

AussieNews

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AUSTRALIAN HIGH COMMISSION
PORT LOUIS



Message From The High Commissioner

This is the first newsletter since my arrival in Mauritius as the new Australian High Commissioner and I am very happy to be launching a new, refreshed look for Aussie News. We would welcome your feedback on the new presentation as well as suggestions on what you would find helpful or interesting to have in the newsletter. Please e-mail us your thoughts.



Very soon after my arrival I was able to meet many in the local Australian community at the Anzac Day service and gunfire breakfast at the Residence. Floreal produced rain for the service but, fittingly, the sun chose to shine as

the Australian flag was raised at the end of the ceremony. Another highlight has been attending the Meat and Livestock Association's Gala Black Box Dinner in late May, held at the Hilton in Flic-en-Flac. This amazing competition for local hotels and chefs which promotes Australia's high quality produce continues to go from strength to strength.

Over the coming months, I hope to undertake visits to Madagascar and the Seychelles to present my credentials. I am looking forward to these visits and to meeting the many people in these countries who work so closely with us here in Port Louis on a range of projects.

Farewell to Gerard

Sadly, we have to farewell Second Secretary Gerard Oakes, his wife Bernadette and their children Jadziah and Morgan, who return to Australia in early July. Gerard has been a mainstay of the mission over the past three years and he and Bernadette have been very active in the community in Mauritius. On a personal note, I would like to thank the Oakes for all their help and friendship which has contributed so much to making my son Ben and I feel at home here so quickly.

Gerard's replacement, Tim Davies, his wife Melissa and their baby girl Sarah arrive in Mauritius in mid-July. We look forward to welcoming them and introducing them in our next newsletter.

My very best wishes for these winter months - which are definitely cooler than I expected - and I look forward to meeting you at forthcoming functions.

Cathy Johnstone

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Anzac Day In Mauritius

On Wednesday 25 April, new Australian High Commissioner Cathy Johnstone presided over the traditional ANZAC Day ceremony at her Residence in Floreal. Apart from marking this significant day in the Australian calendar, for many the ceremony provided their first opportunity to meet Ms Johnstone and get to know her over the post-ceremony gunfire breakfast.



High Commissioner Cathy Johnstone during her speech

killed or died from their wounds or disease.

The men who served on the Gallipoli Peninsula, established a reputation for demonstrating courage, endurance and mateship – the ANZAC spirit.

In 1916, the first anniversary of the landing was observed in Australia, New Zealand and England and by troops in Egypt. That year, 25 April was officially named 'ANZAC Day' by the Acting Prime Minister, George Pearce.

By the 1920s, ANZAC Day ceremonies were held throughout Australia. All States had designated ANZAC Day as a public holiday.



Peter and Ben Johnstone raised the Australian flag at the conclusion of the ceremony

of those Australians who have served in wars, as well as in peacetime operations.

Highlights of the ceremony in Mauritius included a recital by David Muddle of Moina Michael's 1918 poem *We Shall Keep the Faith*, a wreath laying on behalf of New Zealand and Australian service men and women by Marie Achille, the recital of *The Ode* by Ewan Ormiston and the playing of *The Last Post* and *The Rouse* by a bugler from the Mauritius Police Band. The Australian flag was then raised by Ben and Peter Johnstone at the conclusion of the ceremony.

Commemoration of ANZAC Day continued throughout the 1930s and 1940s with World War II veterans joining parades around the country. In the ensuing decades returned servicemen and women from the conflicts in Malaya, Indonesia, Korea and Vietnam, the Gulf wars, veterans from allied countries and peacekeepers joined the parades.

During the 1960s and 1970s the number of people attending ANZAC Day marches fell as Australians questioned the relevance of ANZAC Day. However, since the 1990s there has been a resurgence of interest in ANZAC Day, with attendances, particularly by young people, increasing across Australia and with many making the pilgrimage to the Gallipoli Peninsula to attend the Dawn Service.

For further information about ANZAC Day, please visit the Department of Veteran's Affairs web page (www.dva.gov.au).

ANZAC Day - 25 April - is probably Australia's most important national occasion. It marks the anniversary of the first major military action fought by Australian and New Zealand forces during the First World War. ANZAC stands for Australian and New Zealand Army Corps. The soldiers in those forces quickly became known as ANZACs, and the pride they soon took in that name endures to this day. ANZAC Day is commemorated by Australians in all parts of Australia and around the world and serves to remember the commitment and sacrifice

The ANZAC story began on 25 April 1915 when the Australian and New Zealand Army Corps (ANZAC), landed on the Gallipoli Peninsula. It was the start of a campaign that lasted eight months and resulted in some 25,000 Australian casualties, including 8,700 who were



The Australian High Commission Seeks Aid Projects for Funding

The Australian High Commission would like to invite organisations in its countries of accreditation to submit aid project proposals for consideration for financial year 2007-2008.

The Australian High Commission operates two aid programs, the Direct Aid Program (DAP) and the Small Activities Scheme (SAS) in its four countries of accreditation – Mauritius, Seychelles, Madagascar and Comoros.

The High Commission's Direct Aid Program is a program aimed at

supporting small-scale development projects that are participatory in nature. Special consideration is given to the needs of women, children and other needy groups such as the disabled. Projects can be submitted by individuals, community groups or NGOs engaged in development activities on a not-for-profit basis.

The Small Activities Scheme (SAS) is intended to support community-based activities being implemented by non-government organisations that promote sustainable economic and social development. The key objectives of the SAS are to:

- help meet the basic humanitarian needs of local communities; and
- assist in the accelerated economic and social development of disadvantaged communities including through improvements in the broader policy environment

The Australian High Commission would welcome written applications (in English) for projects with detailed budgets Marked to the attention of the DAP Committee.

For more information on DAP or SAS please contact Yasmina Hosanoo either by email on ahc.portlouis@dfat.gov.au or by calling 202 0160.



Climate Change

Australia Outlines Five Pillars for Tackling Climate Change and announces the development of a domestic emissions trading scheme

Australia is driving more practical responses to climate change - with Australia's five pillars for international action.

On 15 May, Mr Downer outlined Australia's approach to driving more effective international responses to climate change. Our five pillars for international action are:

1. a global response;
2. Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC);
3. the Asia-Pacific Partnership on Clean Development and Climate (AP6);
4. forests; and
5. working with key countries.

Australia is calling for new negotiations for a truly global approach including all major emitters to be launched at this year's UN Climate Convention meeting.

Australian Prime Minister John Howard has made climate change a key focus of this year's APEC Summit to be held in Australia in September 2007. This initiative will ensure that Asia-Pacific perspectives are given full voice in shaping relevant international frameworks in the future.

The AP6 is driving cooperation on low emissions technology with key countries (Australia, China, India, Japan, the Republic of Korea and the United States). AP6 countries account for half of global GDP, energy use and emissions. They have already developed over 90 projects to lower greenhouse emissions, to which Australia has committed \$100 million for this practical work.

Australia has launched a \$200 million Global Initiative on Forests and Climate to tackle climate change and protect the world's forests. Deforestation accounts for around 20 per cent of global emissions. The initiative will support reforestation and reduced deforestation including through sustainable forest management in selected countries.

Australia is also working with key countries on practical climate change response projects. We are working with China, including through the Australia-China Coordination Group on Clean Technology. We are also working with vulnerable neighbours, particularly in the Pacific, to forecast and adapt to potential impacts of climate change, with projects including the \$32 million Sea Level and Climate Monitoring Project and through other bilateral cooperative partnerships.



Australia to move towards a domestic emissions trading system

Prim Minister John Howard has announced that Australia will move towards a domestic emissions trading system beginning no later than 2012.

The Australian Government recognises that climate change is a serious global challenge and that Australia, like every other country, has a responsibility to control and reduce over time our greenhouse gas emissions.

Australia already has a greenhouse gas emissions target, set under the Kyoto Protocol for the period 2008-2012. Under this, Australia is one of the few countries likely to meet its Kyoto target on the basis of domestic actions alone.

On 10 December 2006, the Prime Minister announced the establishment of a joint government-business Task Group on Emissions Trading. The Group was asked "to advise on the nature and design of a workable global emissions trading system in which Australia would be able to participate." The Group submitted its report to the Prime Minister on 31 May 2007

The Government accepts the Task Group's conclusion that, on balance, Australia should set a long-term aspirational goal for reducing greenhouse gas emissions, and a least cost pathway to help get there.

The Government also accepts the conclusion that a well designed emissions trading scheme, specific to Australia, represents the least cost way of meeting an emissions constraint, and delivering sustained and deep reductions in emissions over time.

Australia will move towards a domestic emissions trading system, beginning no later than 2012. The emissions trading scheme will be national in scope and as comprehensive as practicable. It will be designed to take account of global developments and preserve the competitiveness of our trade exposed emissions intensive industries.

The market will determine the most efficient means of lowering emissions. All emissions-reduction technologies will be open for consideration, including nuclear power. Implementing a domestic emissions trading scheme needs to go hand-in-hand with an international strategy to shape the post-Kyoto international climate change framework. Australia will continue to lead internationally on climate change, globally and in the Asia-Pacific region. In March, the Prime Minister wrote to APEC leaders to place clean development and climate change on the agenda for the Economic Leaders' Meeting in Sydney in September.

For further detail, see recent speeches by the Prime Minister's (3 and 6 June) at www.pm.gov.au. The Task Group's report can be found at www.pmc.gov.au.



Australia's Drought

Short Term Relief But Long Term Drought Persists

Australia's Autumn rainfall (March-May 2007) was average to above average over much of inland NSW, northern and western Victoria, Tasmania and southern South Australia, which provided some short-term relief to many agricultural areas- easing partially the effects of the severe drought caused by the 2006/07 El Niño event.

However, some areas missed out, most notably eastern Queensland, southern Victoria (especially around Melbourne) and western WA.

In a statement on drought conditions for the 12-month period ending 31 May 2007, the Australian Bureau of Meteorology said that an important consideration in the recovery from drought was the different rate at which land area systems responded to rainfall deficiencies.

Currently, many water catchments in eastern Australia were excessively dry from a very protracted period of below

average rainfall and above average temperatures. The Bureau said that it would require above average rainfalls just to produce average runoff, and very considerable rainfalls to make a material difference to water storages.

Long-term rainfall and water deficiencies remained in parts of western and eastern Australia, although average to above average rainfall during May in NSW, Victoria and Tasmania eased the intensity and extent of 12-month rainfall deficits in comparison with the situation at the end of April 2007, but severe deficiencies still remained. In contrast, below average rainfall in WA saw little or no improvement in that State.

For the 12-month period from June 2006 to May 2007, there were serious to severe rainfall deficiencies over southern and eastern Australia in an arc extending across south-eastern SA, much of southern and eastern Victoria, and the tablelands and western slopes in south-eastern NSW. A large part of southeast

Queensland was also affected, as were northern and eastern Tasmania and much of WA

Record low 12-month falls were recorded in southern Queensland, in much of WA's west coast, in NE Tasmania and in a large area around Melbourne.

The Bureau predicted that the worst of the long-term deficiencies was likely to remain for some time. For a considerable improvement to occur by August, significant rainfalls during June-August would need to be in the highest 10 per cent of the historical record in many areas, especially in Victoria and southeast Queensland.

Studying In Australia

Changes to Assessment Levels for students undertaking ELICOS and Higher Education courses - effective as from 14 May 2007

All student visa applicants who are holders of Mauritian passports and undertaking either ELICOS (English Language Intensive Courses for Overseas Students) or Higher Education courses (Bachelor Degree, Associate Degree, Graduate Certificate, Graduate Diploma, Masters by Coursework) will now be assessed under Assessment Level 1.

Assessment Level 1 students are eligible to apply for an e-Student visa on the internet from the Department of Immigration and Citizenship's website:-

"http://www.immi.gov.au/e_visa/students.htm".

Internet applications are usually

processed within 5 to 10 working days.

Electronic Student visa applications (internet application) offer greater convenience than lodging a paper application through the Australian High Commission, as follows:

- Convenience – you can apply 24 hours a day, 7 days a week
- Time savings – there is no need to visit the Australian High Commission to make your application
- Flexibility – if you begin an application using eVisa you can save your work and finish entering the details at a later time
- Peace of mind – you can use eVisa to check the status of your application at any time
- Quick response time – being notified visa email means you can know quickly whether a visa for you has been granted

Students applying for Primary-Secondary courses, Vocational courses,

Postgraduate Research courses and Non-Award courses will still be assessed under Assessment Level 2 for which they will have to submit a paper work based application at the Australian High Commission.

For further information/assistance please feel free to call in during Student Counter hours on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday from 9.00 to 10.00 am.

Department of Immigration and Citizenship
Port Louis
14 May 2007

Mauritian Journalist Participates In Australian Study Tour



Laurent Chabrut (far right) meets NSW Community Relations Commission Chairperson, Stepan Kerkyasharian (centre) with other journalists during the inaugural Africa Nation's Group Media Visit to Australia from 9 to 18 June 2007.

What is the best way to see and learn about Australia? For Laurent Chabrut, Mauritius-based journalist and editor with *L'Eco Austral*, it was to join journalists from South Africa, Ghana and Kenya on the African Nations' Group Media Visit to Australia from 9 to 18 June 2007. The nine-day visit, which included Perth, regional Western Australia,

Sydney, Melbourne and Canberra on the itinerary, was the first of its type for journalists from the African region and was organised and sponsored by the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade's International Media Centre. The visit provided targeted opportunities for the African journalists to report more extensively, and at first hand, on

Australia, including on subjects such as: Australia's innovation and scientific achievements; Australia's strengths as an international investment destination; Australia's agricultural trade liberalisation policy; and Australia's engagement with the African region, particularly on issues such as Zimbabwe and investment in the mining sector. The group had meetings with representatives of Federal and States governments, business, industry, academia, cultural organisations and the Australian media.

Mr Chabrut described the program for the visit as interesting and complete, providing considerable material for future articles. Among the highlights he cited was his meeting with Australian Minister for Foreign Affairs, the Hon Alexander Downer; learning more about the Australian education sector, the wine industry, and Australian mining activities in Madagascar. Readers of *L'Eco Austral* can expect to see articles on Australia from August onward.

Farewell to the Oakes Family



The Oakes family on holiday in South Africa - May 2007

In one week's time we will be bidding farewell to our Second Secretary, Gerard Oakes and wife, Bernadette and two children Jadziah and Morgan. Gerard and his family will return to Australia after spending three years in Mauritius.

Gerard's departure will be deeply felt by all members of staff. We will not only lose the office 'IT Whiz' and a 'Would be Didgeridoo Player', but also a great colleague and Supervisor with an amazing sense of humour. We will also

miss the great tunes he would play for us from his famous 'I-Pod' – the office will certainly not be the same without him! Gerard's dedication and talent have helped bring much success to the numerous public events that the Australian High Commission has organized over the last three years in Mauritius, Rodrigues and the Seychelles. These have included annual Film Festivals, Art Exhibitions, Australian Festivals and other similar activities.

From all staff at the Australian High

Welcome to Tim Davies and Melissa Kent



Tim Davies, new 2nd Secretary with wife Melissa and newborn baby Sarah

We would also like to take this opportunity to wish a very warm welcome to Gerard's successor, Tim Davies, his wife Melissa and their newborn baby Sarah who will be arriving in Mauritius next month.

Commission – Bon Voyage and we wish you all the very best of luck in your career.

p.s. Please be aware that your 'didgeridoo talents' might be called on to assist in future Australian Festivals!!!

Migrating to Australia

If you wish to live permanently in Australia, you must apply for and be granted a permanent visa.

The Form 1126i (available from our website 'www.immi.gov.au' or at the High Commission on any Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday from 09.00 am to 10.00 am) will help you choose the permanent visa category and application form best suited for you.

Booklets with detailed information and application forms on each visa category are available free of charge from our website 'www.immi.gov.au'. The booklets are also available for purchase from the High Commission on any Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday from 09.00 am to 10.00 am.

The booklet costs between Mur 300 and Mur 600 each. Please note that Booklet No 1 and No 6 are currently not available and must therefore be downloaded from the website.

Each booklet provides an explanation about the criteria to be met, includes application forms, processing fee and the address of the Department of Immigration and Citizenship office (DIAC) in Australia where the application must be sent for processing.

The Skilled Occupation List can be obtained from the Form 1121i which can be either downloaded from our website 'www.immi.gov.au' or can be obtained from the High Commission on any Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday from 09.00 am to 10.00 am.

Please note that this office does not process any applications for immigration to Australia and is therefore unable to provide any counselling and assist you with the application.

Should you require any counselling and assistance to make an application for migration please feel free to contact a registered migration agent whose details can be obtained from the website 'www.themara.com.au' or by sending an e-mail to 'themara@themara.com.au'.

The world needs science – science needs women



2007 L'Oréal-UNESCO awards Laureates: Pr Tatiana Birshstein(Russia); Pr Mildred Dresselhaus(USA); Pr Ameenah Gurib-Fakimi(Mauritius); Pr Ligia Garallo(Chile); Pr Margaret Brimble(NZ)
photo courtesy: sa@verine vasselini/Gamma

Since 1998, a public-private partnership between L'Oréal and UNESCO has promoted women in science. The L'Oréal-UNESCO Awards For Women in Science recognises outstanding women researchers who have contributed to scientific progress. These scientists are role models for the next generation, encouraging young women around the world to follow in their footsteps.

Firstly the international scientific community proposes candidates. Next two juries – one in the Life Sciences and the other in the Material Sciences – meet every alternate year to select laureates from these fields.

The UNESCO-L'Oréal international Fellowships offer 15 promoting young women scientists crucial international experience that they can bring back and share with others in their home countries.

The partnership also provides L'Oréal National Fellowships with support from UNESCO national commissions. National Fellowship programs exist in 20 countries, respecting the countries specific science needs. L'Oréal Australia is launching its National Fellowships at the World for Science Journalists Conference; Fellows will be announced in September 2007.

Pr Christian De Duve, Nobel Prize in Medicine 1974 is the founding president of the awards.

For more information: L'Oréal Australia, Megan Ryan, Tel:+61 3 9928 3339
www.forwomeninscience.com

Researcher to fight insects with spider venom



Professor Glenn King from the Institute for Molecular Bioscience with an Australian Tarantula
Photo courtesy: Chris Stacey, University of Queensland.

An Australian researcher is working on environmentally friendly insect control methods based on spider venom compounds.

Professor Glenn King recently joined The University of Queensland's institute for Molecular Bioscience, where he will further develop his pioneering approach to insecticide discovery.

"Since spiders have been developing insecticidal compounds for almost 400 millions years, I decided to interrogate their venoms to find natural toxins that might kill insects without harming vertebrates " Professor King said.

He has since described three families of insecticidal compounds, and moved to Australia with the help of a A\$576,000.00 Australian Research Council grant titled "Safeguarding Australia against invasive arthropod pests".

"An increasingly serious public health issue is the emergence of infectious diseases spread by insects such as ticks and mosquitoes, " professor King said. "Hopefully this project will result in environmentally-sustainable methods for controlling those insects that destroy crops or spread human and animal disease".

For more information: The University of Queensland's Institute for Molecular Bioscience, Bronwyn Allan , Tel: +61 7 3346 2134, www.imb.uq.edu.au



Top Australian Award For Local Chefs In Mauritius



Arnold Tanner, World Association Chefs Societies, Helene C Ah-Pong; Manager Austrade Port Louis, Alan Palmer; Black Box Global Coordinator and Chef from Le Paradis Hotel receiving his prize.



High Commissioner Cathy Johnstone and Vice Prime Minister and Minister for Tourism X Luc Duval with representatives from the tourism and hotel sector.

In a competition co-organised by Austrade Port Louis and Meat and Livestock Australia (MLA), Mauritius' leading young chefs battled to create an award-winning dish, resulting in the prestigious 5 Star Le Touessrok Hotel being crowned as the winner of the Australian Culinary Challenge. The competition was one of the food promotion events organised by Austrade Port Louis. The challenge saw 60 chefs from 15 hotels vying for the title at Hilton Resort and Spa Mauritius. The gala dinner was enhanced by the presence

of Hon Xavier Duval, Vice Prime Minister and Minister for Tourism, and many senior representatives from the Hotel Industry. Also present were the Australian High Commissioner and Regional Director of the MLA headquarters in Bahrain, Mr Ian Ross.

"The Culinary Challenge was organised in order to educate local chefs about

high quality Australian food products and to encourage innovative uses of these Australian products," said Helene C Ah Pong, Austrade Manager in Port Louis. Several Australian suppliers including Fosters Wine, WAMMCO, Dandaragan Olive Oil, and Wild Harvest coffee, participated in the event.



Rotary Education Fair

Enhancing efforts in marketing Australian education to our audience in this region, Austrade recently participated in the International Careers Convention organised by Rotary Grand Bay. As usual, the Australian corner attracted a very large number of students and organisers commented on the popularity of the extensive range of study opportunities offered by Australian Universities, TAFE institutions and private, specialised colleges.

Austrade has established an Information Centre at the Australian High Commission especially set up to facilitate student access to information on a large number of Australian educational institutions. The centre is open during office hours, from 08:00 to 15:30 and students are welcome to use the facilities to conduct independent research on courses of interest that they could undertake in Australia.



Award of Order of Australia to Mauritian Migrant In Australia

Queen's Birthday Honours List

The Australian High Commission is pleased to announce that Eddy Abraham, a Mauritian migrant in Australia, has been awarded the MEDAL (OAM) OF THE ORDER OF AUSTRALIA IN THE GENERAL DIVISION, in this year's QUEEN'S BIRTHDAY HONOURS LIST. The citation is 'For service to the community through migrant assistance, multicultural media programs and activities supporting senior citizens.'



official Secretary to the Governor-General

His Excellency the Governor-General Major-General Michael Jeffrey approved the award, in his capacity as Chancellor of the Order of Australia. Mr Abraham was informed by Mr Malcolm Hazell,

and Secretary of the Order of Australia, of the award in a letter dated 28 May 2007. Mr Hazell extended the congratulations of the Governor-General and his own congratulations to Eddy Abraham who said: "I am humbly honoured by this award and I am also proud to see that my contribution to the Mauritian community and to my adopted country, is being recognized in this way."