

Labor revs up buy-OZ plans

JAMES CAMPBELL

ANTHONY Albanese will put the spending power of the commonwealth at the centre of a plan to revive industry if Labor wins the next election.

In a speech to the NSW Labor conference today, Mr Albanese will announce that Labor will create a Future Made in Australia Office that will sit at the centre of Labor's Buy Australia Plan.

The office will operate under new commonwealth procurement rules that will aim to



help local businesses get a bigger slice of government purchases.

The policy is aimed at helping Australian firms win a bigger share of government infrastructure spending.

The commonwealth spends about 3 per cent of GDP a year on procurement, with \$53.9bn in contracts recorded on the AusTender website for financial year 2019-2020.

"Under the Buy Australian Act, maximising the benefit of government purchases to Australia will be the law of the land," Labor leader Mr Albanese, pictured, will say.

Labor says that 95 per cent of the top 20 infrastructure projects worth more than \$500m over the past five years went to foreign companies.

Mr Albanese also wants to increase the share of government money going to the country's small and medium businesses, especially infrastructure projects.

"Labor will provide opportunities for mid- and small-tier Australian companies to participate in the infrastructure pipeline, helping to build and strengthen our sovereign capability," he said.

"This will be done by packaging tenders where appropriate into multiple packages that allow smaller companies to bid for them.

"We will work with states and territories to ensure that the \$20bn provided annually through National Partnership Agreements is consistent with

a national agreement on a Future Made in Australia.

"Together these plans will ensure that Australia's capacity to manufacture essential goods in areas including health, energy, infrastructure, defence and space and communications is increased and that we are more resilient."

Mr Albanese's plan will also pledge to clean up the commonwealth's Indigenous procurement policies, which have been criticised for focusing too much on ownership and not

enough on how many Indigenous people actually benefit from them.

He will argue that Indigenous procurement policy is about more than just the number of Indigenous procurement contracts or the value of these contracts.

He will seek to maximise employment and skills transfers to Indigenous communities and people so that these contracts provide people with the opportunity to get properly involved in long-term skilled work.

VOGUE



Adele in the upcoming November edition of British Vogue magazine. Picture: British Vogue/Steven Meisel

WOMEN WERE BRUTAL: ADELE BLASTS BODY OBJECTIFYING

TIFFANY BAKKER, NADIA SALEMME

SINGER Adele felt "f...king disappointed" that it was women having the most "brutal conversations" about her dramatic weight loss.

"My body's been objectified my entire career," the 33-year-old Grammy winner said in her Vogue cover story. "I understand why some women especially were hurt," she told Vogue.

"Visually I represented a

lot of women. But I'm still the same person," she said.

"And the worst part of the whole thing was that the most brutal conversations were being had by other women about my body.

"I was very f...king disappointed with that. That hurt my feelings."

Adele last year revealed she had lost about 45kg after exercising over a two-year period partly to ease anxiety.

She appears on the covers of US and British Vogue, the

first time the fashion magazines have co-ordinated a cover star across multiple issues. In a revealing interview, the notoriously private star opened up about her divorce and image makeover, and the much-anticipated release of her fourth album, due out next month.

The album will be her first in six years - and comes in the wake of her divorce from ex-husband Simon Konecki. The former couple split in April

2019 after seven years. Adele told Vogue that she ended the marriage to Konecki and "would have been miserable had she not put herself first".

"When I was 30, my entire life fell apart and I had no warning of it," she said. "It just wasn't right for me anymore. I didn't want to end up like a lot of other people I knew. It wasn't miserable, but I would have been miserable had I not put myself first."

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France's frosty bonjour

ELLEN RANSLEY

THE French Ambassador has warned that despite his return to Australia, Canberra must work hard to repair the damage it caused to the two countries' relationship.

In his first interview since he left Australia last month, Jean-Pierre Thebault (pictured) said his return showed that France was "absolutely ready" to put things back on track.

"(Whether we are friends again) remains to be seen," he told Radio National on Friday. France pulled its ambassador from



Canberra amid claims it had been "stabbed in the back" after the Australian government forged a new nuclear submarines deal through a partnership with the UK and US.

The AUKUS subs deal meant the one made with the French government in 2016 worth, \$90bn, was scrapped.

Mr Thebault said: "Our relationship was not only about a contract and that is exactly the problem. That has created a breach of trust and the crisis between our countries is that this was only the tip of a much deeper co-operation. Cancelling all that without any warning, without any previous discussion, without minimum decency of talking to your ally is creating a deep crisis. We'll have to revise everything."

Prime Minister Scott Morrison said the relationship with France was "bigger than a contract". He is yet speak with French President Emmanuel Macron.

Money for rural sports

THE towns of Clare and Balaklava have shared in \$4m of federal government grants as part of the Building Better Regions Fund.

The Clare sports precinct will be redeveloped at a cost of \$2.5m, joining the North and South Clare clubs with a purpose-built sporting facility, upgraded lighting system and resurfaced oval.

The Wakefield Council will receive \$1.5m or 50 per cent of the cost of replacing the Balaklava pool which suffered significant damage last year.

The federal Member for Grey, Rowan Ramsey, said the pool is important.

"Balaklava is an inland community and a decent pool is essential," he said.



Females no longer dressed to kill

CORMAC PEARSON

AFTER motorbike riding became her escape, a Brisbane mother has become an inventor.

Stephanie Bofinger, from Brisbane, is changing the game for women in impact sports.

Ms Bofinger, pictured, always wanted to ride motorbikes but had to wait until her children were older before she could begin.

"At the time I went through domestic violence and I needed to escape ... I got my licence and my life changed," she said.

It wasn't until a charity motorcycle ride in the Simpson Desert that she realised she wasn't alone in suffering from uncomfortable female protective gear. Most protection is designed for men.

It took just over a year until Ms Bofinger had the completed prod-

uct in her hands, and she said it has already saved lives.

Her FemPro Armour can be used for impact sports and women over 60. It protects the chest without squashing breasts, which are prone to tissue damage on impact.

"There is nothing better than (receiving) a message saying someone has had a fall and not broken any ribs due to the product," Ms Bofinger said.