



- **Employment in Tasmania was 3.2% lower than in January last year**
- **The unemployment rate was 0.8 percentage points higher**
- **The participation rate was 2 percentage points lower**

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

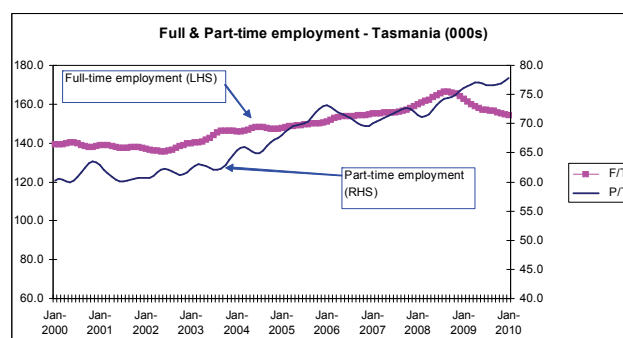
### Employment

Total employment in Tasmania did not change over the month of January, the first month when there hasn't been a fall, since September 2008. Employment is however, 2.8 per cent lower than it was in January last year. Full-time employment has fallen by 5.2 per cent over the year but the effect of this has been lessened to some extent by a 2.2 per cent rise in part-time employment. Total male employment is 4.8 per cent lower than it was last January. Male full-time employment has fallen by 5.5 per cent, while male part-time employment has fallen by 1.8 per cent. Total female employment fell by a much lower 0.49 per cent over the year. Female full-time employment fell by 4.5 per cent since last January, but a growth of 2.0 per cent in female part-time employment offset this to some extent. It is perhaps worth noting that in August 2009, total female employment reached its highest level since 1978, and is currently only 1.0 per cent below that.

### Unemployment

The total number of unemployed people in Tasmania was 13,300 which was 14.7 per cent higher than

it was in January last year. There were 1,900 more males unemployed in January this year compared to last, while the number of unemployed females was slightly lower than it was last January. The Tasmanian unemployment rate was 5.4 per cent in January compared to a rate of 4.6 per cent in January last year. The current national employment rate is also 5.4 per cent, while in other States and Territories, NSW recorded 5.8 per cent, Victoria 5.2 per cent, Qld 5.8 per cent, SA 4.9 per cent, WA 5.0 per cent, NT 3.3 per cent, and 3.8 per



cent.

### Labour Force & Participation Rates

The number of people in the Tasmanian labour force in January was estimated at 245,500, which was 2.1 per cent fewer than the number recorded a year ago. Most of the contraction has occurred in the male labour force, with the female labour force remaining approximately the same size as in January 2009. The Tasmania participation rate was 60.2 per cent in January, down from 62.1 per cent last year, and well below the current national rate of 65.3 per cent.

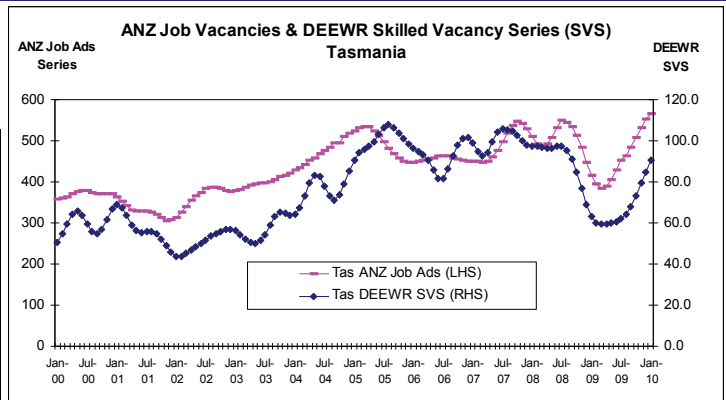
## Labour Force Estimates - Tasmania (Trend data)

	Jan-2009	Dec-2009	Jan-2010
	000's	000's	000's
Employment			
Male	130.0	123.5	123.7
Female	108.9	108.7	108.5
Full-time	162.8	154.9	154.4
Part-time	76.1	77.3	77.8
Persons	238.9	232.2	232.2
Unemployment			
Male	5.8	7.7	7.7
Female	5.8	5.6	5.6
Persons	11.6	13.2	13.3
Labour Force			
Male	135.7	131.2	131.4
Female	114.7	114.2	114.1
Persons	250.5	245.4	245.5
Unemployment Rate %			
Male	4.3	5.8	5.8
Female	5.1	4.9	4.9
Persons	4.6	5.4	5.4
Full-time Teenage*	21.5	30.2	19.7
Participation Rate %			
Male	68.9	65.9	65.9
Female	55.5	54.8	54.7
Persons	62.1	60.2	60.2
*unadjusted data			

### Job Vacancies

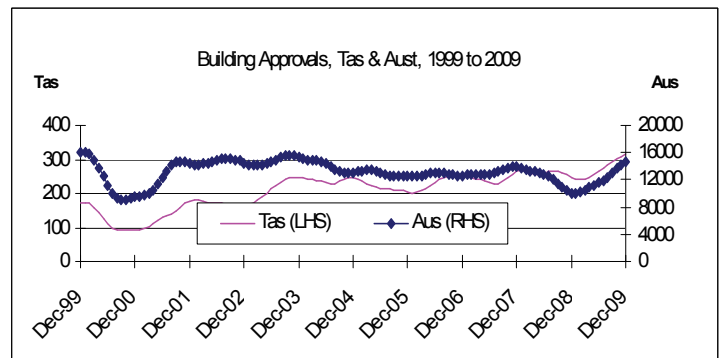
**The ANZ Bank Job Advertisement series** (trend) in Tasmania increased by 2.4% in January and was 35.5% above what it was in January last year. Nationally, the series increased by 1.4% over the month, and was 3.4% below what it was in January 2009.

**DEEWR's Skilled Vacancy Survey Index** (trend) rose in the month of January by 6.3% and was 42.6% above what it was for the same time last year. Nationally, the series increased by 1.1% over the month and was 15.5% lower than in January 2009.



### Other Indicators

**Building approvals** in Tasmania increased during the month of December 2009 by 2.3% and were 28.0% higher than at the same time the previous year. Nationally, building approvals increased by 3.1% over the month and were 44.3% higher than in December 2008.



**Retail quarterly turnover** (chain volume measure) increased by 1.2% in Tasmania in the December 2009 quarter, and by 3.7% over the year. This compares to a national quarterly increase of 1.3% for the December 2009 quarter and an annual increase of 4.5%.

**The Consumer Price Index** for Hobart increased by 0.6% in Tasmania in the December 2009 quarter, and by 2.6% over the year. This compares to a national quarterly increase of 0.5% for the December 2009 quarter and an annual increase of 2.1%.

### Newstart Recipients & Youth Allowees

Benefit recipients (Newstart & Youth Allowances) Tasmania				
	<12 months	>12 months	Total	% > 12 months
Dec-2008	4,681	6,180	10,861	56.9%
Dec-2009	5,517	6,683	12,200	54.8%
Number difference	836	503	1,339	
% difference	17.9%	8.1%	12.3%	

**REGIONAL PROFILES PART THREE – SOUTHERN TASMANIA  
(GREATER HOBART - SOUTHERN))**

### Introduction

The following article is the last of three to be focussing on the labour market in each of the three Tasmanian regions. The data discussed will be primarily from the ABS monthly labour force survey, and rolling three month averages will be used in an attempt to reduce the volatility of the data. In general, the approach will be to compare each region to the State average, and the last five years will be the focus. Each report will focus on the five years to October 2009, to allow direct comparisons of regions, and the previous articles.

### Employment

Total employment in southern Tasmania has grown by 11.5 per cent over the last five years, compared to a growth rate of 8.9 per cent for the whole State. Nearly two thirds of all new jobs created in this time were part-time, and just over two thirds of all job growth occurred among females. Total male employment grew by 7.0 per cent, while total female employment grew by 16.6 per cent. Total full-time employment in the south grew by 5.6 per cent over the last five years, while total part-time employment grew by 25.3 per cent over the same period. This compares with a total increase in full-time employment for the whole State of 6.6 per cent, and of 14.1 per cent for part-time employment.

The following table shows the elements of employment growth in the south of the State compared to all of Tasmania over the last five years.

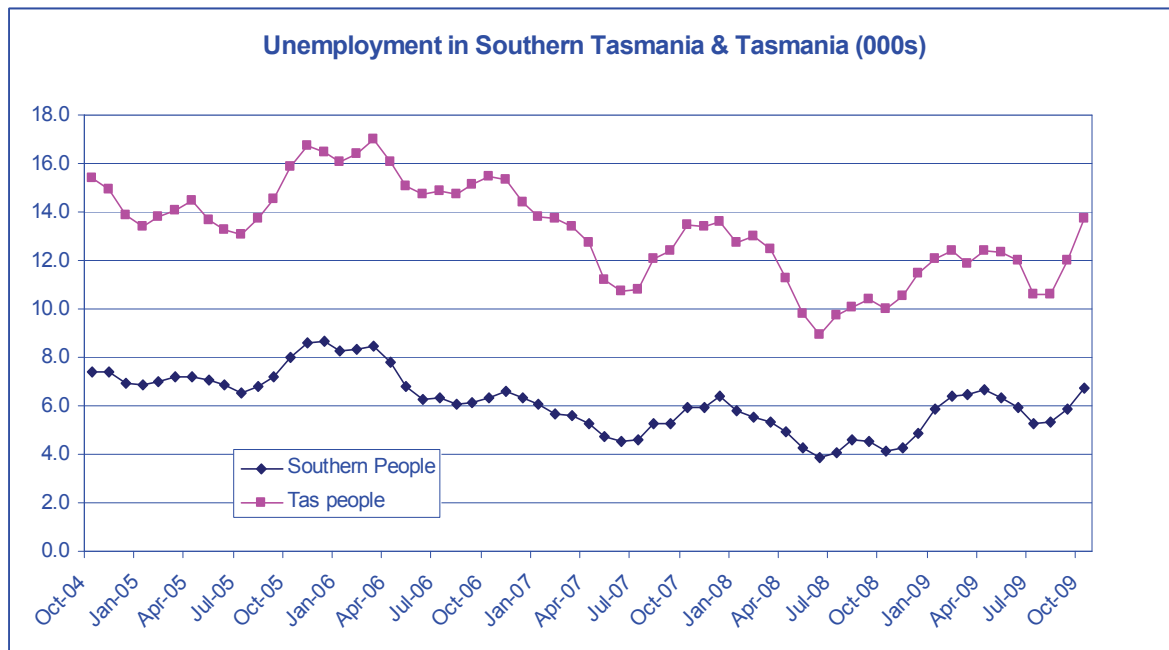
	Southern Tasmania			Tasmania		
	F/time	P/time	Total	F/time	P/time	Total
Males	9.9%	22.9%	32.8%	16.7%	15.8%	32.5%
Females	24.0%	43.3%	67.2%	33.9%	33.6%	67.5%
Persons	33.9%	66.1%	100.0%	50.6%	49.4%	100.0%

The major differences between the employment growth patterns in the South and the whole State have been in the full-time and part-time work split. Growth was fairly evenly split for the whole State, but part-time work made up almost two thirds of employment growth in the south. In October 2004, 49.6 per cent of the State's employed people lived in the southern region, but by October 2009 this share had increased slightly to 50.7 per cent.

### Unemployment

Total unemployment was estimated at 6,800 in the south of the State in October 2009, compared to 7,400 in October 2004, which was a fall of 8.6 per cent. This was below the 11.0 per cent experienced by the whole State, but unemployment in the south did drop to 3,900 in June last year, before trending upwards from the latter part of 2008. Male unemployment in the south fell by 18.9 per cent over the last five years, while female unemployment was 10.1 per cent higher than it was

five years ago. The following graph compares the trends in unemployment in the south to those for the whole State over the last five years.



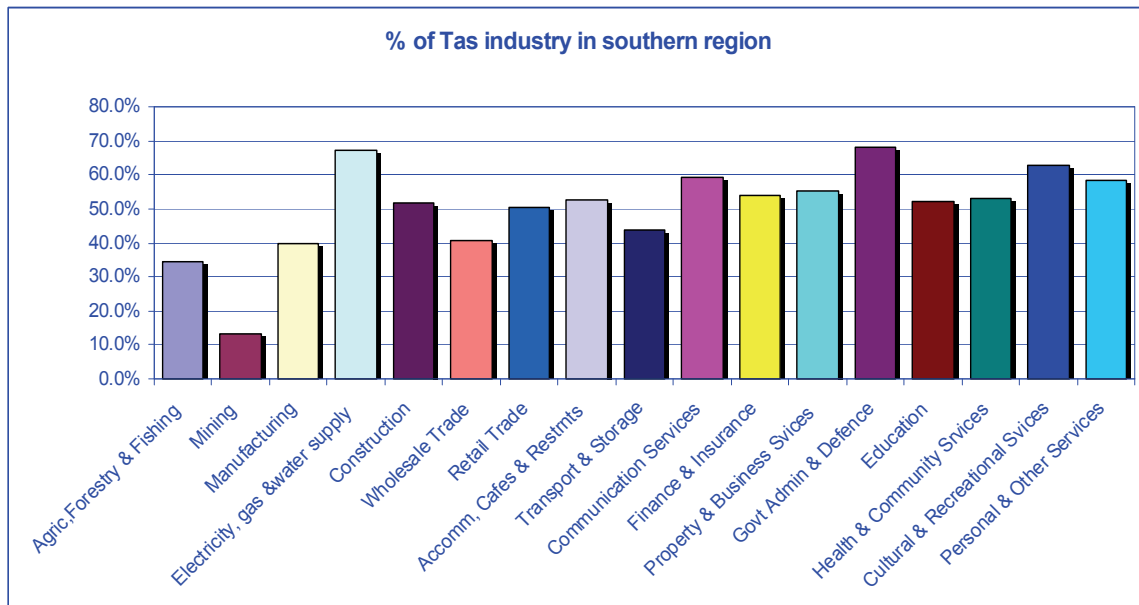
The trend for the south has been broadly similar to that for the whole State. This is hardly surprising, given that about half of the State's labour force live in the south, and therefore any movements in the southern figures are going to heavily influence those for the whole State. In October 2004 47.9 per cent of the State's unemployed lived in the south, but by October 2009, this share had increased to 49.3 per cent. In October 2009, the unemployment rate in the south was 5.4 per cent, down from 6.6 per cent five years earlier. This compares to a fall from 6.8 per cent to 5.6 per cent over the same period for the whole State.

### Labour Force and participation rates

The labour force in southern Tasmania grew by 10.2 per cent between October 2004 and October 2009. This is above the 7.6 per cent experienced by the whole State over the same period. The bulk of the growth at 73.3 per cent occurred in the female labour force in the south, but this is consistent with growth for the State as a whole, where 71.6 per cent of labour force growth was among females. This is also reflected in movements in participation rates, where in the south female participation has increased from 52.5 per cent five years ago, to 57.6 per cent in October 2009. Male participation experienced much more modest growth, increasing from 65.7 per cent to 65.8 per cent. The participation rates for the State increased from 66.7 per cent to 65.9 per cent among males, and from 51.7 per cent to 55.1 per cent for females. The overall participation rate for the south increased from 58.9 per cent to 61.5 per cent, while for the whole State, it increased from 59.0 per cent to 60.4 per cent over the last five years. Over the last five years the south's share of the State's labour force has increased from 49.5 per cent to 50.6 per cent.

## Industry Share

The following graph shows the southern region's share of the State's industry. As stated above, the south's share of Tasmania's labour force in October 2009 was 50.6 per cent.



In general, the south's share of industry employment reflects its share of the labour force, at around 50 per cent. Industries which are under-represented in the south include agriculture forestry and fishing at 34.4 per cent, mining at 13.1 per cent, manufacturing at 39.8 per cent, wholesale trade at 40.7 per cent and transport and storage at 43.7 per cent. Industries where the south has a greater share of employment than the State average are electricity, gas and water supply at 67.0 per cent, government administration and defence at 67.9 per cent, cultural and recreational services at 63.0 per cent, communication services at 59.1 per cent, and property and business services at 55.4 per cent.

### Summary

- Employment growth in southern Tasmania has exceeded that of the State average over the last five years, with around 67 per cent of this growth occurring in the female labour force;
- Unemployment has fallen at a slower rate in the south compared to the State average, but the unemployment rate for southern Tasmania has been consistently below that of the whole State;
- Participation rates in the south have also been consistently above the State average, with female participation in particular exceeding the average by more than male participation rates.

## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENTS IN JANUARY 2010

- Jan 5<sup>th</sup> A new series on SBS Television will see Tasmania feature in a documentary-style food series, *Gourmet Farmer*. The Acting Tasmanian Minister for Tourism and the Arts, Jim Cox said *Gourmet Farmer* would be a showcase of Tasmania and its authentic, quality food and tourism experiences. Tasmania will have an online presence on the *Gourmet Farmer* website with information about the destination and links to Tourism Tasmania's website [discovertasmania.com](http://discovertasmania.com). Tourism Tasmania will also be promoting the series on [discovertasmania.com](http://discovertasmania.com) by featuring Tasmanian itineraries and holiday packages. ([www.media.tas.gov.au](http://www.media.tas.gov.au))
- Jan 5<sup>th</sup> Tasmania's multimillion-dollar poppy industry was looking good for the foreseeable future, Poppy Growers Association chief executive Keith Rice said. Mr Rice said that this year's crop would be harvested from more than 22,000 hectares - a little more than the previous record of 21,600 hectares in the 2000 and 2001 harvests. It would be worth \$75-\$90 million at the farm gate, compared with \$50 million last year and \$33 million the year before. (The Examiner)
- Jan 7<sup>th</sup> Tasmania's cherry harvest would net growers about \$40 million at the farm gate this year, Fruit Growers Tasmania president Jos Driessen said. Mr Driessen said that the state's cherry harvest had been "a bit slow" so far, but was shaping up well. "The organisation I'm involved with - Aussie Cherries Ltd - will harvest about 100 tonnes around the Huon Valley this year" he said. "We provide cherries for all markets - we've registered this year to supply into Japan, Taiwan and Korea. We're positioning ourselves for the future - we have 40,000 trees in the ground and another 25,000 to plant and when they're all producing that will be 600 tonnes of cherries." Mr Driessen said. (The Examiner)
- Jan 7<sup>th</sup> Gunns' \$2 billion pulp mill will start operations with 100% plantation timber it was announced yesterday. Originally the company planned to phase in the use of plantation timber, but the announcement to the Australian Stock Exchange was welcomed by the State Government. Premier David Bartlett said the announcement was a positive sign for the controversial mill and would help allay fears that the mill would have an adverse effect on native forests. Tasmanian Greens leader Nick McKim said while the announcement was positive, the pulp mill was still an unacceptable project. (The Advocate)
- Jan 7<sup>th</sup> The Burnie City Council in the State's north west has released plans for a new sea wall at West Beach. Mayor Alwyn Boyd said the council was calling for public comment on the proposed sea wall, which is designed to lessen impact on the beach and to allow better viewing of beach events including surf carnivals and the city's New Year's Eve bash, A Night on the Terrace. Designed by Taylor, Cullity and Lethlean (TCL), Ald Boyd said a terraced design had been recommended, but the council was keen to gauge public opinion before its January 19th council meeting. (The Advocate)
- Jan 8<sup>th</sup> The Tasmanian Minister for Economic Development, Michael Aird, today launched a new 'Travel to Work' service to help jobseekers in Tasmania's north west take up jobs. Mr Aird said that transport had been identified as a major barrier to employment in the region due to the remote locality

of major businesses. "One of Tasmania's largest job search centres, Choose Employment, has taken the initiative to run a transport service for disadvantaged jobseekers in the North West," Mr Aird said. A \$95,000 grant through the Government's Workforce Participation Program will be used to help Choose Employment to purchase two 12-seater 'work buses' that will be used to transport work-ready clients to seasonal employment opportunities in the vegetable industry from January 2010. ([www.media.tas.gov.au](http://www.media.tas.gov.au))

- Jan 8<sup>th</sup> The State Government has called for tenders for the design and construction of Launceston's Thyne building in the State's north, which will be redeveloped as a permanent residence for the homeless. Tasmanian Human Services Minister Lin Thorp visited the historic York Street site yesterday, where 20 units will be built. The renovation is expected to be completed by May with money provided by the Federal Government's National Building Economic Stimulus Plan. Tenders close on Thursday, January 28 and interested parties can visit [www.tenders.tas.gov.au](http://www.tenders.tas.gov.au). (The Examiner)
- Jan 9<sup>th</sup> A commercial decision has been made to freight Hobart's Norske Skog's paper product and Nyrstar's zinc product from the port of Burnie in the north-west rather than Bell Bay in northern Tasmania. It was now "commercially and operationally unviable" to keep the Bell Bay rail line open at this point, Tasmanian Infrastructure Minister Graeme Sturges said. Instead, the newly owned state rail company, Tasmanian Railway, will increase capacity between Hobart and Burnie from five to seven services a week. (The Advocate)
- Jan 9<sup>th</sup> A construction tender for Princes Wharf No. 1 shed on Hobart's waterfront in southern Tasmania was released yesterday. Renewal of the shed, which is the home of the Taste Festival, is expected to start in March. The successful tenderer would have to include plans for the safe removal of asbestos from the roof. Tenders close on February 3<sup>rd</sup>. (The Mercury)
- Jan 11<sup>th</sup> A new Flinders Island shipping service is expected to be operating by late-January. The new company, Furneaux Freight, has a boat arriving from Cairns. It will provide freight, livestock and passenger services to Flinders Island from Tasmania and Victoria. ([www.abc.net.au](http://www.abc.net.au))
- Jan 11<sup>th</sup> The State Government is to provide \$16.35 million to boost educational opportunities in rural and regional areas, Tasmanian Premier and Education Minister David Bartlett said yesterday. The money - to be spent over the next six years - was aimed at ensuring better opportunities for Tasmanian Polytechnic and Academy students no matter where they lived. Some of the money will be spent on trade training centres being built at Scottsdale, George Town, Bridgewater, St Helens, Smithton and Huonville. And some will be spent in the Academy to improve access for remote students. (The Mercury)
- Jan 11<sup>th</sup> Tasmania has lost its position as the best-performing economy in the nation, but only just, according to the latest Commonwealth Bank CommSec report. WA is the fastest-growing state, buoyed by mining related construction and investment and home building and property sales have fuelled the ACT's performance. Tasmania's economy has continued to benefit from above-average population growth, the report says. Treas-

urer Michael Aird said Tasmania's economy had held up better than expected over the past year. He said the report showed the state's economy was performing above the average of the past decade. (The Mercury)

- Jan 12<sup>th</sup> Circular Head Christian School at Smithton in the State's north west will receive \$1.5 million for a Trade Training Centre focused on agriculture, aquaculture and horticulture, while Smithton High will receive up to \$3 million for a new facility aimed at automotive, general construction, electrical and metal industries. The curriculum at both schools will be set up so that students can travel between schools in order to study the subjects each has been funded to specialise in. (The Advocate)
- Jan 12<sup>th</sup> The Tasmanian State Government has purchased the North West Regional Hospital in Burnie for a price rumoured to be more than \$50 million. Tasmanian Premier David Bartlett said the purchase would provide certainty and the ability to plan ahead for new health infrastructure on the North-West Coast. (The Advocate)
- Jan 13<sup>th</sup> Construction has begun on the multimillion-dollar liquefied natural gas conversion plant at Westbury in the State's north. International industrial gas company BOC says that construction should be finished by April 2010. BOC have contracted mainland engineering company Gas Liquefied Processing to engineer, procure and construct the plant. (The Examiner)
- Jan 13<sup>th</sup> The first of 30 Tasmanian Child and Family centres is due to start construction at Beaconsfield in the State's north later this month. It is part of almost \$6.5 million in new facilities for children and families in the town. Tasmanian Premier and Education Minister David Bartlett said that the Beaconsfield centre was the first in the state and would help both children and parents. The Australian Government has invested \$1.8 million in an Early Learning and Care Centre while the State Government has put in \$2.5 million for the Tasmania Child and Family Centre. Both will be based at Beaconsfield Primary School. Construction on the centre is expected to start this month and be completed by October. (The Examiner)
- Jan 15<sup>th</sup> Upgrades to Northern Tasmania's Cradle Mountain's tracks began this week. Up to \$491,000 of works from an Australian Government Jobs Fund Project would continue for several months with up to six walking track workers, said Parks and Wildlife Service acting north-west manger Stuart Lennox. (The Mercury)
- Jan 15<sup>th</sup> The State Government is calling for tenders for stage one of the Mersey Community Hospital redevelopment at Latrobe in the State's north west, worth nearly \$8 million. Premier David Bartlett and Health Minister Lara Giddings made the announcement just days after revealing plans to buy the North West Regional Hospital building in Burnie, also in the north west of the State, and build a cancer centre. (The Examiner)
- Jan 15<sup>th</sup> Tenders have been called for a \$3 million housing redevelopment on Hobart's eastern shore in the State's south. The Tasmanian Minister for Human Services, Lin Thorp said the Bellerive development was significant because it involved demolition and site clearance as well as the construction of 13 two bedroom units. "This project is part of the Tasmanian Government's commitment to addressing Housing Tasmania's age-

ing stock,” Ms Thorp said. Ms Thorp encouraged building companies interested in being involved in the development to contact Morrison & Breytenbach Architects on 6231 9093 for additional information. ([www.media.tas.gov.au](http://www.media.tas.gov.au))

- Jan 18<sup>th</sup> A total \$5.6 million in state and federal funds has been made available to build an operations centre for Tasmania's newly formed Ambulance and Health Transport Service in Brisbane St in Hobart in the State's south, next to the existing ambulance station. The Federal Government contributed \$2.7 million and the state is providing the remaining \$2.9 million, which is new funding on top of a \$48 million package announced in the State Budget. (The Examiner)
- Jan 19<sup>th</sup> Work will soon begin on a \$1 million upgrade of the Albert Hall at Launceston in the north of the State after the Launceston City Council gave the project the green light yesterday. In its first meeting for 2010, the council heard it had been successful in applying for funding for the project from the Federal Government's Jobs Fund. The upgrade would include the construction of under-stage dressing rooms, general refurbishment, improved access facilities, an upgrade of the main stage area, acoustic works, painting and a strengthened loading dock. (The Examiner)
- Jan 19<sup>th</sup> Two controversial public housing developments in Newnham in Launceston in the north of the State will go ahead after "no relevant planning issues" were noted in an independent planning report. The multi-unit developments in Mount Stuart Drive had drawn opposition from residents who were concerned about degradation of property values and other issues. However, Tasmanian Human Services Minister Lin Thorp said the projects had now been certified by the project authority and would proceed as planned. (The Examiner)
- Jan 19<sup>th</sup> Tasmania's export market remained strong despite new figures showing a slump in international exports, State Treasurer Michael Aird said yesterday. A breakdown of the nation's trade figures shows that international exports contributed \$3.9 billion to the Tasmanian economy in 2008-09, a 4.3 per cent drop from 2007-08. The Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade report says that nationally exports jumped by more than 22 per cent to \$283.8 billion.(The Examiner)
- Jan 19<sup>th</sup> Mining company Bass Metals has received approval from the Environmental Protection Authority Tasmania regarding its proposed new Fossey Mine development at Hellyer in the State's north west. Bass has lodged a permit application with the Waratah-Wynyard Council who will complete the assessment of planning considerations and decide if permits are to be issued. Bass Managing Director Mike Rosenstreich said this was regarded as an important milestone for the Company's plans to scale-up its production profile from its existing Que River (copper-lead-zinc-silver-gold) mine with the development of a new second mine at its Fossey Deposit, part of its overall Hellyer mining and milling project. Further updates on the Fossey Mine development are planned to follow in the near term and the company considers it is on track to be in production and selling base metal concentrates this calendar year. ([www.proactiveinvestors.com.au](http://www.proactiveinvestors.com.au))

- Jan 20<sup>th</sup> British chocolate-maker Cadbury agreed to a takeover offer from Kraft overnight, valuing the British group at \$AU20.28 billion in a bid to create a world leader in food and confectionery. Cadbury in Hobart is more than 80 years old and employs 600 people. The Australian Manufacturing Workers Union is expected to seek assurances of Tasmanian workers' positions and entitlements in the takeover. In December 2008, Cadbury sacked 160 workers from its Hobart plant, which was established in the 1920s in a Cadbury-Fry and Pascall venture. (The Mercury)
- Jan 21<sup>st</sup> Construction is underway in Devonport in the State's north west on more housing options that are being delivered under a \$2.4 million development. Tasmanian Human Services Minister Lin Thorp and Brad-don MHR Sid Sidebottom visited the site in Gunn St, Devonport, yesterday where seven more units are being built. "This project is one of 21 that will see 106 new social housing units being built across the North-West Coast" Ms thorp said. Devonport building company TBS Projects was successful in receiving funding under stage two of the Federal Government's Nation Building Economic Stimulus Plan. "This project alone will see the local employment of up to 10 people, with two of these being apprentices," Mr Sidebottom said. (The Advocate)
- Jan 21<sup>st</sup> The value of building activity in Tasmania continues to increase. Tasmanian Premier David Bartlett today welcomed the latest data from the Australian Bureau of Statistics. "Today's data shows a continuing upward trend in the value of building works done, increasing by 6.2 per cent in the year to September 2009. This increase in building activity comes on top of engineering construction data released last week which showed a \$1 billion (13.2 per cent) increase in engineering work over the same period, including an increase of 8.4 per cent or \$15.6 million in roads, highways and subdivisions. The value of non-residential building work commenced in Tasmania increased by 14.4 per cent in the year to September 2009, to \$602.1 million. This is a good forward indicator of future building activity," Premier Bartlett said. (www.media.tas.gov.au)
- Jan 23<sup>rd</sup> Demolition work has started in preparation for developer Ali Sultan's \$45 million retail and office complex next to the Argyle St car-park in Hobart in the State's south, and it will include an underground Woolworth's supermarket. There will also be 17 other shops, more than 500 extra car parking spaces and four levels of office space. The first stage is due to be completed by the middle of next year. (The Mercury)
- Jan 23<sup>rd</sup> The \$750,000 University Sports and Community Club development continues to take shape at the University Oval in Launceston in the State's north. The original schedule of a mid-February completion has now been extended to late March. The redevelopment was financed by Federal Government funding. (The Examiner)
- Jan 23<sup>rd</sup> Work to expand and upgrade the King Island abattoir is expected to begin in March. Multinational JBS Swift entered into lengthy discussions with the State Government and committed to investing \$14 million in the plant when offered a \$12 million low-interest loan. Plant manager Janette Mossop is hoping work will be completed within 12 months. As the capacity of the plant increases so too must the capacity of the island's beef producers to supply the cattle, and Mrs Mossop was confident that was on track. (The Examiner)

- Jan 25<sup>th</sup> The State Government has pledged \$21.2 million over four years for a renewable energy plan for the Bass Strait islands. The plan will see Hydro Tasmania build new solar, wind and biodiesel energy-generation facilities on King and Flinders Islands. Tasmanian Premier David Bartlett, Sid Sidebottom MHR and Bryan Green MHA travelled to King Island to announce the funding. With money that Mr Bartlett said was already provided for in the state budget, the plan will incorporate a range of technologies to allow the island to store energy when it is windy and use when it is not. Mr Bartlett was adamant that the funding was not an election promise and that the plan would start "almost immediately". While Mr Bartlett claimed the plan would create jobs over the next 10 years, he did not specify or estimate an amount. Mr Bartlett said the plan would massively reduce the need for diesel on the island and this would, in turn, benefit the mainland of Tasmania. The funding was announced alongside a further \$2 million for the island's social infrastructure. (The Advocate)
- Jan 25<sup>th</sup> A liquefied gas refuelling station will go ahead at Rocherlea in Launceston in the State's north after it gained approval from the Launceston City Council. The station is one of six planned around the State to fuel specially converted trucks and will be fed from a multi-million dollar LNG conversion plant at Westbury in the States north. Owned by international industrial gas company BOC, the investment in the liquefied natural gas, trucks and refuelling stations is understood to total more than \$300 million. (The Examiner)
- Jan 27<sup>th</sup> A multi-million dollar plan to convert a far North-West island into a Bay of Fires-type of tourism experience is likely to showcase the region's rugged beauty worldwide and boost visitor numbers to the Coast. It is understood that three Melbourne businessmen, who have a 40ha leaseholding on the 100sq km Three Hummock Island off Circular Head on the State's north west coast, are planning a multi-million dollar, five-star eco lodge, with top-class chefs, botanists and three to four-day walks. Discussions are taking place between the trio and the Parks and Wildlife Service (PWS) in regards to very sensitive environmental issues on the state reserve. There is only accommodation for 21 guests on the island, who are limited to either a homestead or workers' cottage. One of three Melbourne businessmen behind the proposal, Richard Cameron, yesterday said plans were being progressed with the PWS. (The Advocate)
- Jan 28<sup>th</sup> Tasmania's recovery from the global financial crisis looks likely to lag according to Access Economics' latest Business Outlook. The report, which was released yesterday and covers the quarter until December last year, says that compared to other states Tasmania entered the global financial crisis relatively late and coped well throughout the downturn. However, weakened spending on commercial and housing construction was starting to have an impact, with the rate likely to drop further next financial year. Manufacturing investment was also down according to the report, due partly to the closure announcements of the Burnie and Wesley Vale paper mills. Figures from the report reveal that while Tasmania has slowed, it has not stalled. Tasmanian Premier David Bartlett stated that "In the midst of a global recession, the fact that our economy is still growing is extremely encouraging". (The Advocate)

- Jan 28<sup>th</sup> Begents' new \$4million Devonport superstore has opened its doors for business. The Buchanan family-owned electrical, furniture and bedding store with a long history in Devonport in the State's north west has transformed the former Cash and Carry warehouse at 33 Don Rd. Begents' new Devonport store is the final one of five stores to undergo a re-development. Begents also has stores in Burnie, Ulverstone, Scottsdale and Launceston. Begents Group managing director Max Buchanan said that despite the recent global financial crisis, the multimillion-dollar Devonport investment project was undertaken because of his confidence in the city's future and Tasmania's economy. (The Advocate)
- Jan 28<sup>th</sup> Tasmania's commercial construction industry is set for record spending of nearly \$600 million this year, says Master Builder's chief executive Michael Kerschbaum. "That's the highest amount by a mile spent in the commercial area," Mr Kerschbaum said yesterday. "It's well over \$100 million more than has been spent before." Mr Kerschbaum's comments were in contrast to those in the latest Access Economics quarterly report, released yesterday, on the state of the commercial construction in Tasmania. Mr Kerschbaum said that far from a gloomy future for commercial construction and development, the amount of work already on the books supported suggestion that 2010 would be the state's best year ever. Projects already under way include the redevelopment of the Myer Hobart site in the State's south, a \$70 million to \$80 million project; the new Parliament square also in Hobart, \$80 million and major works at the Royal Hobart Hospital in the south and Launceston General hospital in the north of the State. (The Examiner)
- Jan 28<sup>th</sup> Construction is set to start on the Fossey Base Metals Mine, north of Tullah in Tasmania's west, generating an estimated 50-60 jobs together with the Hellyer Mill. Bass Metals announced yesterday that work on the mine, part of the company's Hellyer Mine Project, would soon get underway after a consultant's report gave it the green light. "The approval and commencement of the Fossey mine development highlights a clear growth trajectory for Bass Metals towards becoming an emerging mid-tier producer of zinc, lead and copper-silver concentrates," said company managing director Mike Rosenstreich. (The Advocate)
- Jan 28<sup>th</sup> Tasmanian Premier David Bartlett announced funding of \$950,000 towards the Central Coast Council's wharf precinct redevelopment at Ulverstone in the State's north west. According to central Coast Mayor Mike Downie the redevelopment will improve the quality of the public open space and a variety of commercial infrastructure and services needed to sustain and attract visitors and improve Ulverstone as a place to visit and live. (The Advocate)
- Jan 28<sup>th</sup> The McCain Community Taskforce has received funding for 11 key areas it has identified as crucial with the impending closure of the Smithton vegetable processing plant in the State's north west. Tasmanian Premier David Bartlett yesterday announced funding of close to \$1 million to implement the taskforce plan. The closure will affect the jobs of about 200 full-time and casual employees. (The Advocate)
- Jan 28<sup>th</sup> The Kings Meadows renal unit in Launceston in the State's north was officially opened as part of the \$1 million redevelopment of the Launceston Community Health Centre. The unit is a 16-chair facility that will treat people with renal failure. The new unit is the first stage of

the \$22.5 million Launceston Integrated Care Centre. The cost of the Integrated Care Centre was covered with \$15 million from the Federal Government, and a further \$3 million from the State Government and \$4.5 million from the University of Tasmania. (The Examiner)

- Jan 28<sup>th</sup> Work has begun on the new 400-bay car park and bunker for a third linear accelerator, a device most commonly used for external beam radiation treatments for patients with cancer, at the Launceston General Hospital (LGH). Labor MHR Jodie Campbell said the accelerator would significantly increase the hospital's ability to treat patients - from 90 a day to 123 a day. Ms Campbell went on to say that a three-machine centre in Launceston would also provide opportunities for local training of radiation oncologists and radiation oncology medical physicists. Expressions of interest have been invited for the construction of phase two of the new Launceston Integrated Care Centre (see story above) and stage one of a multi-story car-park on the LGH site. (The Examiner)
- Jan 29<sup>th</sup> A property economist believes Tasmania is becoming a more attractive location for interstate property investors, or people wanting to escape the big cities. Australian Property Monitors (APM) says while house prices in Hobart are rising, the Tasmanian capital is still far more affordable than every other mainland capital. Prices went up by 6.2 per cent in the December quarter, with the median Hobart house price about \$322,000. APM's economist Matthew Bell says people are eyeing Hobart for an investment property, or to relocate. "As the economy becomes more 'networked' and you don't really need to be in the city where you might need to normally work, it becomes more and more attractive," he said. (www.abc.net.au)
- Jan 30<sup>th</sup> The Tasmanian State Government has announced the boundaries for the proposed Bay of Fires National Park on the East Coast. Premier David Bartlett also announced \$1.2 million for a range of parks infrastructure in the region. "The new Bay of Fires National Park will incorporate the existing Mount Pearson State Reserve, the northern part of the Bay of Fires Conservation Area and a small Crown land parcel," Mr Bartlett said. It will conserve a total of 7410 hectares. The proposed park has drawn criticism from both government opposition parties and requires further negotiation with the Aboriginal community. (The Mercury)
- Jan 30<sup>th</sup> A need to manage inventory has been given by Timber company Gunns as the reason why it will shut its Tamar Valley woodchip mill in the State's north for five weeks from February. Gunns chief executive Greg L'Estrange called a late afternoon meeting yesterday of 30 to 40 of the company's major contractors to tell them there would be no work from the Long Reach mill for at least five weeks. Mill workers will be on enforced leave from February 7. Those with no holidays left would take unpaid leave. Industry sources say that a conservative estimate of the loss to the Tasmanian economy from the shutdown of the mill and a halt to shipping of chips to Japan for that time would be about \$6 million. (Examiner)