



- **Employment fell marginally to 233,000**
- **Unemployment rate remained steady at 5.1%**
- **Participation rate also remained steady at 60.4%**

**Note:** All Labour Force estimates are from the Australian Bureau of Statistics' *Labour Force Survey* and are *Trend estimates* unless otherwise stated.

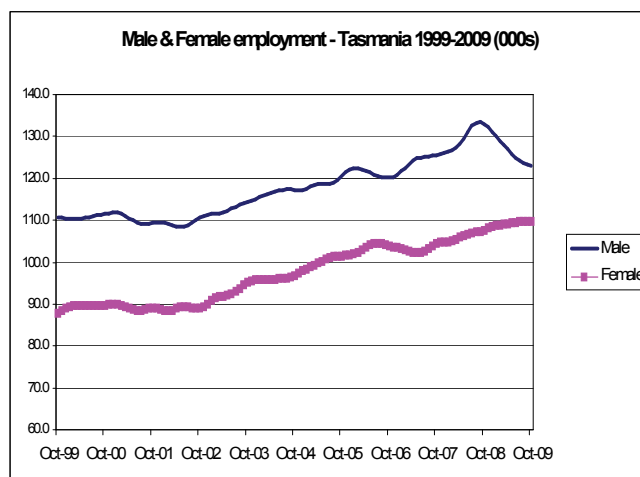
### Employment

Total employment fell marginally in Tasmania over the month of October, and is now 3.2 per cent lower than it was a year ago. Full-time employment fell by 6.1 per cent over the year, while part-time employment partially off-set these falls with growth of 3.4 per cent since last October. Total male employment fell by 7.4 per cent over the year, comprising a fall of 4.7 per cent in full-time employment, and a 6.4 per cent fall in part-time employment. Total female employment is the reverse of trends of male employment, in that it experienced annual growth of 2.0 per cent. Female full-time employment fell by 2.7 per cent, while part-time employment more than off-set this fall with growth of 7.0 per cent over the year.

### Unemployment

Total unemployment in Tasmania has experienced only minor changes over the last 8 months. However there were an estimated 2,300 more unemployed Tasmanians in October, that there were a year ago, an increase of 22.3 per cent. All of the increases in the unemployed have been among males, with female

unemployment actually falling by 8.8 per cent over the year. The current Tasmanian unemployment rate is estimated at 5.1 per cent, up from the 4.1 per cent recorded in October last year. The current national unemployment rate is 5.8 per cent, while in other States and Territories it is 5.9 per



cent in NSW, 5.8 per cent in Vic, 6.1 per cent in Qld, 5.6 per cent in SA, 5.4 per cent in WA, 3.9 per cent in NT, and 3.7 per cent in ACT.

### Labour Force & Participation Rates

The Tasmanian labour force was estimated at 245,500 in October, a fall of 5,300 or 2.1 per cent compared to October last year. All of the falls in the labour market were among males, while the number of females in the labour force increased by 1.5 per cent. The participation rate in Tasmania for October was 60.4 per cent, down from the 62.4 per cent recorded last October, and below the current national rate of 65.2 per cent.

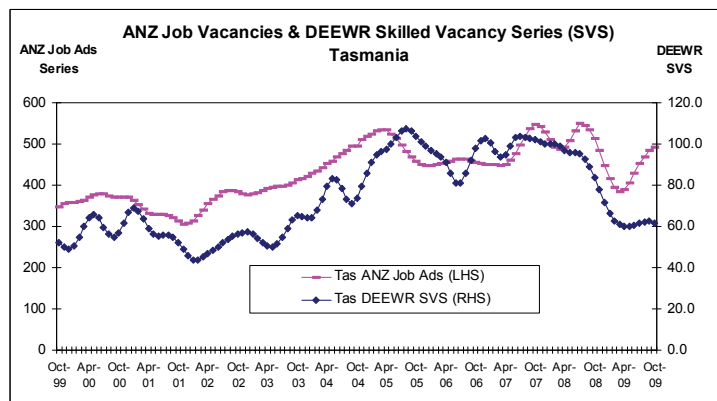
## Labour Force Estimates - Tasmania (Trend data)

	Oct-2008	Sep-2009	Oct-2009
	000's	000's	000's
Employment			
Male	133.0	123.4	123.1
Female	107.6	109.8	109.8
Full-time	166.2	156.4	156.1
Part-time	74.4	76.8	76.8
Persons	240.6	233.2	233.0
Unemployment			
Male	4.6	7.2	7.4
Female	5.7	5.3	5.2
Persons	10.3	12.5	12.6
Labour Force			
Male	137.6	130.5	130.5
Female	113.3	115.1	115.0
Persons	250.9	245.7	245.5
Unemployment Rate %			
Male	3.4	5.5	5.7
Female	5.0	4.6	4.5
Persons	4.1	5.1	5.1
Full-time Teenage*	21.0	22.7	20.3
Participation Rate %			
Male	70.1	65.8	65.7
Female	55.0	55.4	55.2
Persons	62.4	60.4	60.4
*unadjusted data			

### Job Vacancies

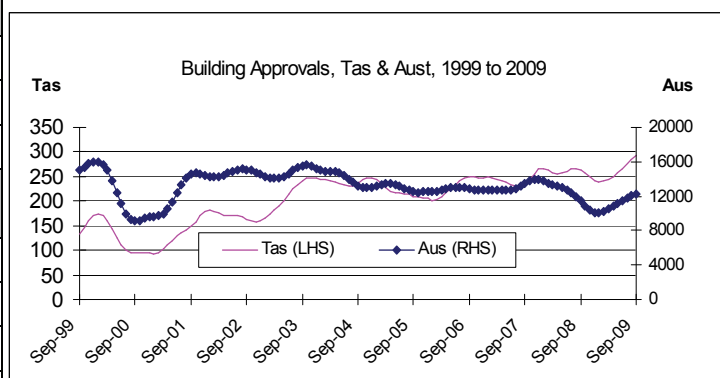
**The ANZ Bank Job Advertisement series** (trend) increased in October in Tasmania for the eighth consecutive month, but was 4.1% below what it was in October 2008. Nationally, the series increased by 1.4% over the month, but was 33.4% below what it was in October 2008.

**DEEWR's Skilled Vacancy Survey Index** (trend) fell marginally in the month of October by 1.4% and was 26.4% lower than for the same time last year. Nationally, the series increased by 1.9% over the month but was 44.0% lower than October 2008.



### Other Indicators

**Building approvals** in Tasmania increased in September by 3.2% over the previous month. They also increased over the year and were 11.0% higher than for the same time in September 2008. Nationally, building approvals increased by 2.0% over the month, and increased by 7.2% over the year.



**The Consumer Price Index** for Hobart increased by 1.2% in Tasmania in the September 2009 quarter, and by 1.8% over the year. This compares to a national quarterly increase of 1.0% for the September 2009 quarter and an annual increase of 1.3%.

### Newstart Recipients & Youth Allowees

Benefit recipients (Newstart & Youth Allowances) Tasmania				
	<12 months	>12 months	Total	% > 12 months
Sep-2008	4,068	5,882	9,950	59.1%
Sep-2009	6,135	6,286	12,421	50.6%
Number difference	2,067	404	2,471	
% difference	50.8%	6.9%	24.8%	

## TRENDS READERS' SURVEY – 2009

### Introduction

Every year the Department of Education Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR) conducts a survey of people on our distribution list for Trends. The purpose of the survey is to gauge readers' views on whether or not the publication is still useful and relevant to their needs, but also to gather suggestions on how the publication may be improved, what might be of interest to readers that is not currently included, and of course whether there is anything in the publication which is less useful, and perhaps could be replaced.

The following article is a summary of the main points emerging from the survey. In addition, it is an attempt to address the most common suggestions from the survey. Some things suggested by readers can be included, but others cannot, often because the data requested simply does not exist, or is not available in a timely manner. The survey is a formal way of gathering opinions and suggestions on an annual basis. However, the producers of Trends welcome suggestions or comments at anytime, so if you have an idea that you think would be useful to other readers, or you have a question about any of the content, you are welcome to contact us anytime, using the contact details on the front of the publication. Many thanks to all those who participated in the survey. Your input is highly valued and helps ensure that we continue to cater for the needs of those who use labour market information on a regular basis.

### Summary of results

Over a third of people who received Trends responded to the survey. The response rates are likely to have been distorted to some extent by the fact that we also use the survey to update our distribution lists. The response rate is likely to have been reduced by people not wishing to continue receiving Trends due to their changing roles, jobs, or their organisation no longer being involved in labour market activities. Responses were spread fairly evenly across sectors, with 34 per cent from government organisations, 28 per cent from the private sector, and 38 per cent from the community not-for-profit sector.

Most respondents indicated they found Trends useful or more than useful. The following table shows the percentage of responses against each section of Trends.

Trends Sections	Little use or less Responses %	Useful or more Responses %
Employment	0.00%	100.00%
Unemployment	3.40%	96.60%
Labour Force & Participation Rates	0.00%	96.60%
Job Vacancies	6.90%	93.10%
Other Indicators	0.00%	100.00%
Newstart & Youth Allowees	24.10%	75.90%
Feature Article	0.00%	96.60%
Economic Developments	0.00%	100.00%

This report contains material of a speculative nature and therefore should be used with caution. The Commonwealth, its officers, employees or agents disclaim any responsibility for any loss howsoever caused whether due to negligence or otherwise arising from the use of this report.

The only section with a significant level of response in the “little use or less” category is the Newstart and Youth Allowees section. This is also consistent with previous years’ results. In response to a relatively low approval rate in the past, we have changed the format of this section from a commentary on the figures to simply printing the table with the latest figures and those from the previous year. These figures are actually published by DEEWR, even though the allowances are paid by Centrelink, and for this reason we decided to continue to include them. We also felt there was sufficient interest (75.9 per cent) to retain them in shortened form to allow readers to compare numbers of people receiving income support, to total unemployed numbers.

On the more positive side, the Economic Developments section has once again had a universal endorsement from readers. This has consistently been rated as the most valued section of Trends for some years now, and as such will continue in its current form.

### **Suggestions for improvements**

#### *a) Gender breakdown*

On page 2 of Trends each month there is a table summarising the main labour market indicators for the month, broken up by male and female. In most cases, the differing labour market indicators of males and females are also usually discussed and compared on the front page as well.

#### *b) Regional data*

The ABS release their monthly labour force statistics usually on the second or third Thursday of each month. They release regional data generally about two weeks after that. As a result a decision has been made not to include regional data every month, as it would be for the month before the rest of the labour force data in the publication. In addition, regional data tends to have a greater degree of volatility from month to month and consequently it can be more difficult to discern underlying trends on a month to month basis. As an alternative we generally produce a regional profile on each of the three regions in Tasmania on an annual basis. In fact, the regional profile series will commence next month.

#### *c) More info on under-employment and more info on regional employment and unemployment*

See above for comments on regional data. We are considering a good suggestion on including data on underemployment and we will be looking at ways of incorporating this data into Trends in the next few months. Underemployed workers are employed people over the age of 15 who would like and are able to work more hours than they currently do. This could be an important indicator of under utilisation of labour, even when the unemployment rate is low for example.

#### *d) Inclusion of statistics in each industry*

The situation with statistics on employment by industry is similar to that of regional statistics. They are not always available at the same time as the standard monthly labour force data because they are released quarterly. In addition, as

they are based on data extracted from a sample survey, quarterly movements are often insufficient to be statistically valid. It is usually much more useful to look at trends in employment by industry over longer periods. At least once a year we produce a feature article on movements and trends in Tasmania's industries which tends to look at the last five years, in an attempt to make a more meaningful interpretation of the data. Hopefully this will satisfy demand for this type of information.

e) *The ability to view past Trends online*

Trends has in fact been available online for many years, with back copies on our Workplace web site dating back to 2001. However, it has become apparent to us that this is not well known, so in response to this we have now included the web address where you can find Trends at the bottom of the front page, below our contact details. Publication to the web site is usually completed by late afternoon on the day the figures are released, as this is done in Canberra not locally. This is one reason why we continue to distribute Trends as a PDF file, in that we are able to reach readers more quickly than waiting for it to be published on the web, and then distributing a link to it.

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## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENTS IN OCTOBER 2009

- Oct 3rd Norseke Skog will shed 50 jobs from its Boyer newsprint mill located near New Norfolk north of Hobart, the Australian Manufacturing Workers Union (AMWU) said yesterday. The company has told staff the jobs would be lost because of a 20 per cent drop in the global newsprint market, AMWU state president Darren Clark said. The jobs would go by the middle of next year and cover a range of roles at the plant. "At the end of the day we're trying to make sure the plant is viable and sustainable but we've also got to be mindful that you do need a certain number of people to run a two-machine plant and you don't want to fall below that" Mr Clark said. Workers had been told there was a possibility of further cuts. (*The Mercury*)
- Oct 7th The Federal Health Minister Nicola Roxon has unveiled a \$1 million upgrade of medical teaching facilities in Tasmania's north-west. The improvements to the University of Tasmania's Rural Clinical School at Burnie are designed to cater for growing student enrolments. The new facilities include lecture rooms and a medical simulation centre. Ms Roxon said the school would bring long-term improvements to medical care in the region. ([www.abc.net.au](http://www.abc.net.au))
- Oct 7th Beaconsfield Gold mine in the State's north produced about 70,000 ounces of gold worth around \$85 million last financial year. This was enough to turn a \$9 million profit and wipe out a big part of the company's debt according to Beaconsfield Gold's chief executive Bill Colvin. Mr Colvin said the mine had a life of about three years and the company

was confident it could dig deeper and extend the mines life another three years. (*The Mercury*)

- Oct 8th Australia's construction industry has grown for the first time in 18 months, following a spurt of residential building bolstered by low interest rates and the first home owners' grant, a survey has found. The Australian Industry Group/Housing Industry Association Performance of Construction Index grew by a seasonally adjusted 8.4 points in September to 50.8, scraping past the 50 point line that separates expansion from contraction. (*The Mercury*)
- Oct 8th The Eliza Purton residential aged care group announced the loss of 20 jobs out of its workforce of 320 state-wide because of financial pressure. Aged and Community Services Tasmania (ACST), the leading peak organisation for aged care services, community care services and retirement villages in Tasmania., has engaged aged care advisers Wallace Mackinnon and Associates to initiate a review of operations. (*The Examiner*)
- Oct 8th Receivers for auto parts manufacturer ACL Bearing Company based at Rocherlea near Launceston have been putting new strategies in place to restructure the company in preparation for its sale. Receiver-manager Matt Byrnes, of GrantThornton, said a number of short-term changes had been made to the way the company operated. "The changes to date have revolved largely around reducing the workforce by about 100 people, mainly through redundancies. There have also been a number of meetings and discussions with key customers around their terms and prices and we have made some changes there to improve the margins." Mr Byrnes said receivers would also be making changes with a long-term view in mind, including a roll-out of new skills training for staff. (*The Examiner*)
- Oct 10th The owners of Queenstown's Mt Lyell copper mine in the State's west announced a \$600,000 assistance package yesterday to help workers stood down because of a mudslide. Vedanta, the British parent company of Copper Mines of Tasmania, said it hoped mining could resume by the end of this month and be back in full production by the end of December. Mining was suspended on August 24 after ongoing heavy rain caused mud to flow into the underground production levels. About 220 Barmingo Mining workers have been off work for more than six weeks since the mudslide hit production. (*The Mercury*)
- Oct 12th Tasmania has the best performing economy in the nation, according to a new rankings report. It ranks best of the eight states and territories on unemployment, population growth and dwelling starts and first overall, according to the CommSec State of the States report, released today. Tasmania's weakest measures were housing finance commitments (seventh) and construction work (sixth), comprising total residential, commercial and building work in the June quarter. But while Tasmania was at the bottom of the leader board on housing finance, it tops the leader board on dwelling starts with the number of dwelling starts in the June quarter 18 per cent above the decade average. (*The Advocate*)
- Oct 13th A \$1 million upgrade of Launceston's Albert Hall in the State's north was announced by Environment, Heritage and Arts Minister Peter Garrett. The funding comes as part of the Australian Greens' Jobs Fund that was negotiated with the Rudd Government earlier this year as part of its economic stimulus package. The fund is worth \$360 million and has \$60 million earmarked for heritage funding across the country with the aim of creating jobs in rural and regional Australia. The \$1 million will go to refurbishing understage dressing rooms, improving access and upgrading exterior lighting and paintwork. (*The Examiner*)
- Oct 13th Tourism and Arts Minister Michelle O'Byrne has announced that the Regional Arts Australia national conference will be held for the first time in Tasmania in August next year.

The event will be hosted by Tasmanian Regional Arts and will bring into the state more than 1000 Australian and overseas delegates. The conference will be held at Inveresk in Launceston in the State's north from August 27 to 29, 2010. (*The Examiner*)

- Oct 13th Final tenders will be called or let by the end of this month for nearly \$100 million worth of capital works at the Launceston General Hospital (LGH) in the State's north. Prime Minister Kevin Rudd formally announced the works in Launceston yesterday, describing them as the biggest investment ever in health for the region. LGH chief executive John Kirwan later confirmed that the last three of the major works packages that make up the hospital overhaul will be advertised for tender by the end of October. On-ground work is expected to be under way early next year in the lead-up to the federal election due in November 2010 at the latest. (*The Examiner*)
- Oct 15th In a first for Tasmania, Burnie in the State's north west will lead the way with the development of the Autism Specific Early Learning and Care Centre, set to be completed in mid-2010. The centre will provide children with autism spectrum disorders dedicated early intervention and care, and employ six specialist staff at the Alexander Beetle House site. Centralised support will also be provided to satellite sites in the Mersey-Leven area and Circular Head. Parliamentary Secretary for Disabilities and Children's Services Bill Shorten said "the new centre will provide a magnet for additional resources to come to Burnie and will assist the community to become a community of choice in the future". (*The Advocate*)
- Oct 15th Health services in northern Tasmania will be boosted by the construction of a new Renal Satellite Service for the Launceston Community Health Centre. The \$732,400 project was announced by the Prime Minister, Parliamentary Secretary for Health Mark Butler and local MP Jodie Campbell during the Prime Minister's visit to Launceston. The new facility will operate six days a week and have the capacity for 16 renal stations that can treat multiple patients per day. The delivery of this unit will provide an immediate boost in construction jobs, as well as providing long term health care to locals. Maci Constructions has been appointed to build the Unit. ([www.egovmonitor.com](http://www.egovmonitor.com))
- Oct 15th The Federal Government has commitment to spend \$2.2 million on six bicycle path projects state-wide. Federal Infrastructure Minister Anthony Albanese and Greens senator Bob Brown yesterday unveiled National Bike Paths Projects in Hobart, Launceston, Burnie, St Helens, Prospect Vale, Strahan and Tullah. (*The Mercury*)
- Oct 17th Launceston-based software company Autech Software and Design has been named regional exporter of the year at the 2009 Tasmanian Export Awards. Shipbuilder Richardson Devine Marine Construction won the overall exporter of the year and small to medium manufacturer awards. Frogmore Creek Wines won the agribusiness award, while CBG Systems was named emerging exporter for their supply and installation of light-weight structural fire protection systems developed for the niche market of marine applications. The Learning Edge International won the information and communications technology division, Pivot Maritime International won the small to medium services award and Hutchins School won the education and training Services award. (*The Examiner*)
- Oct 19th Expressions of interest are being called for a sustainability learning centre to be built in Hobart in the state's south. Premier David Bartlett said the centre would become an outdoor classroom for students and the wider community. "The centre will provide hands-on learning opportunities for government and non-government school students and ensure Tasmanians have the knowledge and skills to meet the challenges of climate change," Mr Bartlett said. The centre is jointly funded through the Australian Government Local Schools Working Together initiative and Greening Australia. (*The Examiner*)
- Oct 19th Tasmania's economy is weathering the global downturn well but faces significant long-term challenges if it is to remain ahead of the pack, warns the September issue of Busi-

ness Outlook, a report by economic consultancy firm Access Economics. Premier David Bartlett welcomed the report saying "It is heartening to see that Access forecast a growth rate of 2.5 per cent for 2009-10 compared with a national projection of 1.9 per cent." But the Premier warned the state could not relax "if we are to provide jobs for Tasmanians and their children into the future". (*The Mercury*)

Oct 19th Tasmania's sheep flock has almost halved in the past 10 years. Drought has prompted culling and graziers have moved out of wool and into lamb production. Wool prices have fluctuated dramatically over the past decade and consumer demand for lamb has made prices soar. Tasmania's sheep population fell 45 per cent between 1998 and June last year to 2.1 million head. Many Tasmanian graziers have moved into dual purpose sheep, which can be shorn and processed for meat. Numbers have also fallen in the live export market. Mutton exports are forecast to fall by 17 per cent this year and another 13 per cent next year, while live exports are forecast to fall by 10 per cent this year and 13 per cent next. The diminishing flock has many in the industry worried sheep populations could fall below sustainable levels. But the Tasmanian Farmers and Graziers Association said farmers would start to rebuild flocks as pastoral conditions rebounded from drought over the next year or two. (*The Mercury*)

Oct 21st Professor Jonathan West's long-awaited Innovations Strategy for Tasmania report was handed to Premier David Bartlett yesterday. Accepting Prof West's report, Mr Bartlett said his influence was already being felt as the Government outlines its policies on renewable network and irrigation expansion. "No doubt this report will create a whole range of debates and that's good for Tasmania." he said. He promised a formal response within the next few months. Professor West's Innovation Plan includes the following:

- An extra \$1 billion investment in irrigation schemes across the state by the Federal Government, turning Tasmania into Australia's food basket.
- An end to the ban on growing genetically modified crops in Tasmania, in the first instance for non-food crops.
- Greater use of the \$2 billion invested in Tasmanian superannuation funds, to support state innovation investment.
- A \$10 million international competition for the best business plan ideas for Tasmania's future.
- Decentralising the Economic Development and Primary Industries department to small towns, so their officers live in the communities they are trying to transform.
- Construction of second Basslink power cable across Bass Strait and a doubling of energy exports.
- Incentives to attract new hi-tech businesses such as global server farms and data centres to Tasmania. (*The Mercury*)

Oct 21st The Tasmanian State Government would be ready to take over rail operations from Pacific National Tasmania by 1st December 2009, Infrastructure Minister Graeme Sturges said yesterday. A new state-owned company Tasmanian Railway is being set up to take over the rail network from Pacific National. Pacific National employees have been sent offers of employment and have until October 31 to accept. A board of directors and an interim chief executive for the new company are yet to be appointed. (*The Examiner*)

Oct 24th Tasmanian building firms are unable to take on new projects in the State's north west as a result of the Federal Government's stimulus spending. Only one tender was received to construct the showground community precinct at Ulverstone from building contractor

Mead Con. While Fairbrother and Vos Construction both requested tender documents, both pulled out of the process due to other contract commitments. The contract was subsequently awarded to Mead Con however, Central Coast Mayor Mike Downie said without a competitive tender process the final contract was still to be negotiated. (*The Advocate*)

- Oct 26th Premier David Bartlett has opened the gas-fired Tamar Valley Power Station located in the State's north. At a cost of \$451 million the plant contains Tasmania's largest single power-generating unit and has an output capable of 390 megawatts. (*The Examiner*)
- Oct 28<sup>th</sup> A new partnership between Greyhound Freight and Stateline Freight means people can now send freight and parcels in and out of Tasmania to any one of the 7,200 towns and suburbs Greyhound delivers to Australia-wide everyday. Greyhound Australia chief executive officer Robert Thomas said that Greyhound Freight would be offering a heavy discount, making it even more affordable for everyday freight. "Companies and consumers can save up to 35% on the previous rates available through Greyhound. This has been achieved by dealing direct through Stateline Freight rather than multiple entities" Mr Thomas said. Stateline Freight is one of the largest independent courier and transport services in Tasmania. Greyhound Freight is a division of Greyhound Australia and has been delivering freight across the country as long as it has been transporting passengers. ([www.tandlnews.com.au](http://www.tandlnews.com.au))
- Oct 29th Funds from the State Government's Dairy Assistance Package are now available to Tasmanian dairy farmers. The package is being co-ordinated by the Tasmanian Farmers and Graziers Association, but a number of agencies are responsible for administering various elements of the package. Information about the dairy package – with application forms where applicable – is available from the TFGA website [www.tfga.com.au](http://www.tfga.com.au) and from the State Government's Farmpoint website. [www.farmpoint.tas.gov.au](http://www.farmpoint.tas.gov.au). (*The Examiner*)
- Oct 29th Superannuation investment company the Retirement Benefits Fund (RBF) has sold the vacant Myer site located in Liverpool St in a package with it's existing Murray St property for \$16 million. The properties located in Hobart in the states south have been bought by Hobart property developer E. Kalis Properties Pty Ltd. RBF chief executive Simon Gillies said the settlement would be finalised in January 2010. (*The Mercury*)
- Oct 30th A new skills shortage is expected within 12 months despite business doing all it can to hold on to staff during the economic downturn, a survey has found. The Australian Industry Group and consultant Deloitte warn that the skills shortage will re-emerge when trading conditions improve because of a drop in training and number of apprentices. (*The Mercury*)
- Oct 31st The Tasmanian Chamber of Commerce and Industry has appointed Robert Wallace as its new Executive Officer. Mr Wallace who was most recently the chief executive of Northern Tasmania Development will take over from interim TCCI chief executive Andrew Scobie. (*The Mercury*)
- Oct 31st Tasmania has become Australia's first state to appoint a minister for hospitality. Tasmanian Premier David Bartlett announced yesterday the new portfolio would be a responsibility of Tourism and Arts Minister Michelle O'Byrne. The announcement was welcomed by the Australian Hotels Association and Restaurant and Catering Association (soon to unite as the Tasmanian Hospitality Association). (*The Mercury*)