

# THE CLARK INDEPENDENT



NOVEMBER 2025

ANDREW WILKIE - YOUR INDEPENDENT FEDERAL MP

## Fostering integrity in politics

At the federal level, probably the most significant integrity measure in living memory is the establishment in 2023 of the National Anti-Corruption Commission (NACC). The NACC's role is to foster integrity in the federal public sector by deterring, detecting and preventing corrupt conduct involving public officials.

But the NACC has not been immune from criticism, and in any case it's just one of many reforms needed if governance at the federal level is to be cleaned up, and if the community is to be confident it has been cleaned up.

Further reforms being pushed for by Andrew include:

- political donation reform to more effectively restrict big money buying political power;
- transparency measures to reveal who is really pulling the strings, like publication of ministerial diaries and an official register of parliamentary pass sponsors;
- stronger whistleblower laws, and the creation of a whistleblower protection authority, so those people who are witness to misconduct in either the public or private sector can speak up safely;
- media freedom laws so our journalists and publishers can report wrongdoing without fear of being raided, jailed or shut down; and
- improvements to the NACC itself, like provision for public hearings.

Of course, Tasmania is not spared the rot that plagues the dark corners of federal politics, and the State Government would do well to at least address the obvious shortfalls in the Tasmanian Integrity Commission. Clearly it needs more resources, expanded powers and a willingness to hold public hearings if it is to rigorously seek out and deal with corruption.

Transparency measures are particularly topical at the moment, as the Tasmanian Government recently received the report of the review of the Right to Information system, and the

Federal Government is pushing ahead with reforms to national Freedom of Information laws. Sadly, the trend by governments of all stripes has been towards withholding information, so we need to be alert to the practice of governments using "reform" as a cover for actually increasing secrecy.

None of which is to deny that Australia and Tasmania are wonderful places and we are very fortunate to live here. It's just that it could be better, and a good place to start would be to ensure that those that govern and administer us do so with integrity.

Cleaning up politics has been a top priority for Andrew ever since he blew the whistle over the lies behind Australia joining in the invasion of Iraq way back in 2003. No wonder he's delighted to be a member of the Privileges Committee, the Parliamentary Standards Committee and the Speaker's Panel.



AI edited image

# Robodebt

The Federal Government has agreed to settle a separate appeal in the class action over the scandalous Robodebt debt recovery program. Taxpayers will now fund an additional \$548.5 million, bringing the total financial cost of Robodebt to \$2.4 billion. Robodebt was a human and financial disaster, and Andrew was at the forefront of efforts to uncover it and to seek justice for the thousands of people affected.

Andrew has also proposed legislation that would address outstanding recommendations of the Robodebt Royal Commission and help prevent a repeat of the fiasco. His Bill proposes higher standards and duties which must be adhered to in the provision of social security services to ensure that policies and processes have an emphasis on service, rather than punishment. It also introduces changes requiring human oversight of automated decision making, as well as more compassionate debt recovery and collection practices and compliance activities.



## The Hobart Clinic

For 40 years The Hobart Clinic has been providing first-rate private mental health services to Tasmanians, and its closure would have seen the State lose 27 in-patient beds. Patients fortunate to have private health insurance, and the money to travel, would have faced the disruption of going to the mainland for treatment. While those shifting to the public mental health system would have added to the pressure on a system already at breaking point. Although the State Government is providing a six month funding life line, the long term future of the Clinic remains uncertain, and Andrew will continue to pressure the Federal and State governments to find a long term solution.

The uncertainty over the Clinic follows the 2023 closure of St Helens Private Hospital and reflects the precarious state of mental health care in Australia. It's chronically under-funded and staff shortages are commonplace, first and foremost because of decades of policy failure by governments at both national and state level. Clearly the funding model for hospitals, public and private, needs to be redesigned. And the health insurers, especially the for-profit companies, need to pay the hospitals adequately for procedures and patient care.

# National Climate Risk Assessment

The recently released National Climate Risk Assessment makes for sobering reading. It's a comprehensive piece of work, and the way in which it considers three climate warming scenarios at 1.5, 2 and 3 degrees Celsius powerfully makes the point that we must do everything we can to comply with the Paris Agreement of keeping warming to no more than 1.5 degrees. The impacts of that temperature rise is bad enough, while the outcome for the earth, society and economy of anything warmer, is alarming. Without more ambition the world is currently on track for 2.7 degrees warming.

No wonder many people, including Andrew, say the Federal Government's 2035 target of reducing emissions

by 62-70 per cent is inadequate. Indeed it's just further evidence that the Government is wanting to have it both ways; to look serious about climate change on the one hand, while it approves new or extended gas projects and coal mines on the other.

Modelling by Climate Analytics puts the necessary carbon reduction by 2035 at 76-89 per cent, simply to hold warming at 1.5 degrees. This is what we should be aiming for, or better in Andrew's view. But this will take an ambitious effort, and the fact that many in the Liberal and National parties don't even believe in climate change makes the necessary ambition a tough ask.

# Federal funding update

## Zinc works

The Federal Government has agreed to provide a \$135 million bailout for Nyrstar's Hobart and Port Pyrie smelters. This all but guarantees the continued operation of the Hobart zinc works, and was a welcome turn of events for Andrew who, among others, had worked with Nyrstar and the Federal Minister for Industry and Innovation, Senator Tim Ayres, to ensure the future of both plants.



Credit: Nyrstar

## Macquarie Wharf

The design work for the redevelopment of Macquarie Wharf 6 is proceeding, with the construction contract scheduled to be awarded before the end of the year. The \$188 million project is funded by the Federal Government and will provide a priority berth for the icebreaker the RSV Nuyina. Crucially, the rebuilt wharf will safeguard Hobart's future as the home of the Australian Antarctic Program.



Credit: City of Hobart

## Brooker Highway

The Federal Government is contributing \$7.7 million towards fixing the dangerous intersection of the Brooker Highway, Duncan Street and Foreshore Road in Montrose. This overdue work is obviously welcome, as Andrew has lost count of the number of constituents who've raised the issue with him, and the number of times he's asked the State Government to sort it out.



## Macquarie Point

The Tasmanian Government, and the Labor Opposition, have dismissed the damning report into the proposed Macquarie Point stadium by the Tasmanian Planning Commission (TPC). The cost to taxpayers of construction and debt over the first ten years has now been put at \$1.8 billion. And that's based on a construction cost of \$1.13 billion, even though the cost expected by architects, engineers and other experts is more likely to be about \$2 billion.

Andrew is concerned that the Tasmanian Government's plan puts at risk the Federal Government's \$240 million grant for urban redevelopment at Macquarie Point. The TPC found that the stadium would make it impossible for the urban redevelopment envisaged in the Precinct Plan to proceed, meaning the Tasmanian Government stands to be non-compliant with the Deed of Agreement between the governments for the funding. Andrew has raised the matter directly with the Prime Minister in an effort to safeguard the money.

To watch a recent speech by Andrew on the stadium, scan the QR code or visit [andrewwilkie.org](http://andrewwilkie.org)



## Community notice board

### Bushfire preparedness

- Bushfire preparation tips can be found at [bushfire.tas.gov.au](http://bushfire.tas.gov.au)
- To report a fire, register your burn or for bushfire information, call **1800 000 699**
- In an emergency, call triple zero **000**
- For the latest news, warnings and alerts check
  - **ABC local radio**
  - **TasALERT.com**
  - **fire.tas.gov.au**
  - **TFS social media**

### Unpaid superannuation

The Clark electorate has the highest level of unpaid superannuation in Tasmania, according to the Super Members Council, with affected Tasmanian workers being shortchanged an average of \$1,450 each year. Clearly the Federal Government needs to introduce legislative reforms, but just as clearly all workers need to check regularly that their super is being paid by their employer.

**ato.gov.au** is a great source of information. Just enter **super** in the search window.

### A Fairer World

At A Fairer World they believe everyone matters, and are passionate about delivering transformative diversity and inclusion training workshops to students, workplaces and the wider community with lived experience experts.



**A  
FAIRER  
WORLD**

*Learn - Connect - Act*

Find out more at [afairerworld.org](http://afairerworld.org) or email [admin@afairerworld.org](mailto:admin@afairerworld.org) or call **6223 1025**

### Access to the noticeboard

Organisations are welcome to submit material for inclusion in Andrew's periodic newsletter. To be considered, material must be in the public interest, brief and in no way related to any for-profit enterprise.

Email proposals to [andrew.wilkie.mp@aph.gov.au](mailto:andrew.wilkie.mp@aph.gov.au) or call **6234 5255**

### Flags and portraits of The King

Andrew can provide Australian, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander flags to community groups and individual members of the community. But flags must be presented personally by Andrew, so anyone wanting a flag will need to contact his office and book an appointment. He can also provide portraits of The King.

### Being dementia friendly

Andrew's office has been formally recognised by Dementia Australia for working towards becoming a dementia-friendly workplace, and a commitment to actively support people living with dementia when they engage with his office. This has involved staff training, clear signage, accessible layouts and compassionate communication to create a safe, inclusive and supportive environment.

If your office is interested in becoming dementia-friendly or would like more information, please contact [dementiafriendly@dementia.org.au](mailto:dementiafriendly@dementia.org.au)



### Golden Wattle Cafe

The Golden Wattle Cafe is a space for people living with dementia, their caregivers and the general community. It is open every Monday 10am-12pm and provides guests with a safe and comfortable environment where they can socialise and enjoy a lovely morning tea.

\$5 per person

Goodwood Community Centre  
20 Acton Crescent, GOODWOOD  
[goldenwattlecafe.com](http://goldenwattlecafe.com)

### Want to get in touch with Andrew?

- Drop into the office at 188 Collins Street Hobart
- Post a letter to GPO Box 32 Hobart TAS 7001
- Phone 6234 5255 or 6234 5861
- Email [andrew.wilkie.mp@aph.gov.au](mailto:andrew.wilkie.mp@aph.gov.au)
- Ask for a meeting

[andrewwilkie.org](http://andrewwilkie.org)



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