



Combined Small Business Alliance of Western Australia Inc. (CoSBA)

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NEXT MEETING: BOARD MEETING

To be advised

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- Media Release –New IR regime.pdf
- SMALL BUSINESS–"BOXING DAY" STATUS.pdf



WA jobless rate rises to 5.2%

The local economy should take heart in the increase of full time jobs in November despite the unemployment rate rising by 0.2 per cent, the Chamber of Commerce and Industry WA says. The Australian Bureau of Statistics today said that WA's jobless rate stood at a seasonally adjusted 5.2 per cent in November, up from 5 per cent recorded the previous month.

The number of people out of a job for the month increased from 60,700 to 64,100 while the percentage of people looking to get into the workforce increased slightly from 68 per cent in the previous month to 68.1 per cent. The number of people employed in full time positions increased from 818,900 to 823,500.

CCIWA senior economist Dana Mason said the state's unemployment rate is near its peak and will steadily decline in 2010. "Pleasingly, the latest employment data shows a rise in the number of full time jobs created during the month, which suggests the worst of the global economic slowdown is behind us, and that local employers are beginning to prepare for the next wave of economic growth," she said.

"Employers across the State are becoming increasingly concerned that as the local economy gathers pace, fuelled by a number of major resource and energy projects, the severe labour shortages that plagued the local economy in recent years will return."

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Meantime, there was a surprising fall in the national unemployment rate in November which has put a fourth consecutive rate rise by the Reserve Bank of Australia back on the table, economists say. (SOURCE/EXTRACT: *WA Business News*, Daily Business Alert, 10.12.09)

Bosses call for labour market flexibility

FROM the boardrooms of Sydney and Melbourne to the heavy workshops in Perth's burgeoning industrial strip, the message emerging from Australia's bullet-proof economy remains the same -- you can't maintain momentum without labour market flexibility.

As Australia's unemployment rate fell unexpectedly from 5.8 per cent to 5.7 per cent, the nation's leading chief executives continued to worry about increased labour market regulation crippling growth, particularly in the boom states of Western Australia and Queensland. Woodside chairman Michael Chaney, John Holland chairwoman Janet Holmes a Court, AGL's Michael Fraser, Wesfarmers boss Richard Goyder, CBA's Ralph Norris and others are cautiously optimistic about the economy but fear more devastating skill shortages.

As does Larry McLeod, who owns Westplate, a Perth-based heavy steel plating fabricator that supplies iron ore processors at Port Hedland, Newman and other Pilbara towns. His business is "flat out" and is expected, like so many other small to medium-sized businesses in the west, to cash in on the flow-down from the \$43 billion Gorgon LNG project next year.

AGL chief executive Michael Fraser said "labour constraints are likely to emerge as a key issue as we see the rollout of these massive energy projects such as Gorgon and the LNG projects in Gladstone. "There will be a need for policy to allow us to increase the country's productive capacity to meet the competing demands of the various major infrastructure projects around Australia."

Wesfarmers chief executive Richard Goyder expressed the need to "minimise the regressive outcomes (flowing from) the new workplace relations framework". David Jones boss Mark McInnes said "there was a need for careful management of wage increases in line with productivity improvements"

Myer chief Bernie Brookes was also worried about the impact the fair pay policy would have on business, with retailers concerned about labour shortages because of high staff turnover. CBA boss Ralph Norris went further, saying: "I am concerned that we may risk our strong productivity improvements achieved over the last decade with less flexible work arrangements, resulting in increased labour disputes and inflationary pressure. (SOURCE/EXTRACT: *The Australian*, 11.12.09)

CEOs warn on jobs squeeze

THE fastest jobs growth in three years has signalled the peak in unemployment and sparked concerns among chief executives that Australia will again be facing acute labour shortages with competition from government stimulus spending. The jobless rate fell to 5.7 per cent in November while 100,000 new jobs, most of them full-time, had been generated in the past three months.

The strength of the jobs market means the Reserve Bank is set to lift interest rates by a further 0.25 percentage points at its next meeting in February. The prospect of unemployment falling below 5 per cent next year could force interest rates higher, particularly if wages start rising.

The ANU's Warwick McKibbin, who sits on the Reserve Bank board, repeated his warning that the government's stimulus spending was too large. "It is a good idea to have a fiscal package in co-ordination with the world, but there was no point going above what the world was doing because all it was going to do was drive up the exchange rate and crowd out exports," Professor McKibbin told a Westpac forum.

The chairman of Woodside and the National Australia Bank, Michael Chaney, was among several senior executives to warn yesterday that this was a danger, particularly with demand from resource projects. "There is a fair chance we will have the same shortage of labour in Western Australia this year as we did before the global financial crisis, which presents a lot of positives and negatives and needs to be managed carefully," he said. "Tradespeople will be sucked up from the south into the north and there will be a lot of pressure on wages and salaries." (SOURCE/EXTRACT: *The Australian*, 11.12.09)

WA to adopt most of national OHS model

Commerce Minister Troy Buswell says WA will adopt the bulk of the proposed laws for a national occupational health and safety regime but will retain its own settings in some areas. Mr Buswell told the Workplace Relations Ministerial Council (WRMC) that WA supported the principle of OHS harmonisation. "WA has already agreed to the vast majority of recommendations for national harmonisation and is a strong supporter of maintaining a high level of workplace safety," Mr Buswell said.

"Areas where we are unlikely to introduce the model laws include changes to the level of penalties and right of entry; power for health and safety representatives to stop work; and reverse onus of proof for discrimination issues. "We also have concerns about changes to Category 1 and 2 offences in the model laws proposed by Safe Work Australia and adopted today by the WRMC. "WA has also indicated its willingness to participate in the Safe Work Australia framework but reserves its right not to adopt changes recommended by that process in the future."

Today's announcement is a turnaround from Mr Buswell's earlier position when he flagged the state would be unlikely to agree to join Safe Work Australia because of concerns about the union's preference for the scheme model. (SOURCE/EXTRACT: *WA Business News*, Daily Business Alert, 11.12.09)

Rudd's super plan

WA's mining boom is to be used by the Rudd Government to significantly increase Australians' superannuation nest eggs under a plan being hatched by Federal Cabinet. *The West Australian* understands the Prime Minister and his senior colleagues intend gradually lifting workers' 9 per cent superannuation guarantee to 12 per cent over coming years, beginning as early as next year.

But to do it, the Government will need unprecedented cooperation from unions and businesses to trade-off wage rises with incremental increases to the super guarantee, as part of a modern-day "Accord" last seen under the Keating government. As part of the plan, the Government would involve the Australian Fair Pay Commission to ensure increases to the super guarantee flowed to the lowest paid workers.

Mr Rudd and his Cabinet ministers view superannuation as "unfinished business" from the Hawke-Keating era and believe that the looming decades-long mining boom in WA, Queensland and the Northern Territory provides the perfect opportunity. They believe increasing super contributions would help prevent an inflation and interest rates spiral caused by another wages explosion. It means WA resources sector workers could be among the first to secure big increases in their superannuation.

But all workers stand to benefit from the push to improve retirement income adequacy from as early as July 1 next year, with the Government considering a 0.5 percentage point increase to the super guarantee as part of the May Budget. Moving to 12 per cent would generate huge long-term financial benefits for workers. (SOURCE/EXTRACT: *The Australian*, 12.12.09)

Corporate captains call for end to uncertainty

AUSTRALIA'S corporate elite are demanding more leadership from the government on key issues, saying it is time for decisions on climate change, taxation and infrastructure policy. While praising the Rudd government's actions to stave off recession, bosses have urged Canberra to end the uncertainty plaguing the business sector as it continues to battle tough economic conditions.

An exclusive survey of 34 of the nation's top chief executives conducted by The Weekend Australian in recent weeks reveals a lingering pessimism about the economic recovery next year. "Given the ongoing uncertainty that persists in many areas, we continue to be cautious about the year ahead; potential areas of concern include asset bubbles and central bank reaction, competitive currency devaluations and the continuing global pressure on sovereign credit," said Macquarie Group chief executive Nicholas Moore.

The caution is being fuelled by the wait for the federal government to make decisions on key issues. Mr Moore said business was eager for the results and the government's response to the Henry review of the tax system and Cooper review of the superannuation system, both due in the new year. (SOURCE/EXTRACT: *The Australian*, 12.12.09)

Buswell eyes \$100m windfall in new forecast

A turnaround in the State's economic fortunes could help the Government rake in \$100 million more in revenue than expected this financial year. However, it will still be under pressure to deliver on Premier Colin Barnett's pledge to maintain a surplus, with public sector wages growth still above target. Ahead of this Friday's mid-year economic review, Treasurer Troy Buswell said yesterday that improving business confidence had arrested a slide in the State's private sector investment. In light of this, the Treasury had been able to revise its growth forecasts for WA.

However, the Treasurer did confirm that public sector wages - which make up about 43 per cent of the Government's expenses - had grown by 8.5 per cent in the first four months of this financial year. While this was an improvement on the quarterly growth numbers of 12.4 per cent, it was still higher than the overall expense growth target of 6.6 per cent for this financial year. (SOURCE/EXTRACT: *The West Australian*, 14.12.09)

New individual job contracts ruled out

WORKPLACE Relations Minister Julia Gillard has ruled out offering any new form of individual contract in the lead-up to the next election as the government rolls out sweeping changes to employment standards and awards from January 1. New Year's Day will mark the introduction of a new national system of employment standards and streamlined awards. It follows an historic agreement last week for the states to harmonise national occupational health and safety laws, a measure Ms Gillard said had eluded governments for a generation.

The Coalition is preparing to contest the election due late next year by offering a new form of permanent individual contracts for workers. Employer groups want a focus on flexibility for higher income earners. That is an option Ms Gillard ruled out in an interview with *The Australian* yesterday, arguing the Rudd government had already got the balance right in dismantling the Howard government's "hated Work Choices".

"Absolutely not, no. We made a solemn promise to the Australian people in 2007. We have legislated that solemn policy," she said.

"We have got the balance right. We have consulted with the business community over the best part of two years now on the design and delivery of this system, the Fair Work system." The January 1 changes will ban employers and workers signing any new Interim Transitional Employment Agreement, put in place as a temporary measure after the ban on the Howard government's Australian Workplace Agreements.

Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry chief executive Peter Anderson said while employers welcomed the streamlined national system it was disappointing Ms Gillard was closing off any options on individual agreements. (SOURCE/EXTRACT: *The Australian*, 14.12.09)

Skills shortage looming

EMPLOYERS can no longer afford to think workers will be too spooked by the global financial crisis to change jobs, with a new survey finding most people have no more difficulty getting work now than last year. While 86 per cent of the 200 workers aged 20-34 surveyed by the Mercer consultancy in October said they thought the crisis would make it harder to find a job, when asked about their actual experiences more than half said it was "easier" or "about the same" to find work compared with 12 months ago.

Mercer executive Martin Turner said the findings showed a war for talent was back on the agenda, and employees were growing more comfortable to take a risk in their search for greener pastures. "We've been saying for some time now that the big picture for employers is around a looming skills shortage, which we are predicting will be worse than a couple of years ago," Mr Turner said. "The GFC has only been a temporary respite from those issues of skills shortages in the labour market. "There is now pressure on employers to have a sound understanding of the skills they need and how they are going to acquire them. (SOURCE/EXTRACT: *The Australian*, 14.12.09)

National IR laws could dilute protection

The federal government's uniform occupational health and safety laws could actually reduce protections for workers, the ACTU warns. The states and territories, except Western Australia, agreed at the Workplace Relations Ministerial Council in Melbourne on Friday to a model occupational health and safety (OHS) regime. Currently, there are 10 main OHS regimes across the nation and more than 400 regulations and codes of practice.

Workplace Relations Minister Julia Gillard said it was good news for business. But ACTU secretary Jeff Lawrence said the reform package would water down strong state-specific protections, such as those provided for in NSW. "I would have thought that a combination of a federal Labor government and state Labor governments would have had an objective of improvement of workers health and safety," he told ABC Radio on Monday.

Ms Gillard refused to back away from the new policy. "Safe Work Australia can of course deal with technical issues, but the policy decisions have all been made," she said. (SOURCE/EXTRACT: *WA Business News*, Daily Business Alert, 14.12.09)

Union seeks to negotiate Rio's Pilbara contracts

Mining giant Rio Tinto faces a renewed push for a union-negotiated collective agreement among a small but strategic group of employees working on train operations for its Pilbara iron ore mines. *The Fin Review* (SOURCE/EXTRACT: *WA Business News*, Today's Business Headlines, 15.12.09)

Small business in for a shock

Fewer than half of Australia's small businesses are adequately prepared to deal with a further round of family friendly workplace laws that will take effect next month. *Sydney Morning Herald* (SOURCE/EXTRACT: *WA Business News*, Today's Business Headlines, 16.12.09)

Ex-unionists take Fair Work roles

Danny Cloghan, whose prior roles include being chief of staff to former health minister and attorney general Jim McGinty, is among six new appointments to Fair Work Australia. Minister for Workplace Relations Julia Gillard announced the appointments this week.

Under the federal government's new workplace relations system, Fair Work Australia commissioners are appointed to be "independent umpires". Ms Gillard said the newly appointed commissioners are "fair-minded and capable professionals from varied backgrounds". However, five of the six new commissioners come from a union background, with only one having experience with an employer group. (SOURCE/EXTRACT: *WA Business News*, Daily Business Alert, 16.12.09)



[Breakfast Mentoring](#)

Ever dreamed of buying, building & selling businesses and having some of your biggest pay days ever?

Yes! Then there are things you need to know and be doing NOW to make it happen!

This workshop is for sellers and buyers and will show you how to put a value on a business, significantly increase it's value AND turn it into a **MAGNET FOR BUYERS!**

If you've always wanted to own your own business but didn't know how to go about finding a good one? If you are a business owner and would like to control the sale process & decide when to sell and how much for? **THEN THIS WORKSHOP IS FOR YOU!**

So don't wait until it's too late. **START NOW!** Learn what you can be doing every day to buy, build and sell businesses. The best businesses don't go on to the open market — *they attract good buyers!*

Know how to determine what a business is worth

Decide and plan to buy or sell at the value you want at the time you want;

What smart buyers look for in a good business;

What you can do to add value to a business;

What are the biggest mistakes people make when buying or selling businesses;

How you can prepare yourself (and the business, if you are a seller) for the sale / purchase process;

Effectively presenting and selling a business—the process which is fair to both parties;

Buying & selling privately versus engaging a broker.

All Business Owners & Prospective Business Owners

It can take years to get a business “ready for sale”: it can take years to find the best business to buy for you – don't delay, learn what YOU need to be looking for and doing RIGHT NOW!

John Denton, Business Broker and Consultant with Performance Building Sales “Helping business owners realise their life's dreams through buying and selling businesses.”

Dates: Wednesday 9th December, 2009

Venue: Small Business Centre - Stirling, 45 Delawney St, BALCATTA WA 6021

Time: 9.00am to 1.00pm

Cost: \$110.00 per person inc GST, includes refreshments & workbook.

Don't miss out!! **Register Now.** Your business may be eligible for a FREE training voucher to go towards the cost of this workshop. Please direct any queries to [Maxine Scott](#) on 9240 6337.

Small Business Centre - Stirling (SBCS), 45 Delawney St, Balcatta WA 6021



SCC e-news 10th December 2009

Coming Events

Put these in your diary for 2010 and more details will follow in the New Year.

Tuesday 2nd February –

Network2000 5.30pm at The Eastern Hotel, Midland

Tuesday 9th February –

Breakfast Club with Hon Eric Ripper, Leader of the Opp. - 7.15am at the 7th Ave Bar & Restaurant, Midland

Wednesday 24th February –

Bi-Annual Meeting - 7.15am at The Eastern Hotel, Midland

Thursday 4th March –

Breakfast Club with Hon Ljiljana Ravlich - 7.15am at the 7th Ave Bar & Restaurant, Midland

Members News

American Chamber of Commerce

We are pleased to invite you to the annual American Chamber of Commerce Trade Mission to the Offshore Technology Conference (OTC) in Houston, in May 2010. For information see the following link.... [http://www.swanchamber.com.au/download.asp?file=download/American Chamber of Commerce.pdf](http://www.swanchamber.com.au/download.asp?file=download/American%20Chamber%20of%20Commerce.pdf) <<http://www.swanchamber.com.au/download.asp?file=download/American%20Chamber%20of%20Commerce.pdf>>

Membership Drive

Any member who introduces or recruits more than 3 new members to the Swan Chamber of Commerce in 09/10 will **receive 1 years free SCC Chamber or N2k membership** for the following financial year (whichever is relevant). Remember to make sure your name is put next to 'Recruited By' on the application form.

Download the Membership Application Form now.... [http://www.swanchamber.com.au/download.asp?file=download/Membership application.pdf](http://www.swanchamber.com.au/download.asp?file=download/Membership%20application.pdf)
Currently leading the Membership Drive are Paul Keding (Billabong Transport), Mike Cox (Acclaimed Catering), Richard Scholes (West Coast Water Filter Man), Kieran Kinsella (MRA), Simon Stokes (Powerhouse Direct), Craig Verrier (Verriers Engineering) and Brian Leaning-Mizen (Mind Synergy) all with 1 new member so Congratulations and keep up the good work!

Small Business Smart Business Training Vouchers for 2009

The West Australian Department of Education and Training continues their program in 2009 and offers your business up to a \$200 Small Business Smart Business Training Voucher, to assist you with the cost of training to improve your business management skills.

Download the SBSB 2009 [Application Form](#)

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THE SMALL BUSINESS PARTNERS



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<http://www.sbdc.com.au>

West Coast Small Business Training Institute

<http://smallbusinesssolutions.wa.gov.au>

