



October 2026

GREEK TRIBUNE

www.greektribune.com.au - Mobile: 04 0886 5004 - Email: info@greektribune.com.au

AUSTRALIAN NEWS

Former State MP escapes jail over allowance claims

Former South Australian MP Fraser Ellis has avoided jail after being convicted of seven counts of deception over the misuse of a parliamentary accommodation allowance.

The former Narunga MP appeared in Adelaide Magistrates Court and was sentenced to 10 months' imprisonment, suspended on condition he enter a 12-month good-behaviour bond.

Magistrate Simon Smart said Ellis had deliberately made false claims under the Country Members Allowance, which helps regional MPs cover accommodation costs when travelling for parliamentary duties.

The court heard Ellis fraudulently received \$4,676 through dishonest claims covering 20 nights between December 2018 and May 2020. The money has since been repaid.

Mr Smart said the

offending involved "gross breaches of trust", stressing that public officials were expected to act honestly when dealing with public money.

Ellis was elected as a Liberal MP in 2018 but became an independent after the allegations emerged in 2021. He was initially convicted of four deception offences in 2024 and acquitted of 19 others. Following a prosecution appeal, three additional convictions were recorded this year.

After sentencing, Ellis said he was grateful the six-and-a-half-year legal proceedings had ended but continued to disagree with the court's finding that his actions were criminal.

He described his conduct as "casualness" or "recklessness" with paperwork and said he accepted the punishment and wanted to move forward.

\$123.7m cost for elderly patients stuck in hospitals

The South Australian Government spent more than \$123.7 million during 2025-26 caring for elderly patients who were medically ready to leave hospital but remained there because no aged-care places were available.

According to SA Health figures tabled in Parliament, the average daily cost for each patient waiting for an aged-care place was \$1,318. On Monday, 487 elderly patients were in this situation, compared with just 60 in October 2022.

State Health Minister Blair Boyer described the situation as a "crisis", warning that a shortage of aged-care beds was placing significant pressure on the health system. The State Government estimates that South Australia's population aged over

70 will almost double over the next 30 years.

COTA SA chief executive Miranda Stark said hundreds of elderly people were effectively "stuck" in hospitals when they would prefer to be at home or in appropriate care facilities. In some cases, the wait for an aged-care place can be as long as four years.

The State Government maintains that aged care is a federal responsibility. However, it has announced a \$250 million interest-free loan program aimed at creating 650 new aged-care beds.

The Federal Government, meanwhile, says it is investing \$47 billion in the aged-care system and expanding home-support packages to help reduce pressure on hospitals.

Australia Tightens Migration Rules

Australia is introducing stricter migration rules targeting international students, "visa hoppers" and backpackers as the government seeks greater control over immigration.

Home Affairs Minister Tony Burke announced the changes on Thursday, saying immigration remained a "strength" for Australia but required a "high level of control".

International students will generally no longer be able to bring family members to Australia. Exemptions will apply to students already in the country, applicants from Pacific and South-East Asian countries and PhD students.

The government will also crack down on "visa hopping", where students complete one

course and then apply for another, sometimes at a lower qualification level. Students will be permitted to progress to higher qualifications, such as moving from a bachelor's degree to a master's.

Working holiday visas, widely used by backpackers and an important source of agricultural labour, will also face a new ballot system. Holders aged 18 to 30 can currently work in Australia for 12 months and extend their stay by completing specified regional work.

Under the changes, those qualifying for a second year will enter a ballot capped at 45,000 places, compared with 57,000 who qualified last year. The third-year ballot will be capped at 5,000, down from 31,000.

British working holidaymakers will be exempt under the Australia-UK free trade agreement.

The changes form part of the government's plan to reduce net overseas migration to 225,000 by 2028.

Australian Bureau of Statistics figures showed the population reached 27.9 million in March 2026, rising 1.4 per cent over 12 months. Net overseas migration accounted for 292,100 people.

Migration remains politically contentious amid concerns over housing, living costs and pressure on public services.

Settlement Services International chief executive Violet Roumeliotis warned that restricting family members



Minister for Immigration
Tony Burke MP

could make Australia less competitive in attracting future talent.

Small businesses struggle as costs rise

Small businesses across regional Australia are warning that rising costs, online competition and changes to card payment rules are threatening their survival.

In Keith, South Australia, clothing retailer Francene Martin recently experienced a trading day without a single sale despite offering a 50 per cent discount. After 16 years in business, the owner of Retail Therapy said conditions had never been tougher.

Ms Martin said local retailers struggle to compete with online giants such as Amazon, Temu and Shein, which can offer prices small businesses cannot match. She described feeling disheartened after opening on a Sunday and making no sales.

The pressure is being felt nationwide. In Ballarat, Victoria, Prey Café operations

manager Frazer Wyley recently highlighted the difficulties facing hospitality businesses in a social media post that attracted thousands of comments and shares.

Mr Wyley said many operators are questioning how they can remain viable as costs rise. He pointed to the sector's slim profit margins, with wages, superannuation, ingredients, packaging, utilities and EFTPOS fees consuming much of the revenue from a cup of coffee.

Further concern surrounds payment rules due to take effect on October 1, when businesses will no longer be able to apply surcharges to card transactions. While the Reserve Bank says the reforms will reduce transaction costs and save businesses millions of dollars annually, some advocates fear



operators will have to absorb the costs.

CreditorWatch's August Business Risk Index found that one in eight Australian cafés and restaurants closed during the past year, while payment defaults increased nationally for a third consecutive month.

CreditorWatch chief economist Ivan Colhoun said small businesses are facing

"mounting shocks", including inflation, higher interest rates and changing consumer spending habits. Although inflation has eased, prices remain significantly higher than five years ago.

Ms Martin and Mr Wyley are urging consumers to support local businesses, saying local spending helps protect jobs, services and vibrant regional communities.

Odyssey Cultural Festival 2026

With the 19th Greek Odyssey Festival just around the corner, it gives us great pleasure to present this year's vibrant program of cultural events. We begin with the official festival launch on 2 October 2026 at the heart of Adelaide's Greek community, the historic Olympic Hall, where the winners of the 2026 Greek Odyssey Art Prize will be announced.

This year's festival, titled Across the Seas – Stories of Migration, is dedicated to the generations of Greek migrants who crossed oceans in search of a new home and a brighter future in Australia. Their journeys, sacrifices and achievements have helped shape the rich cultural legacy we celebrate today.

The Odyssey program offers something for everyone. Highlights include a bilingual lecture by the Consul General of Greece,

Community Life



Alexandra Theodoropoulou at the Olympic Hall, on Sunday 11 October 2026, at 5.30pm exploring the future of the Greek language in the age of artificial intelligence. The Festival will also present the Greek Australian Writers' Festival, coordinated by Helen Vatsikopoulos, featuring renowned authors and literary voices from across the nation.

The Greek Film Festival

returns to Nova Cinemas from 15 October, presenting six outstanding films that showcase the best of contemporary Greek cinema. All screenings will be in Greek with English subtitles, ensuring they can be enjoyed by a broad audience.

The festival will conclude with a special concert, I Diki Mou I Patrida, directed by Sofia Arhontoulis and presented at Olympic Hall on

27 November. This moving tribute will honour two of Greece's most beloved composers, Marios Tokas and Manos Loizos.

The Greek Odyssey Festival is far more than a series of events; it is a celebration of our culture and a bridge between generations. Through music, dance, literature, film, food and tradition, it brings together young and old alike while welcoming the wider Australian community to experience and appreciate our heritage.

On behalf of the Greek Orthodox Community of South Australia, we warmly invite you, your family and friends to join us and be part of this year's celebrations. Together, let us honour our culture, our history and the enduring spirit of our community.

For more information, please obtain a copy of the Festival Program Booklet from the office of the Greek Orthodox Community of South Australia, 262 Franklin Street, Adelaide. Telephone: (08) 8231 4307.

GREEK COMMUNITY TRIBUNE

ABN: 55 829 388 691

Correspondence to: The Editor,
BOX 330, FULHAM GARDENS,
SOUTH AUSTRALIA, 5024

Phone: 0408 865004

Website: www.greektribune.com.au

E-mail: info@greektribune.com.au



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



ABOVE: Members of the revitalised Cyprus Community Dance Group performing at the Father's Day celebration held on 6 September at the Cyprus Community of South Australia Club.



ABOVE: Members of the newly elected Cyprus Community committee, led by new President Yannoulla Michael, together with members of the Ladies Auxiliary, at the recent Father's Day celebration.

Fraser Ellis says errors were mistakes, not dishonesty

Former South Australian MP Fraser Ellis has admitted making mistakes in claiming parliamentary allowances but insists he did not knowingly act dishonestly, a court has heard.

The 34-year-old former Member for Narungga appeared in the Adelaide Magistrates Court ahead of sentencing on seven counts of deception relating to the misuse of the Country Members Accommodation Allowance between November 2018 and May 2020.

The allowance is intended to assist regional MPs who must travel for parliamentary duties. Ellis was originally convicted of four deception charges in 2024 and acquitted of 19 others. However, the Director of Public

Prosecutions successfully appealed three acquittals, resulting in a total of seven convictions.

Defence counsel Scott Henchcliffe KC told the court Ellis had been accused of falsely claiming 78 nights of accommodation worth \$18,095, but was convicted over only 20 nights valued at \$4,676. "He accepted that he made mistakes and he was too casual in his approach," Mr Henchcliffe said. "He maintains he did not knowingly act dishonestly."

The defence argued the claims were not part of an organised scheme and occurred in a "haphazard" manner. Mr Henchcliffe urged the court not to record a conviction and instead consider a good behaviour bond.

"He feels strongly that



his reputation has been tarnished by the outcome and he feels quite depressed about that," he said.

Prosecutor James Slocombe argued the offences were too serious to avoid a conviction and called for a short suspended prison sentence.

"Your Honour needs to

consider the need for public deterrence," he said.

The court heard Ellis had repaid \$24,130 to the House of Assembly before charges were laid.

Elected to Parliament in 2018 at age 25, Ellis lost the seat of Narungga at the 2026 state election to One Nation's Chantelle Thomas.

Greeks abroad demand support from Athens

Greek migrant organisations in Germany, the Netherlands, France, Belgium, Sweden, Denmark, Britain, Cyprus and Canada have staged protests and demonstrations in recent days.

The rallies were held outside Greek embassies and consulates, as well as in central squares in cities where Greek migrants live and work.

Demonstrators highlighted their demands for action to address the problems they face in their daily lives, while also expressing their support for the struggles of the Greek people and the nationwide rally held at the Thessaloniki International Fair on September 5.

In resolutions issued following the demonstrations, the organisations stressed that Greeks who migrated abroad in recent years, as well as those who left Greece decades ago, are facing problems including the rising cost of

living, inflation, increased energy and heating costs, low wages and job insecurity. At the same time, they criticised the Greek state for failing to provide meaningful solutions to issues affecting Greeks living abroad.

Particular concern was expressed over inadequate funding and staff shortages at Greek consulates. According to the organisations, lengthy delays in the issuing of documents and the processing of administrative matters result in waiting periods of several months for appointments, lost wages, additional travel expenses and considerable inconvenience. In some areas, Greek consulates have ceased operating altogether, forcing citizens to travel to other cities to access consular services.

Strong criticism was also directed at the state of Greek-language education abroad. The organisations argue that staff shortages,



inadequate infrastructure and the closure of Greek schools and Greek Language Departments are making it increasingly difficult for younger generations to maintain their language and cultural identity.

Many families, they point out, are forced to bear the financial burden of their children's education, while students often have to travel to other cities to attend classes.

Among their key

demands are the immediate staffing of consular authorities with permanent personnel, the speedy processing of urgent cases, the reopening and strengthening of Greek schools, and full coverage of the needs of Greek-language education.

They are also calling for greater support for community organisations and for cultural, scientific and sporting associations operating in the countries where Greek migrants live.

A MESSAGE ON THE ANNIVERSARY OF THE PROCLAMATION OF THE REPUBLIC OF CYPRUS

This year marks 66 years since the proclamation of the independence of the Republic of Cyprus, a historic achievement for the Cypriot people as a whole. Despite the limitations and shortcomings that characterized the independence agreement, it represented an important step forward in our nation's journey.

Unfortunately, the foreign and domestic interventions, conspiracies, and betrayals that followed led Cyprus into new tragedies, culminating in the treacherous military Greek junta coup, the Turkish invasion of 1974, the continuing occupation, and the unlawful division of our homeland.

Despite these difficult circumstances, the Republic of Cyprus has, over its 66 years of independent existence, achieved significant progress in almost every area of economic development, social policy, and culture. This progress is, above all, the result of the hard work, creativity, and perseverance of the Cypriot people.

We must always remember that the Republic of Cyprus remains our strongest political and legal instrument in the struggle to end the occupation, overcome division, and achieve the reuni-



fication of Cyprus within the framework of a bicomunal, bizonal federation. If Australia, a country whose people come from dozens of different national and cultural backgrounds - can prosper through cooperation, mutual respect, and harmonious coexistence, then Cyprus too can evolve into a truly independent and multicultural state, a common homeland for all its people.

As Cypriots and as refugees living in Australia, we send these messages to our homeland together with the assurance that we will continue to stand steadfastly alongside the Cypriot people. At the same time, we appeal for unity and solidarity. The time has come to put aside our internal divisions and focus on our common goal: ending the occupation and securing the future of Cyprus. In today's geopolitical environment, what is at stake is not only our country's natural and offshore wealth, but also the very existence of our homeland as we have known it and inherited it.

Honouring Heritage, Building Wealth with Pareia

For Panos Kavarinos, Director and Principal Broker of Pareia Broking Advisory, success is about more than securing finance—it is about building lasting relationships and helping families protect their future.

With Greek roots tracing back to Lesvos and a family history built on hard work and resilience, Panos has created Pareia around two enduring Greek values: philoxenia—hospitality—and pareia—a trusted circle of companions.

Pareia Broking Advisory provides a comprehensive range of services, including home, commercial and business lending, SMSF loans, equipment finance, buyers' advocacy, insurance and funds management. Whether helping a first-home

buyer enter the market, supporting a growing family business or helping clients structure their long-term financial goals, Pareia takes a personal, solutions-focused approach.

Panos understands the importance of family and the challenges faced by Greek-Australian families, particularly when navigating property, family guarantees, business finance and changing financial markets. His philosophy is simple: professional advice should be clear, accessible and built around each client's circumstances.

Pareia's mission is straightforward: find the right loan for you, give you back time, remain always a phone call away, and act as your partner for life.

Discover more at www.pareiabroking.au.