



Land McKaig

Late Mail

March, 2009 Issue 20

In this Issue

[Flood or Natural Disaster Assistance](#)

[Family Tax Benefit Registration](#)

[Regulations Released for Pension Drawdown Measure to Benefit Retirees](#)

[Small Business General Business Tax Break](#)

[State and Federal Award Wages Explained](#)

[These Days Human Resources Mean People, Performance, Profit](#)

[Business activity statement](#)

[Tax Bonus Payments](#)

[Stock market watch](#)

Flood or Natural Disaster Assistance

In response to the damage suffered during Cyclone Ellie which commenced 31 January 2009 Centrelink are providing Payments for disaster recovery. If you feel you have suffered significant damage to your property or have been unable to access your residence or leave your residence during the flooding for greater than 48 hours you may be eligible for this one off payment. If you feel you may meet the criteria for the payment please either go to your nearest Centrelink office or visit <http://www.centrelink.gov.au> to download Disaster Recovery Claim forms, to apply. If Centrelink accepts your claim, payments are \$1,000 per adult and \$400 per child and you have until 7th of August 2009 to lodge a claim for payment.

Family Tax Benefit Registration

From 1 July 2009, claims for family tax benefit, including previous year claims, can no longer be accepted by the Tax Office. This means we will no longer claim Family Tax Benefit as part of your tax return.

To claim family tax benefit, you need to apply to the Family Assistance Office by either lodging:

- online at www.familyassist.gov.au, or

- a paper claim form in person at a Centrelink customer service centre or Medicare office

For information on the family tax benefit, you can contact the Family Assistance Office by:

- visiting the FAO website at www.familyassist.gov.au
- phoning the FAO on **13 61 50** between 8am and 8pm Monday to Friday
- visiting your nearest FAO – offices are located in Medicare offices and Centrelink customer service centres
- phoning **13 12 02** if you do not speak English well.

Regulations Released for Pension Drawdown Measure to Benefit Retirees

Senator Nick Sherry, Minister for Superannuation and Corporate Law, announced the release of regulations which give effect to the Government's decision to halve the minimum payment amounts for account-based pensions for this financial year.

The regulations, Superannuation Industry (Supervision) Amendment Regulations 2009 (No. 2) reduce the minimum payment amounts for account-based, allocated and market-linked (term allocated) pensions by 50 per cent for 2008-09. Similar amendments have been made to the Retirement Savings Accounts Regulations 1997.

This temporary relief addresses concerns that the minimum drawdown requirement for this financial year was based on account balances at 1 July 2008, when equity values were higher.

"The release of these regulations removes any doubt that pension payments can cease for the remainder of this financial year where the pension has already paid out half of the previous minimum," Minister Sherry said.

If you feel this change in legislation may benefit you please contact a Land Mckaig office to discuss.

Small Business General Business Tax Break

The Government has a proposed investment tax break for business.

The tax break, in the form of an investment allowance will provide:

- an additional tax deduction of 30 per cent of the cost of eligible new depreciating assets acquired under a contract, or started to be constructed, after 12.01am AEDT 13 December 2008 and before the end of June 2009 and installed ready for use by the end of June 2010.
- an additional tax deduction of 10 per cent of the cost of eligible new depreciating assets acquired under a contract, or started to be constructed, between 1 July 2009 and 31 December 2009 and installed ready for use by the end of December 2010.

New expenditure on existing assets may also qualify.

- For both periods, small businesses will be able to claim the deduction for eligible assets costing \$1,000 or more. Small businesses must have a turnover of less than \$2 million a year to qualify. For larger businesses to qualify with turnover greater than \$2 million a year, the expenditure must be \$10,000 or more.

For further information on the tax breaks please refer to

www.treasurer.gov.au or contact a Land McKaig Office.

State and Federal Award Wages Explained

There are state and federal workplace relations systems which outline the minimum entitlements and pay rates for employees. Which system your business sits in determines the employees' rate of pay and whether the employer and employees can make, federal workplace agreements.

The following are employees covered by the federal award system:

- constitutional corporations (including a financial or trading corporation - generally Pty Ltds or Limiteds)
- incorporated companies (eg. Pty Ltd) in a territory
- the Commonwealth government and Commonwealth authorities
- employers covered by a federal award before 27 March 2006, but aren't constitutional corporations (these employers will transition (move) out of the federal system by March 2011).

Please make note that Employers who are sole traders, partnerships or trusts are not constitutional corporations and aren't in the federal system. Employers who are in a trust structure but with a corporate trustee may be in the federal award system so please contact the workplace authority if you are unsure.

Should you require further information on the Federal Awards please refer to

www.workplaceauthority.gov.au and State Awards www.wageline.qld.gov.au.

These days Human Resources mean People, Performance, Profit.

Land McKaig has been approached by Philip Jenkins, principal of Benchmark Business Solutions to run seminars for clients in relation to human resource issues. Philip is a member of HR Coach, which is a network under-pinned by the HR Coach Research Institute which runs the HR Quarterly Index. Phillip, is well aware of current issues that concern Australian businesses.

Philip regularly runs seminars on the key outcomes of the HR Coach Research Institutes' Quarterly Indices and would like to include Land McKaig clients in these seminars.

In consideration of the current economic situation together with national developments in Industrial Relations, Philip has suggested some topics that may be of interest to you, as follows:

- Information on the new Industrial Relations laws
- An HR Audit (are you at risk and do you comply)

Do you have pressure points in your business with regard to:

- Following up to ensure tasks are completed
- Efficiency of the management team
- Linking strategy to the actions of individuals

If you are interested in these topics, or would like to attend seminars or discussion groups on other topics, please contact Philip on admin@benchmarkbizsolutions.com

We have included more **information about Benchmark Business Solutions & HR Coach below.**

HR Coach supports a national network of specialists focused on integrating people management into strategic business planning and is continually developing new approaches, products and systems to boost the powerhouse SME sector in Australia. The Townsville-based Benchmark Business Solutions is your HR Coach in North Queensland. The principal, Philip Jenkins can be contacted on 1300 132 133 or email admin@benchmarkbizsolutions.com

It's simple. Businesses don't make decisions – people do. This is why HR Coach is unique. We are business coaches who focus on people. More specifically, we link your people to performance and profit so your business achieves strategic action.

HR Coach supports a range of national initiatives to improve business confidence, performance and productivity. These include the *STAR Workplace program* and the *Just 1 Job Initiative*.

At a seminar you can find out about the HR Coach Strategic Action Model which underpins successful strategic planning for Australian businesses poised for growth and access a number of White Papers from the Research Institute such as '*Recognizing Great Workplaces*', '*Managing in Uncertain Times*', '*Gen Y Impact on Strategy*', '*The Business of the HR Crisis*' and '*Retaining Employees*'.

Business activity statement

The next Business Activity Statement due date for Tax Agents is the 26th May, 2009, with the January to March period coming to an end.

All information is due to be in our office by 4th of May, 2009. We remind our clients that any information received after this date may result in your Business Activity Statement not being completed in time for the due dates with the Australian Taxation Office.

Tax Bonus Payments

If your 2007-08 taxable income was \$100,000 or less and you paid tax, you could be eligible to receive a tax bonus payment of up to \$900. The 7.6 million people who have already lodged their 2007-08 tax return will start receiving their payments from early April. First payments arrive in bank accounts on Wednesday 8 April 2009 and in letter boxes on Thursday 9 April 2009. Payments will be made progressively through to 16 May 2009.

If you have already lodged your 2007-08 tax return the Tax Office will automatically calculate your eligibility and entitlements and send your payment to you. They will transfer the payment into the bank account or mail a cheque to the address you nominated in your 2007-08 tax return, unless you or your agent changed your details.

Unless you were granted a deferred lodgement date by the Tax Office prior to 18 February 2009, you must lodge your 2007-08 tax return by **30 June 2009** to be eligible.

Stock market watch

Bell Potter Securities Ltd – Stock watch 08/04/2009

Company	Price	12 Month high	12 Month low	Target
CSL Limited	31.95	43.19	26.85	47.00
BHP	32.19	50.00	20.00	32.50
Arrow Energy	2.72	4.11	1.74	4.10
Westpac	20.30	26.25	14.40	19.00

SPECULATIVE STOCKS

Company	Price	12 Month high	12 Month low	Target
Bow Energy	0.99	1.24	14.65c	

The information herein has been obtained from sources considered to be reliable, but its accuracy and completeness cannot be guaranteed. No liability or responsibility is accepted for any errors or for any negligence, default or lack of care or for any loss of damage whatsoever that may arise from actions based on any material contained in this publication. The recommendations herein may not be suitable for all investors.

AYR OFFICE	HOME HILL OFFICE	TOWNSVILLE OFFICE
Ph 4783 3944	Ph 4782 2733	Ph 4755 0433
Fax 4783 3100	Fax 4782 2020	Fax 4755 0844

The information contained in the Land McKaig newsletter has been obtained from sources considered to be reliable, but completeness cannot be guaranteed. Before acting on any matter contained in this newsletter you should contact your accountants and discuss the matter further. No liability or responsibility is accepted for any errors, or for any negligence, default or lack of care or for any loss of damage whatsoever that may arise from actions based on any material contained in the publication.