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GREEK TRIBUNE

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AUSTRALIAN NEWS

New law to ban aggressive customers from shops

New South Australian laws now allow aggressive and violent customers to be banned from supermarkets and shopping centres for up to 12 months.

Attorney-General Kyam Maher described the reforms as a nation-leading move aimed at protecting retail workers from stalking, harassment, threats and abuse. Businesses can apply for workplace protection orders, and offenders who breach them could face up to five years in jail.

The laws, supported by the Shop, Distributive and Allied Employees' Association (SDA), are already being used, with Woolworths Group submitting four applications for protection orders. SA SDA secretary Josh Peak said retail workers deserved to feel safe and should not fear abusive customers returning to stores.

Retail worker



Attorney General Kyam Maher

Janine Hall said two colleagues were assaulted while performing bag checks, describing the attacks as "coward punches from behind". She said abuse from customers occurs daily and hoped the new laws would make offenders think twice.

Hurley Hotel Group managing director Peter Hurley welcomed the reforms, while Mr Maher noted similar laws exist in the ACT and are being considered in New South Wales, Queensland and Western Australia.

Protesters march at Nakba Day rallies around Australia

Protesters gathered in cities across Australia to mark Nakba Day, which commemorates the mass displacement of Palestinians during the 1948 Arab-Israeli war. "Nakba," meaning "catastrophe" in Arabic, is observed annually on May 15.

Around 500 people joined a rally in Melbourne, marching from the State Library to Flinders Street Station. Palestinian-Australian surgeon Dr Bushra Othman spoke about the loss experienced by Palestinian families, saying homes became memories passed down through generations. Independent Senator Lydia Thorpe expressed solidarity between Aboriginal Australians and Palestinians, while Greens Senator David Shoebridge criticised the Australian government's response to the

current Middle East conflict.

Small groups holding Israeli flags gathered nearby, separated from demonstrators by police, who reported no incidents during the event.

In Perth, community organisations including the Palestinian Community of WA also held a rally. Speaker Nick Everett encouraged Australians to contact politicians and support calls for justice for Palestinians.

The Nakba followed the 1947 UN partition plan for Palestine and the 1948 creation of the State of Israel. About 750,000 Palestinians became refugees during the conflict. Their "right of return" remains one of the most disputed issues in Israeli-Palestinian negotiations.

Federal budget to help with cost of living

The federal budget handed down on 12 May 2026 focuses heavily on easing cost-of-living pressures for Australians amid rising global oil prices linked to the Middle East crisis. Treasurer Jim Chalmers said the government aimed to reduce the impact of higher living costs through tax relief and support measures.

A major initiative is the new Working Australians Tax Offset (WATO), which will provide up to \$250 annually from the 2027-28 financial year. The measure effectively raises the tax-free threshold and is expected to benefit more than 13 million workers. Combined with previous tax cuts, an average worker earning around \$81,000 could receive annual tax relief of almost \$2,500 by 2027-28.

The government is also introducing a new instant tax deduction of up to \$1,000 from 2026-27. Workers will be able to claim this amount for work-related expenses without needing receipts, reducing paperwork and simplifying tax returns. About 6.2 million taxpayers are expected to benefit, with average savings of \$205.

Further tax cuts are planned over the next two years. The tax rate for incomes between \$18,201 and \$45,000 will drop from 16 per cent to 15 per cent in 2026, and then to 14 per cent in 2027. The government says these changes will help offset bracket creep and provide ongoing financial relief.

The budget also includes health support measures. Medicare levy low-income



Prime Minister Anthony Albanese and Treasurer Jim Chalmers

thresholds will rise by 2.9 per cent, helping more than one million lower-income Australians. In addition, \$5.9 billion will be invested in cheaper medicines through the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme, including treatments for cancer, kidney disease and cystic

fibrosis. While there were no major new pension measures, older Australians will benefit from cheaper medicines, higher Medicare levy thresholds and expanded aged care funding, including more aged care beds and support services.

New BreastScreen SA screening clinic opens at Modbury

BreastScreen SA is South Australia's dedicated breast cancer screening program, providing free breast screens (screening mammograms) every two years for women aged over 40. The service screens around 100,000 women each year, aiming to detect breast cancer at an early stage.

For South Australian women, screening every 2 years has been found to reduce a woman's chance of dying from breast cancer by up to 41%. Regular breast screening saves lives - it improves treatment options and leads to better long term health outcomes.

BreastScreen SA encourages women of Greek heritage to access free breast screens. Current data shows that 48.2% of Greek women aged 50 to 74 years are participating - meaning many women are missing out on this vital health check.

Women aged over 40, without symptoms are eligible to attend BreastScreen SA. A screening appointment takes 15 minutes,

with specialist female radiographers providing a safe and reassuring environment. No GP referral is required, and female interpreters can be arranged at no cost.

BreastScreen SA is pleased to announce a new screening clinic has recently opened at Modbury, offering a convenient location for women living in the north-eastern suburbs.

In total there are 9 screening clinics across metropolitan Adelaide and 3 mobile screening clinics that travel to more than 40 outer metropolitan, rural and remote locations.

Let this story be your reminder. Are you aged over 40 and have you had a breast screen in the past 2 years? Are you overdue? - A simple conversation with friends, colleagues or family members could save a life.

For more information and bookings, phone 13 20 50 or visit www.breastscreen.sa.gov.au. Translated information is also available via the website.



Church Name Day celebrated

Hundreds of Greek community members attended the two day celebration of the Sts Constantine and Helen Greek Church in Goodwood for the church's name day on Thursday May 21st.

Wednesday night members of the Administrative Council and the broader community attended the Great Vesper.

The two-day event continued on Sunday as again hundreds of people came to the church to attend the Great Divine Liturgy and be part of this significant religious event.

The divine liturgy concluded with the traditional procession of the holy icon around the church.

The morning service was followed by a lunch

Community Life



The clergy and members of the Greek Orthodox Community's church committees, lead the way with the procession of the icon at the St Constantinos and Eleni name day celebration at Goodwood on 21 May

at the hall next door with traditional grilled delicacies and take away Greek food prepared by members of the church's volunteers' team.

The ladies from the Women's Fellowship prepared the popular honey puffs 'loukoumades' enjoyed by hundreds of church parishioners.

Battle of Crete Remembered

The Cretan Association of South Australia commemorated the 85th anniversary of the Battle of Crete on Tuesday 12 May at the National War Memorial on North Terrace, Adelaide.

Members of the Greek community of South Australia, were joined by Greek and Australian military representatives, Minister Tom Koutsantonis, Consul General Alexandra Theodoropoulou, Bishop Siliouan and other Greek community representatives.

The event included speeches and a wreath laying ceremony, commemorating the sacrifice of Greek and ANZAC soldiers who fell defending Crete during the German invasion in May 1941.

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Cultural, social and political events in South Australia

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The Cretan Federation of Australia marked the anniversary of the Battle of Crete with a wreath-laying ceremony on the 12th of May at the National War Memorial. Pictured among those attending are South Australian Treasurer Tom Koutsantonis MP, Greek Consul Alexandra Theodoropoulou, President of the Greek Community Peter Ppiros, Bishop Silouan, members of the Greek and Australian armed forces, and representatives of Greek community

Real estate sales slow down due to higher interest

Elevated interest rates have reduced the borrowing capacity of prospective home buyers, with many real estate agents reporting that the housing market is beginning to level out after a period of strong growth. The Reserve Bank increased interest rates by 0.25 percentage points to 4.35 per cent on Tuesday, placing the cash rate at its highest level since February 2025. While this move is aimed at controlling inflation, it is also increasing financial pressure on households and affecting housing affordability.

Property data firm Cotality reports that demand in the housing market is softening, while price growth is slowing across several mid-sized capital cities. This marks a shift from the post-pandemic boom period, when low interest rates and strong demand pushed property prices sharply higher. Now, higher borrowing costs and economic uncertainty are encouraging more cautious behaviour

among buyers.

For some Australians, these changes are already influencing major financial decisions. Trevor and Sonja Walter recently purchased their first home in Adelaide's northern suburbs after a six to eight-month search. The couple said the most recent rate rise prompted them to reassess their budget and carefully review what they could afford before proceeding with their purchase.

However, not all buyers are finding success in the current market. House hunter Hossein Ranjbar has struggled to secure a property in South Australia, explaining that many homes he is interested in are already beyond his budget. Despite making several offers, he has been consistently outbid, often by buyers with greater financial capacity. He believes the latest rate increase will make it even harder for him and his wife to enter the market.

Real estate agents are



also noticing a shift in buyer behaviour. Ray White agent Nick Borrelli, based in Adelaide's inner north-eastern suburbs, has observed increasing hesitation among potential buyers in recent months. He attributes this to uncertainty around interest rates and upcoming policy decisions, including the federal budget.

Despite this, some industry professionals believe the market is stabilising rather than declining sharply. While demand has eased compared

to previous months, interest from buyers remains steady, though more restrained. In western Sydney, Raine and Horne agent Allana Kazzi said that auction clearance rates in Parramatta have fallen to their lowest level since 2020.

South Australian auctioneer Brenton Ilic suggests that while higher interest rates increase repayments and affect affordability, they do not always lead to a major downturn, as the housing market often adapts to changing conditions.

Cyprus vine variety thrives in Australian conditions

An ancient grape variety from Cyprus is offering hope to Australia's struggling wine industry as climate change and rising water costs place pressure on growers. In South Australia's Riverland region, grower Yanni Koutouzis has successfully trialled Xynisteri, a drought-tolerant white wine grape known for surviving harsh heat and low rainfall.



ideal.

Unlike traditional grape varieties that require watering every few days, Mr Koutouzis's 800 Xynisteri vines can survive for months without irrigation. The thick-skinned grape is naturally resistant to heatwaves, pests, and dry conditions, making it well suited to the Riverland, which has experienced several years of below-average rainfall and extreme heat.

Xynisteri has a history stretching back more than 5,500 years in Cyprus. It was introduced to Australia in 2018 by researcher Dr Alexander Copper, who believed eastern Mediterranean grape varieties could better suit Australia's warming climate than traditional French varieties such as shiraz or chardonnay. After trials in McLaren Vale failed because of cooler conditions, the Riverland's hot climate and lime-stone-rich soil proved

Climate experts warn South Australia's wine regions could warm by nearly two degrees Celsius by 2070, increasing water demand and pressure on growers. At the same time, water prices in the Murray-Darling Basin have more than doubled in the past year, while wine over-supply has pushed grape prices to historic lows. Some Riverland growers now receive less than \$100 a tonne for grapes, forcing many to abandon crops.

Despite these challenges, drought-resistant varieties like Xynisteri are giving producers re-newed optimism. In the Barossa Valley, growers Paul and Mara Georgiadis have expanded their Xynisteri plantings after strong results and growing demand for white wine. For growers like Mr Koutouzis, the variety represents a sustainable future for Australian wine production in a hotter, drier climate.

Festival Hellenika showcases ancient and contemporary Greek culture

Festival Hellenika continues to shine as one of Adelaide's most vibrant cultural celebrations, bringing together music, film, ideas, and community. This year's program drew strong crowds, reflecting its growing popularity and diverse appeal.

The weekend opened on Friday 1 May at the Ikarian Hall, Unley, with the screening of The Greeks of South America by filmmaker Billy Cotsis. The documentary explored the rich history and resilience of Greek communities across Latin America, offering audiences an immersive cultural experience. Cotsis expressed his gratitude to the Festival Hellenika committee, performers, and community for creating such a meaningful and inclusive event.

On Saturday 2 May, Professor Andy Koronios presented Make Space for Earth at the Australian Space Centre, Lot Fourteen. His engaging talk explored the intersection of space technology, ethics, and philosophy, offering insight into how innovation can address



In the photo, Irene Kavooris and presenter Kris Ferguson talking about the Hellenika Festival on 5EBI-FM multicultural radio.

real-world challenges while remaining grounded in human values.

The weekend concluded on Sunday 3 May at Lockleys Community Centre with the launch of book 'Whose Is This Song? Balkan Nationalism, Greece and Shared Culture', hosted by the editor of the book Eleni Elefterias-

Kostakidis. The event blended film, discussion, food and live music, with performances by Eleni and Felicia Harris, alongside contributions from Dr Helen Vatsikopoulos and Billy Cotsis. The afternoon sparked thoughtful discussion on shared cultural identity, with the Consul General of Greece Dr Alexandra Theodoropoulou



In the photo, Irene Kavooris, Dr Helen Vatsikopoulos, Greek Consul General South Australia - Dr Alexandra Theodoropoulou, Billy Cotsis, Sotiris (Sam) Simos) and Eleni Elefterias-Kostakidis

also in attendance, expressing their pleasure at the event's success.

Festival Hellenika President Dr Adoni Fotopoulos reflected on the festival's growth: "What started as a handful of Greek cultural events 35 years ago has grown into a three-month-long festival... This year

we've had sold-out events, often scrambling to find extra seating... It was a joy to host Sydney creatives... My hope is for more cultural cross-pollination in future festivals."

Visit the festival website for the full program.

<https://festivalhellenika.org.au/events/>