlier stage in situations where children may be exposed to risk.

Greater protection from body corporate fee increases

Unit owners will have greater protection from increased body corporate fees as a result of legislation passed in Parliament last month. The *Body Corporate and Community Management and Other Legislation Amendment Bill* will ensure a better and fairer system for working out shared costs within apartment complexes. Under loopholes in the body corporate legislation, owners of high value units such as penthouses were able to go off to QCAT and get their body corporate fees and levies reduced massively.

These reductions are at the expense of those in cheaper units whose own body corporate fees and levies then go up to compensate. This led to many instances where pensioners and people on modest incomes who had bought home units with certain body corporate fees being faced with massively jacked up fees merely because penthouse owners could exploit a legal loop hole.

In some extreme cases some unit owners were forced to pay thousands of dollars in extra body corporate fees, including a disabled Cairns man who saw his body corporate fees rise 50% in one year to \$7500 after someone in his unit complex went to QCAT.

For more information on consumer rights, visit www.fairtrading.qld.gov.au or call 13 QGOV (13 74 68).

BLIGH GOVT MOVES TO STRENGTHEN PROTECTION OF QLD COAST

New laws will strengthen protection of our most vulnerable coastal land from future urban development under the Bligh Government's new **Queensland Coastal Plan**. The new consistent approach to coastal planning will:

- Protect future coastal communities from threats such as storm tide surges, such as cyclones
- Protect Queensland's precious coastline from development in high risk areas of coastal erosion and storm tide inundation caused by climate change
- Safeguard areas of high ecological significance from development

The **Queensland Coastal Plan** will allow state and local governments to work together, to utilise climate science, advanced mapping technology and sound policy direction to prevent further community exposure to coastal hazards. With this highly sophisticated mapping technology at their disposal, councils will now be able to make planning decisions for the future of their communities that will help manage growth and build more resilience to coastal hazards. The new **Queensland Coastal Plan** will have the power of a State Planning Policy, and will enable planners to prepare for future challenges by:

- * Factoring in a sea level rise of 80 centimetres by 2100 based on the best climate science;
- * In an Australian first, applying new technology to map coastal hazard areas along the coastline;
- * Banning urban development in non-urban areas mapped as high hazard (areas which are projected to be permanently inundated from sea level rise or temporarily inundated by storm surges to a depth greater than one metre in 2100);
- * Preserving the Queensland tradition of enjoying the coast by ensuring public access is improved and land is reserved for important economic activities that need to be located on the coast, such as ports and marinas; and
- * Requiring an adaptation plan from councils before any existing urban development is intensified in high hazard areas. **For more information visit www.derm.qld.gov.au**

Historic WWII Places in Atherton Tablelands Featured On New Website

A website mapping sites of significance from World War II, including the Atherton Tablelands region, is now available. A major war cemetery, general hospitals, military camps and ordinance depots are among the places featured on the website in the Atherton Tablelands region. Atherton War Cemetery, which contains 164 graves, is the third largest war cemetery in Australia and a sad reminder of the fact that a great deal of military activity took place in this region. The website features over 500 citations on places of military significance within Queensland, in addition to mapping a further 1000 locations which relate to WWII. Users can search for sites of WWII significance by place names, place types, or via a timeline detailing the state's involvement in WWII. The website's capabilities will be supported by Google Earth mapping. To view the Queensland WWII Historic Places website, visit: www.ww2places.qld.gov.au.



Pool registration deadline extended by 6 months to November

Given the focus on recovery efforts following the January floods and Cyclone Yasi, the Government has decided to push the May 4 deadline to register swimming pools back to November 4. The decision will not compromise the safety of children as new laws around pools and pool fencing have been in place since December 2009 and were strengthened again in December 2010. Previously we have had no way of knowing how many pools there are in Queensland, or where they are located. This register is an important part of our total pool safety strategy. The register will provide statistical information enabling us to undertake future reviews, better promote pool safety awareness and support a pool safety inspection system. So we need every pool owner to check the register at www.dlqp.qld.gov.au/poolsafety or call 1800 340 634 to make sure their pool is registered and their details are correct.