

**IN BRIEF**  
**\$256m in federal funds for councils**

Almost \$256 million will be provided to 210 Victorian councils in 1991-92, the Federal Minister for Local Government, Ms Fatin, announced yesterday. The assistance comprises \$188.5 million in financial assistance grants and \$67.4 million in identified local roads grants.

**Murder plea**

An 18-year-old man bludgeoned his girlfriend to death with a tomahawk less than 15 months after stabbing a schoolgirl 23 times, the Supreme Court in Hobart was told yesterday. Anthony Lee Faltuz has pleaded guilty to murdering Jennifer Humes, 16, on 19 October last year. He also pleaded guilty to attempting to murder Belinda McNeil, 12, on 2 August 1988.

**Search resumes**

A search will resume today for the pilot boat George Tobin, which sank in heavy seas off Port Phillip Heads. Two men are dead and a third is missing, presumed drowned, after the 15-metre launch was swamped by a freak wave on Thursday.

**RSPCA strike**

About 20 staff employed by the RSPCA's animal rescue centre have gone on strike indefinitely over plans to shed about 10 jobs. The industrial action includes full-time, part-time and casual employees who work as animal attendants, ambulance drivers and in the clerical area.

**Policeman charged**

A policeman, 26, has been suspended from duty and will be charged on summons with two counts of trafficking, three counts of possessing and one count of using cannabis.

**Brothels opposed**

Oakleigh residents have overwhelmingly rejected a move to allow more brothels to be established in the municipality. At recent council elections, 72 per cent of voters supported a proposal which requested the council to take action to prevent any more additional brothels. There are four brothels in Oakleigh.

**Fairstar airlift**

A passenger airlifted from the trouble-plagued cruise ship Fairstar was in a satisfactory condition last night in a Brisbane hospital after suffering a heart attack. The Fairstar has been hit by a variety of mechanical problems in the past few months.

**Politicians slated**

Australia's politicians should stop bickering and concentrate on leading Australia out of its economic problems, the chairman of AMP, Sir James Balderstone, said yesterday.

# Keating gains more votes in exile

By PHILIP MCINTOSH  
 A Saulwick Age Poll shows that the former Treasurer and Deputy Prime Minister, Mr Keating, is steadily gaining in public support, although voters still clearly prefer Mr Hawke as Labor leader.

The poll this week shows that 52 per cent of Australians preferred Mr Hawke as leader of the party, while 30 per cent chose the former Treasurer and 18 per cent were undecided. When voters in Melbourne and Sydney were asked a similar question on 31 May — three days before the leadership challenge — 66 per cent said Mr Hawke would make the better Prime Minister compared with 18 per cent who chose Mr Keating. In a period of 11 weeks, therefore, public support for Mr Hawke has fallen by 13 points while preference for Mr Keating has grown by 11 points.

This trend, if it continues, lends credence to Keating supporters who believe that the more Mr Keating is distanced from the Treasury portfolio, the more his public image will improve.

This belief was articulated by the ACTU secretary, Mr Kelly, who said on a talk-back program in Sydney last month: "If the electorate knew how intelligent and how caring a person he was ... there would be no doubt that people would regard him very highly." Since he lost the leadership challenge on 3 June, Mr Keating entered a round of public appearances beginning with a speech on urban planning at a Canberra university seminar on 10 July and an appearance on the Channel Nine's "Midday" show. This was followed by a speech at the University of New South Wales on 25 July and an inter-

**SAULWICK AGE POLL**

**WHO WOULD MAKE THE BETTER LABOR LEADER?**

	Total	Men	Women	Labor	L/Nat	Melb	Syd
Hawke	52	52	52	59	48	61	47
Keating	30	32	29	32	33	27	35
Don't know	18	17	19	9	19	12	18

Percentages are rounded to the nearest whole number

view that night on the ABC 'Late-line' program.

Members of the Canberra gallery have described the appearances as Mr Keating's "concerted push to broaden his image as he continues his bid for leadership", and to promote himself "as a politician of ideas and vision" in contrast to "an ageing Hawke administration, devoid of policy imagination". One unnamed Keating support-

**About the poll**

Date: 14 and 15 August 1991.  
 Sample: 1000 voters.  
 Coverage: National.  
 Method: Telephone.  
 Question: Thinking about politics, who do you think would make the better leader of the Labor Party, Mr Hawke or Mr Keating?

Surveys of this kind are subject to normal sampling variance which, with a sample of 1000, could be up to plus or minus four per cent.

Saulwick Age Poll is conducted by Irving Saulwick and Associates, who also hold the copyright.

Keating increased from 20 per cent to 32 per cent. There is much stronger support for Mr Hawke in Melbourne than in Sydney. In the May poll 64 per cent of Sydney voters said Mr Hawke would make the better Prime Minister, but this has dropped to 47 per cent.

## Flannery evidence proves wrongful conviction: Edelsten

By SALLY HEATH, medical reporter

Evidence presented to the Victorian Medical Board hearing on Dr Geoffrey Edelsten this week proved that he was wrongly convicted in New South Wales last year, Dr Edelsten said yesterday. The board has been considering the possible deregistration of Dr Edelsten after his conviction in July 1990 of conspiring seven years ago to pervert the course of justice by improperly issuing

a medical certificate for the alleged hit-man Christopher Dale Flannery and of soliciting him to assault a former patient.

However, on Tuesday, Mrs Kathleen Flannery told the board her husband had been genuinely ill in hospital when the medical certificate was issued. She said she was stunned when Dr Edelsten was convicted but she had not come forward because no one had asked her. She said her husband had gone

to Dr Edelsten's clinic to have a tattoo removed and had subsequently become ill and required treatment in hospital. He was unable to stand trial because of his medical condition, she said.

Her husband had never indicated that he had a special arrangement with Dr Edelsten to obtain a medical certificate to adjourn or delay Mr Flannery's trial. She said that during the clinic visits for the tattoo removal Mr

Flannery discovered that Dr Edelsten was facing attempted blackmail by two former patients. As a result, Mr Flannery contacted a friend in the NSW police force, Detective Bill Duff, who visited Dr Edelsten's clinic and arranged to have his post office box put under surveillance.

She said that neither she nor her husband had any subsequent contact with Dr Edelsten. Mrs Flannery said she wanted

to put the record straight. Her evidence was made public yesterday.

After its release, Dr Edelsten said: "It is fabulous news. Her appearance at the board was a complete surprise to everyone." He said his lawyers would urge the NSW Attorney-General, Mr Collins, to hold a judicial inquiry into his convictions. The Medical Board hearing has been adjourned until Thursday.

## Students claim city college misled them over courses

By JOHN MASANASKAS, ethnic affairs reporter

A State Government body is investigating whether a private city college, closed because of a student revolt, used false advertising to attract students to its courses.

The head of the State Training Board, Mr Terry Moran, said yesterday that his board was also reviewing approval given to the Melbourne Commercial College to enrol foreign students.

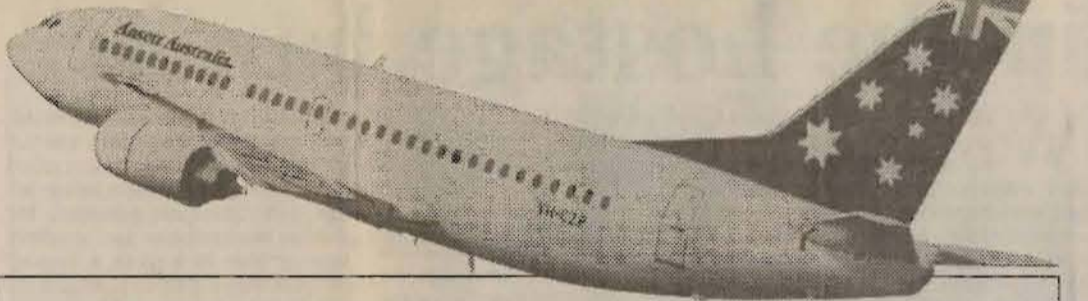
The college's former general manager, Mr Robert West, who resigned on Wednesday after three weeks in the job, said yesterday that the college was in "absolute crisis" and that he had resigned mainly because foreign students had not been properly monitored. Most overseas students had inadequate attendance records, he said, but the information had not been passed on to education authorities for visa cancellations. Classes were halted this week

when local students learned that their courses were not accredited by the State Government. They claim that the college gave assurances that courses for Australian residents were officially recognised.

Students have paid annual fees of up to \$6000 for courses, including business studies, travel and tourism administration and computer operations.

Because the courses are not officially recognised, students cannot transfer directly to accredited colleges to complete their studies.

A document obtained by 'The Age' indicates that the federal Department of Education was aware that Melbourne Commercial had incorrectly claimed accreditation as early as last May. In a letter to the college's principal dated 12 August, the department's Canberra office said a submission by the college in May for Austudy and Abstudy approval could not be considered until its registration was clarified.



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