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# GREEK TRIBUNE

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## AUSTRALIAN NEWS

### Record renewables share in grid as power demand climbs

A report by the Australian Energy Market Operator has revealed that renewable energy powered 46 per cent of Australia's national electricity market, in the three months to December, a record high, while coal's contribution dipped below 50 per cent for the first time.

AEMO attributed the shift to increased solar and wind generation and coal plant outages.

Despite this, power prices remained high due to reliance on costly gas generation and transmission constraints.

Energy Minister Chris Bowen highlighted

the need for new infrastructure to share affordable renewables across the grid, saying, "More renewables bring wholesale prices down".

Southern states like South Australia and Victoria benefited from better transmission, while constraints in NSW and Queensland kept prices higher, according to the report.

Clean Energy Council spokesperson Chris O'Keefe noted that renewables, supported by storage and upgraded transmission, were the key to building a cleaner, lower-cost energy future for Australia.

### Five bucks an hour may solve crisis in disability care

The Health Services Union is calling on the Federal Government to approve a five dollar per hour wage increase to address a critical shortage of disability care workers.

The call comes as Australia faces a shortfall of 100,000 positions, with one-in-four disability workers planning to leave the sector.

The growing demand for National Disability Insurance Scheme services, coupled with high emotional burnout

and limited career development, has created an increasingly difficult environment for people relying on disability support.

Union secretary Lloyd Williams argued that disability workers must be fairly rewarded, similar to recent pay increases for aged care and childcare staff.

The proposed pay rise, which would cost 900 million dollars over three years, would aim to improve staffing, supervision, and working conditions.

### Long-term homelessness grows amid housing cost crunch

A new report from the Productivity Commission has found that persistent homelessness rose by 25 per cent over the past five years, with almost 38,000 Australians experiencing long-term homelessness in 2023/2024.

Despite 1.5 billion dollars in annual funding to address the issue, one-in-three people seeking accommodation through homelessness services received no assistance.

Homelessness Australia CEO Kate Colvin highlighted the grim findings, noting

that even those who secured housing often struggled to maintain it.

While early intervention prevented homelessness in just over 80 per cent of cases, the rising cost of housing and utilities, up nearly 25 per cent since the pandemic, has continued to push vulnerable Australians into crisis.

Advocates have called for increased Centrelink payments and better rent assistance, to address ongoing rental stress, with 42 per cent of recipients spending over 30 per cent of their income on rent.

## GREEK COMMUNITY TRIBUNE

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## Santorini takes measures as tremors continue

After a series of strong tremors, hundreds of residents and tourists fled the Greek island of Santorini. Authorities closed schools and indoor venues, halted construction, and advised people to empty pools and avoid coastal areas due to the risk of landslides. Although no damage or injuries have been reported, seismologists caution that the intense seismic activity could persist for weeks, even months. The mayor urged calm, reassuring the public that emergency measures are in place. Increased ferry and flight services are helping those leaving the island.

Authorities enforced measures on last week as tremors continued to shake the popular tourist island of Santorini and hundreds fled. Schools were closed until the end of the week on Santorini and surrounding islands,

and indoor social gatherings were cancelled and prohibited. Measures also included the cessation of construction work, and authorities advised the emptying of pools.

With seismologists estimating that the intense seismic activity could take days or weeks to abate, people were also advised to stay out of coastal areas due to the risk of landslides. Lines continued to form at travel agents as people bought tickets to leave the island. Overnight hundreds boarded a ferry heading out.

Seasonal worker Beni Ouklala said he was leaving with his family to find some calm. But local resident Eftichis Diamantopoulos shrugged off the tremors. Over the last days extra flights have been put on by carriers while ferries have been packed full of people leaving.

Hundreds of quakes, with a magnitude as high as



Quakes keep shaking famous Greek tourist island

around 4.9 have been registered in the sea between the volcanic islands of Santorini and Amorgos in the Aegean Sea since Friday, said Greek experts. There has been no damage or injuries.

Santorini Mayor Nikos Zorzos called for calm and patience, saying the tremors could last weeks and adding emergency measures were

in place in case of a larger quake. Emergency rescue crews have been sent to the island pre-emptively in case of a larger quake.

Greece is one of the most earthquake-prone countries in Europe as it sits at the boundary of the African and Eurasian tectonic plates whose constant interaction prompts frequent quakes.

## SA's wine industry kicks off early vintage season

South Australia's wine industry has kicked off one of its earliest vintages on record, off the back of a challenging year of drought, heat and frost.

Picking has already begun in some of the state's major wine regions — a month or more earlier than usual.

But while some yields are expected to be down, the industry remains hopeful of excellent quality SA wines as a result.

Renmark grower Jack Papageorgiou said it was the earliest he had started picking grapes in his 50 years in the Riverland. "We had a mild winter and a bit warmer spring, and that sort of brought a lot of our crops earlier. We noticed cherries were very early, so there was an indication we're coming to an early season", he said.

Riverland Wine Grape-growers chair Ashley Ratcliff started harvesting in the second week of January, and agreed it could be one of the earliest ever starts for the region.

"[I'm] not quite sure why

the harvest started earlier but a lot of wine companies have started getting sparkling off which is important and it's also really good because we've had this heat, so anything off is a bit of a bonus," Mr Ratcliff said.

"People who haven't been affected by frost have actually got reasonable crops."

The Riverland, Barossa and Clare valleys suffered extensive crop damage in September due to a series of frosts, and the state has just sweltered through an extensive heatwave.

"A lot of growers are starting to see the impact of the frosts — low yields and that's causing them challenges in respect to scheduling and hitting their estimate tonnes," Mr Ratcliff said.

The good news is that many winemakers are reporting back good quality from the fruit they are picking.

"Feedback I've had from winemakers both large and small has been really encouraging, so the 2025 vintage looks like it could be a very good one," Mr Ratcliff said.



Cooltong winegrape grower Jack Papageorgiou

In the Clare Valley, picking of the famous riesling variety was in full swing.

Jim Barry Wines general manager Tom Barry said it was their earliest vintage since 2016, and said it was challenging but promising.

After a dry 2024, the winery has had to increase irrigation, watering more regularly and deeper into the soil.

"With the dry weather, things are coming on reasonably quickly," Mr Barry said.

"A year like this throws up a few challenges ... [but] our

vineyards are looking really, really good considering."

Fifth generation Barossa Valley grape grower Tammy Schutz supplies fruit for high end red wines and also expects an early vintage.

"We are almost a month early this year for vintage," Mrs Schutz said.

"Bud burst was earlier, and unfortunately a lot of growers around the valley were hit by frost.

For the famous Barossa reds, the quantity was expected to be lower but quality high.

## International Womens' Day 2025

As women around the world are preparing to celebrate International Women's Day in March, the Greek Orthodox Community of SA is in turn organising a special event to mark this special day, inviting all everyone to come along.

The event to celebrate International Women's Day is to be on Friday 7 March 2025 at Olympic Hall at 6.45pm.

Guest speakers for the evening are the Hon Minister Andrea Michaels, Olivia Savas MP and the Greek Consul General Alexandra Theodoropoulou.

The theme for this year's event is "Marching Forward". A cultural program will be presented by the Meraki Ensemble.

## Community Life



Dancers of the Adelaide Greek Lyceum at the Cyprus festival

### GOCSA to celebrate 1821 uprising

The Greek Orthodox Community of S.A. will honour for

yet another year this historic day with the following scheduled events:

SUNDAY 30 MARCH 2025 at 11.00am, celebratory Doxology at the Cathedral of Archangels

Michael and Gabriel, conducted by the Community's clergy. A large number of official guests have been invited to attend. The Executive and Supervisory Committees as well as teaching staff and students will also be present. The celebrations will continue at the church's courtyard, in front of the war memorial, with a memorial service, a wreath laying ceremony and the two national anthems.

After the memorial service, the Community's Greek schools will continue the celebrations with a special student's event, at the Olympic Hall, featuring songs, poems and short sketches depicting the heroic tales of the 1821 Epos.

Food and drinks available. All members of the local Greek community welcome.





## Cultural, social and political events in South Australia

Contact: Harri on 0484 387 818 - or email your community's news or a photo: info@greektribune.com.au



**TOP LEFT:** At the official opening of the Cyprus Festival 2025, were the former Victorian Labor politician and current President of the Cyprus Community Theo Theofanous, former Premier Mike Rann and Member for Adelaide Steve Georganas MP.

**TOP RIGHT:** Mike Rann, Adelaide Mayor Dr Jane Lomax Smith and husband Tim.

**LEFT:** Consul General of Greece Alexandra Theodoropoulou, President of Greek Community of SA Peter Ppiros, Premier Peter Malinauskas, President of Cyprus Community Andreas Evdokiou, Minister Andrea Michaels MP and Chris Ioannou

### BEAUMONT CHILDREN MYSTERY

## New search prompted by new information

An upcoming dig for the Beaumont children will likely be the last chance to conduct another search for their remains at a former factory site before the land is sold off, the SA MP behind the idea says.

The disappearance of the three young Beaumonts — nine-year-old Jane, seven-year-old Arna and four-year-old Grant — on Australia Day in 1966 is one of the nation's most baffling and tragic cold cases.

After the three siblings went missing from Adelaide's Glenelg beach, several witnesses provided a description of the children being seen with a tall, tanned, thin-faced man, with short blond hair.

Independent MP Frank Pangallo said a third search at the former Castalloy site scheduled to begin on Saturday, February 22, would be more extensive than previous efforts, in 2013 and 2018, which failed to reveal any signs of the missing children.

Mr Pangallo said the private search would be conducted by a local earth moving firm in conjunction with two forensic archaeologists "who are experts in looking for bodies", as well as university students.

"The site has now been cleared and the government is about to put it up for sale and the government has received many

inquiries from people asking 'well now that you've flattened the site why don't you have another look and see if there's anything there',” Mr Pangallo told ABC Radio Adelaide.

He said police and the SA government had been informed of the upcoming work, adding new information had since come to light suggesting the 2018 excavation might "not have gone deep enough".

"They didn't excavate at the right level because a considerable amount of fill had been put on top, so what's going to happen this time is it'll be over a wider area and it'll go down deeper and also include these two other sites," he said.

"They'll comb the area and look for any sign that there are any kind of remains there or any activity that there had been decomposition in the soil, so it's quite an involved dig, this one.

SA Police said those involved in the new search had "kept SAPOL apprised of their plans and their rationale for the renewed activity".

"The individuals conducting the fresh excavation at the site are following a theory that SAPOL believes is not supported by evidence and available information," a police spokesperson said.

"SAPOL will monitor the



The enduring mystery of Adelaide's Beaumont children missing since 1966

excavation as it proceeds." The site on Mooringe Avenue at North Plympton was once owned by Adelaide businessman Harry Phipps, who died in 2004.

Police have previously described Mr Phipps — along with about a dozen others — as a person of interest.

Mr Phipps's son Haydn, who was 15 at the time the children went missing, claimed to have seen the children at his family home in Glenelg.

He also told police he was violently abused by his father as a child.

Police previously said that ongoing investigations had prompted two brothers to come forward and tell police they had dug a hole

for Mr Phipps at the site the same year the Beaumonts disappeared.

"You can't categorically say that the children were murdered by Mr Phipps or that the remains are at Castalloy but there is enough information to suggest that it is worth exploring this site one more time to eliminate this possibility," Mr Pangallo said.

"It's still a heartbreaking story 59 years on."

The Beaumont parents both passed away without knowing what had happened to the children.

Nancy Beaumont died in 2019, a year after the last search at Castalloy, and Grant Beaumont — also known as Jim — passed away in 2023.

(Source: ABC)

## Australians found to pay more for dental care

Australia spent 11.1 billion dollars on dental care in 2021 to 2022, ranking sixth among OECD countries for per capita expenditure.

However, its public funding ranks poorly, sliding to 23rd in the OECD, according to the medical publication, the Australian Dental Journal.

Analysis, based on OECD data, found that 60 per cent of dental health costs are borne by individuals at 6.67 billion dollars, with 2.16 billion dollars from health insurance, 1.3 bil-

lion dollars from the federal government, and one billion dollars from state and territory governments.

This has contributed to rising untreated dental issues due to affordability challenges.

In contrast, countries like Poland, Japan, France, and Germany have more inclusive systems, with higher government contributions or comprehensive insurance coverage, offering dental care at lower costs or even free for certain demographics.

## Blood cancer set to become most common cancer

Blood cancer is being called Australia's silent killer and is set to become the country's most common and deadly cancer by 2035, currently claiming 16 lives daily.

Cases have risen 79 per cent in 20 years, yet only 12 per cent of research funding has gone to prevention and early detection.

The Leukaemia Foundation has urged support for its World's Greatest Shave fundraising campaign, now

in its 27th year, aiming to raise 12 million dollars.

With no known cause, screening process or prevention methods, research is crucial.

The foundation has funded 365 research grants since 2000 and relies on public donations to aid the 140,000 families currently battling blood cancer, receiving only a small portion of government funding.

## Drop in school enrolments, attendance and retention

School attendance in Australia has hit a 10-year low, with only 85.9 per cent of students attending regularly in 2024, according to The Productivity Commission's report on education services.

Retention rates have also fallen, with over 20 per cent of students not completing

Year 12.

Government school enrolments are at a record low of 63.9 per cent, despite educating more disadvantaged students. Private school funding growth has slowed slightly, while public school funding increased by 5.5 per cent, according to the report.

## The passport processing headache greeting Australian travellers

Issues continue with the national SmartGate passport processing system, resulting in long queues at Sydney and Melbourne airports, with ongoing failures increasingly impacting travellers and frustrating industry stakeholders.

The technology, designed to streamline border clearance, has faced technical faults and delays since its rollout in 2015, despite a ballooning budget now exceeding 120 million dollars.

New figures have shown that only 57 per cent of inbound passengers use SmartGates, falling short of the Government's original 90 per

cent target.

Industry leaders, including the Australian Airports Association, have called for urgent improvements as congestion worsens.

Issues have also compounded as staffing levels at processing desks have reduced.

While international hubs like Singapore have reduced clearance times to 10 seconds, Australia's average is 72 seconds, excluding queuing times.

As the country aims to welcome a record number of international passenger numbers by 2030, stakeholders have increasingly called for government action to modernise the system.