

OUTLOOK

DECEMBER 2020



Our Plan to get VICTORIA **Back to Work and Back in Business**

COVID-19 RESPONSE
NOVEMBER UPDATE

LIBERAL VICTORIA

www.vicn.at/B2W

THE NATIONALS
for Regional Victoria

THE NATIONALS *for Regional Victoria*



A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

This year has played out in a way that none of us could have predicted. While many of our personal plans have been sidelined it has also provided us with an opportunity to reflect on our day to day life and the way we approach it, I hope you are all safe and well.

Victorians have endured through the world's hardest and longest lockdown after the Andrews Labor Government let COVID-19 get out from their hotel quarantine program. We must also continue to acknowledge the suffering of communities in Gippsland and Northern Victoria who are still recovering from last summer's bushfire season. I congratulate all of you for persisting through these difficult conditions and for coming together as a community.

Our State Parliamentary Team and their staff have worked hard in 2020 to hold Daniel Andrews to account and to support our local communities deal with restrictions that have been confusing and inconsistent. As Nationals we should also congratulate our Federal Parliamentary Team for their tireless work throughout 2020 and for an exceptional Federal Budget that puts regional Australia first.

While our focus has been rightfully elsewhere, we should remember to celebrate 100 years of the Federal Nationals in 2020 and be proud that our great Party will continue representing regional communities for many years to come. One of the last public functions I attended prior to the COVID-19 crisis taking hold was the centenary reenactment and dinner held in Melbourne in March and one of the first events following the lifting of restrictions will be the unveiling of the Sir John McEwen statue in Canberra in December.

As Christmas approaches, I wish everyone a safe and happy festive season. I hope that conditions allow you all the opportunity to spend some quality time with family and loved ones and i look forward to working with (and seeing) you all again in 2021.

Kind Regards

Neil Pankhurst
State President

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The Nationals Head Office - Victoria

State Director
Assistant State Director
Finance Manager
Media & Communications Coordinator
Administration Officer
Operations & Finance Officer
Campaign Coordinator - Northern Victoria

Matthew Harris
Jake McKenzie - Edwards
Paul Harms
Brooke McCurdy
Xavier Healy
Claire Buckley
Lucy Buffon

To get in contact, please call (03) 9600 1424 or email vic@nationals.org.au

KEEP UP TO DATE

2020-21 AEDC, FEDC & Branch AGMS

Each AEDC, FEDC and Branch must hold their Annual General Meeting and submit their AGM Forms (and conference motions) by 5.00pm on 21 February 2021.

Don't forget that Head Office can help you facilitate Party meetings on Zoom. Just reach out at vic@nationals.org.au or call (03) 9600 1424.

62nd Women's Conference

The Women's Executive are looking to host the 62nd Women's Conference in 2021 after a successful event this year. Keep an eye out for further information in the coming months.

SAVE THE DATE

THE NATIONALS for Regional Victoria

National Party of Australia Federal Centenary Dinner

100 years of serving rural and regional Australia

St Arnaud

19 March 2020 - 6pm

Further details to follow in the coming months
Please contact Chris Anderson 0427670662 or
Kevin Erwin 0427480462 for further information

THE 104th NATIONALS STATE CONFERENCE

Inverloch

FRIDAY 21 & SATURDAY 22 MAY 2021

Due to the cancellation of Conference this year we will be holding the 2021 Annual State Conference at the RACV Club in Inverloch.

Accommodation is available within the RACV club with the options of caravan sites, hotel style rooms and villas.

Invites to follow in the new year.

Follow Us



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Join Us



To become a member feel free to reach out via one of the following:

Website: [vic.nationals.org.au](https://www.vic.nationals.org.au)

Email: vic@nationals.org.au

Contact Us



You can reach the State Office at the following:

Mail: Suite 908, Level 9,
343 Little Collins Street
Melbourne Vic 3000

Phone: (03) 9600 1424

Email: vic@nationals.org.au

Future Business Forum

Corporate Supporters Program

Contribute to the growth of regional Victoria by exchanging ideas with the Nationals and leaders of business and industry

In conjunction with the Federal Budget announcement The Nationals – Victoria hosted a Zoom post budget briefing for our corporate supporters with Deputy Prime Minister and Leader of the Nationals The Hon. Michael McCormack as the guest speaker.

Off the back of this event The Nationals – Victoria launched our new corporate supporters club - “The Future Business Forum”.

The Future Business Forum (FBF) allows for corporate supporters to contribute to the growth of regional Victoria by exchanging ideas with the Nationals as well as leaders of business and industry on an ongoing basis.

The FBF was met with great enthusiasm and we will be hosting regular events to engage with our corporate supporters. Members receive priority invites and member rates to all The Nationals – Victoria’s corporate events as well as complimentary tickets to our Corporate Engagement Program.

If you know anyone who may be interested in joining the forum please get in touch with Matthew Harris or Jake McKenzie.

More information including pricing can be found at futurebusinessforum.com.au



The Nationals ensure that Regional Victoria has the opportunity and resources it needs to grow.



The Future Business Forum provides you with the opportunity to contribute to the debate and shape the future of regional Victoria.



At our events you will connect with senior business leaders, senior Nationals MPs and federal ministers to discuss your vision for regional Victoria.



Your membership will support the Nationals in keeping regional issues at the forefront of the state and federal policy debate.

Enquiries to Matthew Harris - State Director or Jake McKenzie - Assistant State Director

Post: Suite 9.08, 343 Little Collins Street, Melbourne, 3000 Phone: (03) 9600 1424 Email: jake.mckenzie@nationals.org.au

The Nationals getting regional Victorians

Back to Work and Back in Business

Victoria needs a bold plan for recovery after hundreds of thousands of job losses, two harsh lockdowns and business closures caused by COVID-19.

This is particularly true for regional Victoria, which wore the brunt of shutdowns because of the Melbourne outbreak – even in communities that have never recorded a single case of coronavirus in nine months.

But as it's deemed safe enough to ease restrictions, Nationals MPs have wasted no time getting back out into the community to hear from locals about the impact of the closures and what will be needed – now and into the future – to get back on track.

Every community is unique.

For some, relief on household bills or council rates is the top priority, while others want to see funding targeted to initiatives and projects that will revitalise business, communities and regional economies.

One common theme is clear – we can't afford to wait until the next election for a bold plan for recovery.

On November 1, The Nationals released our positive, proactive blueprint for recovery – Back to Work, Back in Business – and urged the Andrews Labor Government to immediately implement it.

The Plan's centred on four pillars that will be critical to our state's recovery and the survival of jobs and small businesses by helping Victorians to secure their family finances, rebuild local business, invest in health and education, and support our communities.

It's a comprehensive roadmap to recovery for families, businesses and to reunite Victoria.

Kick-starting Regional Victoria's economy

Regional businesses, tourism, agriculture and manufacturing are critical to Victoria's economic recovery.

Key is job creation.

The Nationals plan calls for a \$1 billion 'Bringing Manufacturing Home' fund to be established to help create jobs and reduce the risk of supply shortages encountered as a result of world crises – like those have experienced with COVID.

Getting visitors back to regional Victoria will help inject life into our regional communities and revive struggling local economies.

Our plan calls for a \$400 million fund to be established to develop and upgrade tourist attractions and a further \$300 million Regional Tourism Fund to support tourism operators in country communities to recover and promote local tourism.

The Andrews Labor Government has recently adopted our call for 'Road Trip for Victoria' vouchers that offer Victorians a 50 per cent discount of up to \$200 on tours or accommodation when booking three nights or more will give families more reasons to spend in town.

We're cautiously optimistic this is a step forward but with the Government yet to announce eligibility requirements and application processes (at time of writing) it's unclear if the program's full potential will be realised under Labor.

Building the roads and rail of the future

Local projects support local jobs.

The Nationals have called on the Andrews Labor Government to immediately reinstate the Country Roads and Bridges Program and to fast-track shovel ready infrastructure including the Kilmore Bypass, Shepparton Bypass, Gippsland Princes Highway duplication, Ballarat Western Link Road (Stage 2) and Princes Highway (west of Colac) upgrade.

Driving a booming agriculture sector

Victorians produce some of the world's leading food, fibre and technology.

The Andrews Labor Government must build and expand overseas markets to showcase Victoria's produce and innovation, including by diversifying Victoria's import base to ensure we don't rely on any one country for more than 15 per cent of our goods imports.

The Nationals' plan also calls for a \$10 million agricultural supply chain fund to allow our primary producers to unlock new trade opportunities, and provide fast, secure revenue to our farmers.

Meanwhile, we also want Labor to make fixing the mess it's made of the transformational Murray Basin Rail Project a priority by committing to delivering it – in full – by the end of 2021.

Attracting Victorians to the Regions

The pandemic has reshaped the way Victorians live and work, and employers and employees have realised that we can still have a job in the city, while living in the country.

It's seen Victorians embrace the idea of decentralisation like never before.

The Nationals believe we should capitalise on this changed outlook by providing \$250 million to assist businesses and government agencies to permanently transform their operations to allow their staff to work from home more often and live where they want to.

To attract more people into regional Victoria, regional payroll tax should be abolished to 30 June 2022 to encourage more businesses to move operations into the regions.

Growing populations lead to more demand and more



investment in services.

It's why we're calling for the building of new and upgraded community hospitals previously committed to in regional Victoria to be fast-tracked and for funding to increase the number of mental health outreach support workers supporting rural communities.

This is not a plan for the next election – Victorians can't afford to wait that long.

We need to take action now to set us firmly on the path to recovery.

Back to Work Back in Business is a plan to provide greater connectivity between Melbourne and the regions - so we can recover and thrive as one community.

It's time for Victorians to have hope again for the recovery of our state.

The full plan is available at <https://vicnats.net/backtowork>





MURRAY–DARLING COMMUNITIES INVESTMENT PACKAGE

Damian Drum – Federal Member for Nicholls

Having listened to farmers and irrigators, combined with intense lobbying from myself and my Nationals colleagues, Federal Water Minister Keith Pitt recently acted on water policy reform.

The Murray-Darling Communities Investment Package means Victorian communities, including those within the Nicholls electorate, will benefit from more than \$230 million of Commonwealth investment that will focus on creating jobs, economic activity, and healthy rivers in regional areas.

The initiatives are practical and realistic, and based around three key themes:

- Investing in communities;
- Improving river health; and
- Building trust and transparency between governments and communities.

Among the initiatives, almost \$40 million will go towards improving compliance. This means we've

finally arrived at a position where compliance and metering in the Northern Basin will be at a satisfactory level, thus providing much-needed confidence in the system for both communities and governments.

Under this government, water buybacks are off the table – this is what our farmers have been calling for. Buybacks are a lazy policy of the past. They are damaging and destructive and cannot happen again. The Murray–Darling Basin Economic Development Program will get an additional \$34 million. This investment will provide more opportunity for communities impacted by water recovery under the Basin Plan to get funding for economic development projects.

The program is about helping rural and regional communities that are on the backfoot because of historic water recovery.

In July, under round two of the program, I announced a total of \$2.86 million of funding for nine projects across the Nicholls electorate. These include an upgrade of Ky Fauna Park's reptile house and visitor



facilities, the redevelopment of Tatura Library, and a walking trail linking Yarrowonga to Cobram. Another crucial aspect of the policy overhaul involves splitting the Murray-Darling Basin Authority, with a new independent statutory compliance body to be created.

I have been calling for the MDBA to be split for more than 12 months and now with an independent statutory compliance body, the Commonwealth Environmental Water Holder will have to take responsibility for their actions, as well as abide by the same rules as our farmers.

Importantly, this package includes a new approach to the delivery of Sustainable Diversion Limit adjustment projects and the 450GL to help Basin governments and communities achieve Basin Plan requirements.

The Commonwealth will focus the future of the 450 GL efficiency program on off-farm projects that avoid any need to take any further water out of the consumptive pool.

In August, Air Chief Marshal Sir Angus Houston was named as MDBA chair. I can think of no one better qualified to lead the Authority and to build strong and collaborative relationships with stakeholders. I have every confidence that his more than four

decades of experience in defending Australia and our national interests will be exceptionally useful in developing a sense of shared purpose when it comes to stewardship of Murray-Darling Basin water resources with communities, irrigators, and other stakeholders.

Now, it's time to shift the Federal Government's focus to engaging and involving communities in developing the solutions that are right for them and to stop treating the water recovery task as something separate.

In short, it is time to make the Basin Plan pay dividends to communities, rather than communities pay for the Basin Plan.





BUDGET 2020

REPAIR, RECOVERY & GROWTH FOR REGIONAL AUSTRALIA

2020 has been a year that none of us will soon forget.

So many Australians have been doing it very tough, through no fault of their own.

After fires, floods and drought, we were hit by COVID-19.

COVID-19 has resulted in the most severe global economic crisis since the Great Depression. However, Australians are resilient and we look forward to Christmas and the New Year with positivity because we know we are better placed than most countries to recover thanks to a strong Federal Government.

In response to this pandemic crisis, The Nationals in Government have committed unprecedented support to save lives, cushion the blow and help Australians remain in jobs.

We have provided \$17 billion in JobKeeper payments and \$7.0 billion in cash flow boost credit amounts for Victorians.

Total Federal government support to Victoria has increased by \$8.5 billion (10.9 per cent) over the forward estimates compared with the 2019-20 Budget. This year's Budget sets out the next phase of our Economic Recovery Plan.

The Australian Government will provide Victoria with \$130.3 million – to be matched by Victoria – as part of the \$1 billion JobTrainer Fund.

A new JobMaker Hiring Credit will encourage businesses to hire younger Australians. It will be payable for up to 12 months and be immediately

available to employers who hire those on JobSeeker aged 16-35. Treasury estimates this will support around 450,000 jobs for young people.

It is estimated that three million Victorian taxpayers are now benefitting from tax cuts, backdated to 1 July.

980,000 Victorian businesses will be eligible for business tax incentives, including temporary full expensing with no asset limits.

We are also retaining the Low and Middle Income Tax Offset for an additional year to reward hard work. It means Australians will have more of their own money to spend on what matters to them, which will help local businesses and create more jobs.

The Nationals in Government are also building on the successful Instant Asset Write Off.

More than 99 per cent of businesses will be able to write off the full value of any eligible asset, until June 2022. This will expand Australia's productive capacity and create tens of thousands of jobs.

For example, it means a trucking company can upgrade its fleet, a farmer can buy a new header and

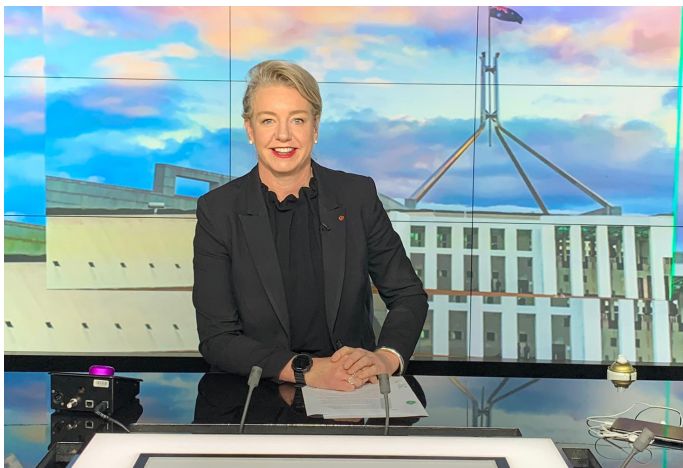


a manufacturer can expand their production line.

Australia's manufacturing sector employs around 860,000 Australians and I am very excited about the Federal government's Modern Manufacturing plan. It targets six national manufacturing priorities to build on our strengths and ensure manufacturing plays a greater role in our recovery:

- medical products;
- food and beverage manufacturing;
- recycling and clean energy;
- resources technology and critical minerals processing;
- defence industry; and
- space industry.

This is significant for the regions because as we know Australia's resources and minerals, food and beverage ingredients, defence manufacturing, our wind and solar farms et cetera are significant employers in the regions.



For The Nationals, this year's Budget is all about supporting regional jobs, regional households and regional communities.

The fact is, to rebuild our economy we need to build. Build and upgrade roads, rail and bridges. Here in Victoria the 2020-21 Budget commits an additional \$1.1 billion over the next decade to transport infrastructure projects, including:

- \$320.0 million for the Shepparton Rail Line Upgrade;
- \$292.0 million for Barwon Heads Road; and
- \$208.0 million for stage two of the Warrnambool Rail Upgrade.

This Budget expands our 10-year infrastructure pipeline

which is already supporting 100,000 jobs on worksites across Australia today.

Major projects funded by The Nationals in Government already underway include:

- \$447.7 million for the Gippsland Rail Line Upgrade;
- \$683.8 million for the Monash Freeway Upgrade; and
- \$500.0 million for the M80 Ring Road Upgrade.

A further \$2 billion is being invested in road safety upgrades and an additional \$1 billion will support local councils to upgrade local roads, footpaths and street lighting.

The Nationals in Government are also providing \$1 billion for new research funding for our universities, backing our best and brightest minds.

A 50 per cent wage subsidy will support businesses who employ new apprenticeships and traineeships. The new JobTrainer fund will create up to 340,000 free or low-cost training places for school leavers and job seekers while 50,000 new higher education short courses will be available, including in health, IT, agriculture, science and teaching.

And, there's also an additional \$51 million through our Regional Tourism Recovery initiative to assist tourism regions that are highly reliant on international travellers to pivot to the domestic market.

Domestic tourism support, education and employment support and relocation incentives all point to stronger regions.

While there is a strong focus on youth, our seniors have not been forgotten with an additional 23,000 home care



packages to be provided to support senior Australians who want to keep living at home. This brings the total to more than 180,000 places, three times the number of home care packages than when this Government was elected in 2013.

Age Pensioners will receive an additional \$250 payment in December and another \$250 payment in March. Health and hospitals funding to Victoria has increased by \$802.9 million compared with the 2019-20 Budget.

This year's Budget included funding for new lifesaving medicines on the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme – to treat leukaemia, melanoma and Parkinson's disease and help women with ovarian cancer.

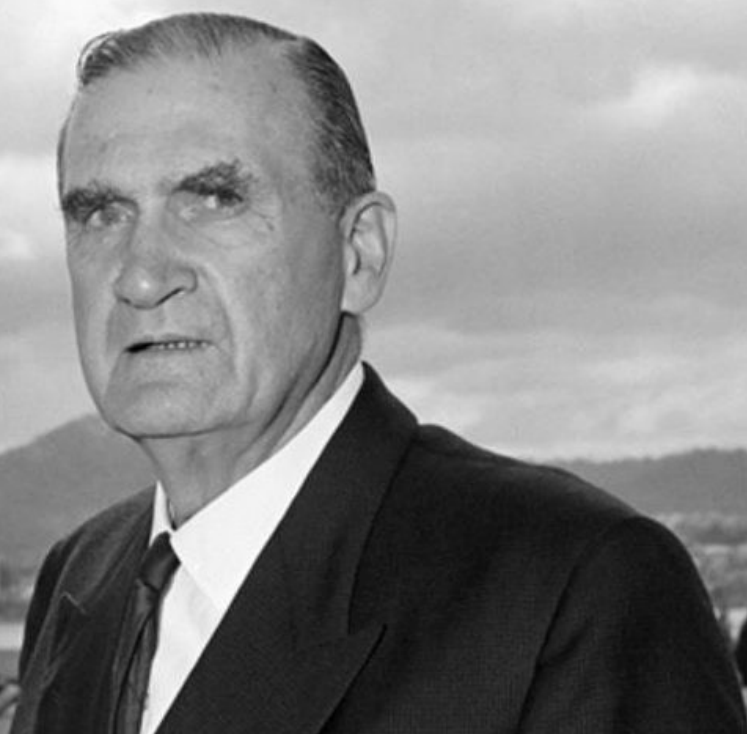
We have also provided \$5.7 billion to support mental health, including funding for critical front-line services and suicide prevention.

There is \$1.9 billion in new funding as part of the Government's energy plan to support low emissions and renewable technologies. It includes a further \$1.8 billion in funding for the environment. This will further help our wildlife recover from bushfires and protect and enhance our natural environment.

There is also a \$33.5 million heritage upgrade package where \$3 million will assist in revitalising the Mount Buffalo Chalet.

The Nationals in Government are proud to have been able to deliver a Budget that puts regional jobs, regional households and regional communities front and centre.

THE HISTORY OF SIR JOHN McEWEN



John McEwen is a forgotten giant of Australian political history.

For a long time I have been intrigued by McEwen's work and this year I decided to dig deeper.

The result is a new book to be published in this, The Nationals' 100th, year.

My work is not a chronological history of McEwen's life and contribution, rather it contains selected examples of deliberate actions and events I hope will illustrate the man and his mission, and the role he played in Australia's growth and development during the twenty-first century.

His contribution across 37 years is unparalleled, laying the very foundations of modern Australia as a first world economy and as an independent, sovereign power.

And yet, McEwen rarely if ever features on even one powerpoint slide of an economics, international relations or political science lecture in our universities.

Is this because he was from the Country Party, or simply because he was from the country?

In the centenary year of The Nationals a statue of this political titan is rightfully being erected in Canberra. Finally, humble McEwen can stand straight and tall amongst the pantheon of the architects of our great nation, Barton, Deakin, Menzies, Curtin, and Chifley. Physically, McEwen was a striking man.

Six feet tall, with the straight bearing of a soldier on parade, square-jawed, with piercing crystal blue eyes that were so brilliantly captured by the artist Sir William Dargie in his official Parliamentary portrait.

This painting captures not only McEwen's visionary gaze and the gnarled old hands of a farmer in his lap, but also his unflinching character.

The adjectives often used to describe McEwen can be contradictory.

On the one side is the dour, choleric, incredibly determined and unyielding hard man of politics. On the other is the compassionate, patient, humorous and generous mentor.

McEwen was indisputably a very serious man known for his stern outlook, dark often furrowed brow that seemed never to deviate and rarely to crack into a smile.

Such was his temperament that Menzies gave him his enduring moniker - Black Jack.

His was an intelligent face, but a face that had also seen deprivation, great suffering and loss, the face of a workaholic, of single-mindedness, and of great physical pain in his later years.

The two personalities indeed seem difficult to reconcile. And yet the forging of these traits, with all their internal contradictions, in very poor circumstances in a small pocket of north eastern Victoria were the essential qualities that propelled McEwen to be a Prime Minister. These qualities made him able to reimagine a nation emerging from war, to be able to build entire industries from scratch, and to cleave Australia from

the motherland England and carve a truly independent, sovereign vision for Australia.

These traits also enabled McEwen to stand up to powerful vested interests, to lead a minority to affect the majority, to guide an entire nation into the deepest of friendships with its most hated enemy, and to articulate such a clearly defined policy platform under his remit that it became synonymous with his own surname – “McEwenism”.

My book is intended to be a re-introduction to McEwen. It does not cover everything.

It does not even detail McEwen's important role in four of the most significant developments in Australian political history: the founding of the United Nations in San Francisco with H.V. Evatt and Frank Forde; McEwen's refusal of the United States' demand for the entire Aussie wool clip during the Korean War, bringing about the 1950s wool boom; it does not explain his 1939 White Paper on Aboriginal Australians which aimed to extend Australian citizenship; nor even does it touch on his role in dismantling the White Australia policy and championing of a non-preferential immigration policy. This and more has had to be omitted.

Instead, my little book reflects on six themes in the great man's life: Protectionist or Pragmatist?; Place, Party, Patriot, Power and Prime Minister.

My hope is that this modest contribution will ignite interest in the man, his approach and the critical but unique role regional Australia and their political representatives have played in our national story.





NO CONFIDENCE MOTION

The second wave that shut down regional Victoria could have been avoided, but due to the bad decisions made by the Daniel Andrews and the Labor Government in hotel quarantine and delays and botching of contact tracing, Victoria suffered under one of the longest and harshest lockdowns in the world.

In response to the Labor Governments lies, mistakes and coverups on September 17th the Liberals and Nationals moved a motion of no-confidence in the Premier.

In support of the no confidence motion the Liberals and Nationals conducted a coordinated marketing campaign headlined by a petition that garnered almost 100,000 signatures from Victorians expressing their lack of confidence in Labors management of the pandemic. The Nationals marketing campaign was multi-pronged utilising social media, traditional print media, radio and third-party endorsement to promote the motion and highlight the failures of Andrews and Labor.

The motion ultimately failed, 23 votes for to 44 votes against, with all Labor MP's choosing to vote for the job of their premier over the jobs of their constituents.

Despite the motion being voted down our marketing campaign revealed a strong mood for change, particularly within regional Victoria, and highlighted the willingness of the National Party to advocate for the matters that are important to regional Victorians.

MEET A MEMBER

Meet Callum Moscript



Tell us a little bit about yourself, your background, where you grew up, what you do for a living.

I grew up on a generational dairy & beef farm outside Leongatha in Gippsland. After school I worked in sales for a genetics & reproduction company throughout Victoria & Tasmania. This provided exposure both locally & internationally to people who are at the forefront of innovation in the industry. After resigning in 2018 I returned to our family farm where I now work full time while still doing some genetic consulting, plus buying & selling cattle in my spare time.

When and why did you join the Nationals?

I have been exposed to the National Party for well over 15 years. However I joined in 2017 realizing that the best way to predict our future is to create it. The core values & beliefs of the Nationals are more important than ever. It's now up to us as Young Nationals to grow & develop the party into the future.

To me is a really exciting proposition & a big reason why I have become more actively involved.

What would you say to other young adults from regional Victoria who are interested in politics?

Get in touch with your local member. There are so many ways to be involved on a local, state or federal level.

You're the Young Nationals representative for Eastern Victoria on State Council, what does it mean to you to be a part of the governing body of the party?

All the Young Nat's on State Council are passionate people who understand the challenges & opportunities young people have.

I'm looking forward to working with all the YN representatives to help deliver outcomes that provide opportunities for our members.

You helped through the last the Federal election what were your favourite memories.

Winning is always the best memory!

To see our humble party, even through adversity, what no one (in the mainstream media) thought possible. That's just awesome.

Looking into the future, where do you see The Nationals place in politics?

Being champions for regional areas, small business, hard working Australians & families. This has made our party successful for over 100 years and will continue to drive us, inspire us & challenge us.

**We want to hear
from you!**

Every month our members receive a digital monthly outlook to their email address full of interesting stories from our MPs, party administration and member updates.

To get involved, send you relevant updates and stories to: brooke.mccurdy@nationals.org.au



SHOP LOCAL

AND SUPPORT

LOCAL BUSINESS

THE NATIONALS WISHES EVERYONE A MERRY CHRISTMAS AND SAFE AND HAPPY NEW YEAR.

WE THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT THROUGHOUT THE YEAR AND URGE YOU TO REMEMBER TO SHOP LOCAL WHEN DOING YOUR CHRISTMAS SHOPPING THIS YEAR.

EVERY DOLLAR YOU SPEND COULD BE THE DOLLAR THAT KEEPS A LOCAL BUSINESS OPEN.

THE NATIONALS *for Regional Victoria*