Prime Minister Julia Gillard sworn in

Julia Gillard has been sworn in as Prime Minister of Australia after one of the closest elections in our history. Ms Gillard’s Australian Labor Party (ALP) has formed a minority government with the support of Greens MP Adam Bandt and independent MPs Andrew Wilkie, Rob Oakeshott and Tony Windsor.

The result of the election took 17 days to be finalised after the ALP initially won 72 of 150 seats in the House of Representatives and the Liberal/National Coalition won 73. Both major parties entered into negotiations with the Greens and independents but ultimately the ALP was able to form government.

Shortly after the confirmation of her election as Prime Minister, Ms Gillard stated her pledge in the role: “Ours will be a government with just one purpose, and that’s to serve the Australian people.”

The election resulted in Liberal candidate Ken Wyatt taking the marginal seat of Hasluck from Labor, thus becoming the first indigenous MP elected to the House of Representatives. It also saw the election of Wyatt Roy to the seat of Longman, who, at age 20, became the youngest ever Australian MP.

See page 2 for more on our PM.

For official results, visit: vtr.aec.gov.au

Rudd heads key Cabinet appointments

On 11 September, PM Gillard announced her new Cabinet.

Key appointments include former Prime Minister, Kevin Rudd, to the position of Minister for Foreign Affairs. Mr Rudd replaces Stephen Smith, who is now the Minister for Defence. Mr Rudd’s first action as Foreign Minister was to visit the ADF and AusAID Australian Medical Task Force in the flood-affected city of Kot Addu, central Pakistan, before addressing the United Nations in New York.

Other notable portfolio changes include Craig Emerson as the Minister for Trade. For Dr Emerson, who previously had portfolio responsibility for small business, competition policy, consumer affairs and deregulation, this marks his first Cabinet position. He made his first ministerial visit to Washington, DC.

Former trade minister Simon Crean has been moved to the position of Minister for Regional Australia, Regional Development and Local Government and Minister for the Arts.

Other new faces include Joseph Ludwig as the Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry and Chris Bowen as the Minister for Immigration and Citizenship.

Wayne Swan, who visited Canada in June for the G20 Summit, continues as Treasurer (finance minister) and Deputy Prime Minister.

For a full listing of Cabinet Ministers, visit the Prime Minister’s website: pm.gov.au/The_Ministry/Cabinet
Who is Australia’s Prime Minister?

While Prime Minister Gillard is famously Australia’s first female Prime Minister, her background is not so well known outside of Australia. The following profile comes from the Prime Minister’s website:

Ms Gillard was born in Barry, Wales in 1961, the daughter of a nurse and aged care worker. She and her family migrated to Australia in 1966 and she grew up in Adelaide. She was educated at Mitcham Demonstration School and Unley High School in South Australia.

Ms Gillard started her arts and law degree at the University of Adelaide. In 1983 she was elected National Education Vice-President of the Australian Union of Students (AUS) and moved to Melbourne to complete her degree at the University of Melbourne.

Later that year, she was elected President of the AUS.

After graduating, Ms Gillard began work as a solicitor in Melbourne with the law firm Slater and Gordon. She became a Partner at the firm in 1990. Ms Gillard’s work at the firm focused on employment law.

From 1996 to 1998 she served as Chief-of-Staff to the then Opposition Leader (currently Premier) of the State of Victoria, John Brumby.

Ms Gillard won the federal seat of LALor for the ALP in 1998. From 1998 to 2001 she served on the House of Representatives Standing Committee on Employment, Education and Workplace Relations.

In 2001 Ms Gillard was appointed Shadow Minister (opposition critic) for Population and Immigration and subsequently took on responsibilities for Reconciliation and Indigenous Affairs in 2003.

From 2003 to 2006 Ms Gillard served as Shadow Minister for Health. On 4 December 2006 Ms Gillard was appointed Deputy Leader of the Australian Labor Party and served as Shadow Minister for Employment and Industrial Relations and Social Inclusion.

Following the ALP’s victory at the 2007 federal election, Ms Gillard was sworn in as Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Education, Employment and Workplace Relations and Social Inclusion.

Ms Gillard became Prime Minister on 24 June, 2010, succeeding Kevin Rudd.

She is a passionate supporter of the Western Bulldogs Football Club.

Read more on the Prime Minister at pm.gov.au

High-powered line up for inaugural Australia-Canada Leadership Forum

The future dimensions of the Australia-Canada partnership will feature prominently at a gathering of high-level business, government and academic leaders from Australia and Canada that will take place in Sydney, Australia from 16-18 November. This event - the Australia-Canada Economic Leadership Forum – promises to generate some fresh and original thinking on the way forward.

The discussion will revolve around the following key themes:

* the most effective models for developing and building infrastructure that will underpin both countries’ competitiveness and productivity
* the options that are open to Australia and Canada to foster more liberalised trade and investment and to work towards economic integration, and
* the lessons that Canada and Australia can learn from one another in their approaches to promoting innovation, research and technology, and the options for maximising productive collaboration between the two countries.

The line up of influential participants in the Forum – from business, academia, and government – is impressive and gives us cause for optimism that the discussions will represent a major step forward in renewing and enhancing the partnership between our two countries.
British Columbia joins Ontario in recognising Australian driver licences

In positive news for the many Australians living in Canada’s westernmost province, residents of British Columbia are now able to exchange their Australian driver’s licence for a B.C. licence without having to undergo a driving test.

The Insurance Corporation of British Columbia (ICBC), which is responsible for driver licensing and vehicle registration in the province, recognises Australian drivers provided that they have two years of driving experience and meet eligibility requirements indicated on the ICBC website. Licences can be exchanged at any ICBC licensing office for a cost of C$31.

The Australian Government welcomed the developments in B.C. as such arrangements are valuable in facilitating the two-way movement of skilled personnel between Australia and Canada and promoting commercial links.

The Australian Government is seeking to put in place similar arrangements with all other Canadian provinces and territories. Currently, Australian licences are recognised only in Ontario and British Columbia, although licences from all Canadian provinces and territories have been fully recognised in all Australian jurisdictions for some time.

For more information, visit: icbc.com/driver-licensing/moving-bc/other-country/australia

Oil sands visit

Michael Googan, Second Secretary at the High Commission (pictured at right), was recently invited to join a number of Canadian Senators and other delegates on a tour of Alberta’s oil sands.

On arrival in Calgary, Mr Googan was welcomed with a traditional Albertan ‘white hat’ greeting. From there, he visited a number of sites.

He attended a variety of information sessions hosted by the Alberta Government, the Canadian Association of Petroleum Producers and other interest groups.

Australia to host energy summit

Australia will host the 3rd Asia Pacific Partnership Energy Regulatory and Market Development Forum conference in Sydney on 3-5 November 2010.

Further information is available from: ret.gov.au
Canadian Naval Centennial Fleet Review

From 9-14 June Australia was represented by the Navy Ship HMAS Newcastle at a traditional Fleet Review to celebrate the Centennial of the Canadian Navy in Victoria, BC.

A fleet review is a Royal Navy tradition dating back to 1415 that was originally intended as a means of demonstrating the strength of a nation’s naval fleet. Nowadays, fleet reviews are ceremonial. The Review featured ten Canadian ships and 13 from five foreign navies and coast guards.

The Review began with a Parade of Nations in downtown Victoria. The parade featured the sailors of the visiting nations, as well as a fireworks display, a rock concert, a display by the Canadian Forces Sky Hawks skydiving team, a fly past by maritime aircraft and a performance by the renowned Canadian Air Force Snowbirds Air Demonstration Squadron.

The highlight of the review saw all participating ships gathered alongside ships of the Canadian Fleet at the Royal Roads anchorage and the Canadian Navy flagship carried the Governor General as Reviewing Officer through the lines of ships.

The efforts of our sailors on board HMAS Newcastle went a long way to reinforcing the very strong bond between the Australian and Canadian Navies.

Australians star at TIFF

Australian films were again prominent at the Toronto International Film Festival (TIFF) this year. Seven Australian features were entered into official competition, highlighting Australia’s diverse industry.

On 11 September, the High Commission co-hosted a networking reception with Screen Australia to profile the Australian presence at the festival.

The event was attended by around 170 guests, including actors Geoffrey Rush, Ryan Kwanten and Tovy Schmitz plus other artists, producers and financiers.

Australian films shown at TIFF 2010 were:

- Blame
- Griff the Invisible
- Machete Maidens Unleashed!
- Mother of Rock: Lilian Roxon
- Wasted on the Young
- Jucy

(L-R) Nancy Hughes Anthony (President & CEO, Canadian Bankers Association), Melissa Fransen (First Secretary, Australian High Commission) and Brian Anthony (CEO, Director’s Guild of Canada) at the Australian TIFF reception, Toronto.
High Commission welcomes new DHOM

The High Commission recently welcomed Bruce Soar to the post as Deputy High Commissioner. Mr Soar arrived with his wife and three children at the beginning of September. He took a moment to explain how he came to be in Ottawa.

“This is my first time in Canada. It’s a place I’d always wanted to work, so being Deputy Head of Mission is a great honour. And it’s been a wonderful first few weeks. My family can’t believe how friendly everyone has been. We’ve had such a warm welcome in Canada, we already feel like we belong here.

“I was born and grew up in Adelaide, South Australia. It took me a long time to work out what I wanted to do, so I spent six years moving between courses at the University of Adelaide. During that time, I did degrees in economics, commerce and law. After leaving university I worked for Price Waterhouse (now PriceWaterhouse-Coopers) for a couple of years before moving to Canberra in 1996 to take up a job with the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade.

“I’ve been working at DFAT for 14 years now. That sounds like a long time, but I’ve worked in so many different jobs over that time that it doesn’t feel like long. Working for the Department, the longest you tend to spend in any one job is three years.

“Since joining the Department, I’ve spent most of my time in Canberra.

However, I was posted to the Embassy in Berlin for three years and returned to Adelaide as State Director of the Department’s South Australian Office between 2004 and 2007. My last job was in the Department’s International Economy Branch, working on Australia’s response to the global financial crisis and the establishment of the G20.

“As DHOM, my main priority will be to help the High Commissioner strengthen the already very productive bilateral relationship between Australia and Canada, and to help identify new areas where our two countries can work together and benefit from each other’s experiences.

“At the moment, the major challenge I face is getting on top of what is such a broad and complex relationship. Canada and Australia share a similar outlook on many international issues and work together in such a range of areas that it will take some time to come to grips with everything.”

Australian musicians centre stage at MusicFest Vancouver


The festival was attended by 25,000 people over ten days, and culminated with the Sounds of Australia playing in the Van Dusen Botanical Gardens as the festival’s final act. Reviews for the Australian musicians were very positive throughout the festival.
Ottawa’s Service Centre team wins prestigious award

The Ottawa Service Centre located at the Australian High Commission was recently awarded the 2010 Secretary’s Client Service Challenge under the Overseas Post Category. The Service Centre provides pre- and post-lodgement client enquiry support for visa applications across the Americas.

The team of 22 staff speaks four languages—English, Spanish, French and Portuguese—which has allowed other posts, in particular Paris and Lisbon, to take advantage of the service.

The Secretary of the Department of Immigration and Citizenship (DIAC, which is the Call Centre’s parent agency), Andrew Metcalfe, awarded the accolade to the Ottawa Service Centre for:

* achieving high performance including provision of consistent, accurate and timely information and services which meet and exceed service standards;
* implementing innovative ways of working and improves service delivery;
* anticipating their client's information needs and exceeding their expectations; and
* maintaining excellent team morale and high job satisfaction.

Canada and Australia among most popular destinations for young world travellers

Wondering why there are so many Australians working at the ski fields in Whistler? Or why Bondi Beach cafes seem to have so many Canadians frequenting them?

It is because young Australians and Canadians have been taking full advantage of the popular Working Holiday Maker program that exists between our two countries.

In the last 12 months, Canada has attracted more than 35,000 working holiday maker participants. Of these, more than 10,000 were from Australia – the largest number from any single country.

In the last year more than a third (8,500) of the 23,000 Canadians participating in a working holiday maker agreement went to Australia. You can find out more about Australia and Canada’s Working Holiday Maker Programs at the Australian and Canadian Government websites:

immi.gov.au/visitors/working-holiday/

international.gc.ca/typ-pjy/
Minister Van Loan addresses Canadian-Australian Chamber of Commerce

On 17 September, the High Commissioner attended an event hosted by the Canadian Australian Chamber of Commerce in Toronto.

At the event, Canadian Minister of International Trade, Peter Van Loan, delivered a speech on the importance of trade and investment links between Australia and Canada.

L-R: Bob Onyschuk (Chair CACC), Michael Small (Canada’s High Commissioner Designate to Australia), Peter Van Loan (Canadian Minister of International Trade), Glen Murray (Ontario Minister for Research & Innovation), Justin Brown (High Commissioner).

Think Tank Corner

The Lowy Institute
Published a policy paper, ‘Confronting the Crisis of International Climate Policy,’ proposing an international framework for greenhouse gases based on carbon prices rather than emissions targets. The paper suggests that each country pledges or negotiates to implement a starting carbon price equivalent policy along with a schedule of real annual price increases.

It also released a working paper, ‘International broadcasting and its contribution to public diplomacy’, examining the role of government-funded international broadcasters in supporting their nations’ public diplomacy effort. lowyinstitute.org

The Australian Strategic Policy Institute
Has released a series of reports analysing the current capabilities, structure, and equipment of each branch of the Australian Defence Force. It has also published its annual defence almanac, providing a summary of the composition, funding, and strategy of the Australian Defence Force. It also includes chapters on international cooperation agreements and counter-terrorism. aspi.org.au

Coming Events

Priscilla — The Musical
After hit engagements in Sydney and London, Priscilla Queen of the Desert—the Musical rolls into Toronto October 12. Based on the Oscar-winning Australian film, Priscilla features an incredible array of jaw-dropping costumes and an irresistible score of over 20 dance-floor classics. Priscilla is a journey to the heart of fabulous. mirvish.com/shows/Priscillaqueenofthedeserthemusical

Ottawa International Animation Festival
Australian films feature prominently in the Ottawa International Animation Festival from 20-24 October. animationfestival.ca
Deputy PM addresses Canadian business leaders

While in Toronto for the G20 Summit in June, Australian Deputy Prime Minister and Treasurer, Wayne Swan (pictured at right), participated in a CEO Roundtable event, hosted by the Canadian – Australian Chamber of Commerce and Canada 2020. At the event, Mr Swan delivered a luncheon address to 160 business, political and media representatives.

Approximately 20 CEOs and senior corporate representatives attended the Roundtable, including from RIM, Bombardier, Nexen, the TSX, Rio Tinto Alcan, Presima and Macquarie Capital Markets, along with individuals from the University of Toronto, and the C.D. Howe Institute. At the roundtable, Mr Swan made a presentation on the resilience of Australia’s economy, which was followed by a question and answer session.

Following the roundtable, Mr Swan delivered a luncheon address, ‘Emerging from the crisis: the G20 and the Asia-Pacific’. The speech attracted a 160-strong audience of predominantly business and political leaders and media representatives, and included the Ontario Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs & Government House Leader, Monique Smith, the Mayor of Toronto, David Miller and the chair of the Canada-Australia Parliamentary Friendship Group, Candice Hoeppner MP. Following his speech, the Deputy PM participated in a question and answer session moderated by former CBC journalist Don Newman.

Mr Swan’s speech is available from: treasurer.gov.au

High Commission News: election buzz hits Ottawa

It was a busier than usual summer at the High Commission. The two weeks of pre-federal election voting saw 241 Australians cast their votes in Ottawa out of a total of 1843 in Canada. In addition, the High Commission received 132 postal votes.

To mark the election, the High Commissioner hosted a breakfast at 7:00am on Saturday 21 August to allow invited guests to watch the vote count as it was broadcast live from Australia.

With no clear election result, guests watched as Australian media examined the ramifications of the then-inconclusive vote count.

Australia leading destination for foreign students

According to a study by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), Australia has the highest proportion of international students enrolled in its tertiary institutions out of all countries.

In 2008, twenty per cent of students enrolled in tertiary institutions in Australia were from overseas. The OECD average was 6.7 per cent.

More information on the study, and other OECD data, is available from: oecd.org
State in profile: Tasmania

Exports: AUD 3.9 billion including Zinc (AUD 562 million), Aluminium (AUD 424 million) and Wood (AUD 363 million)

Trade with Canada: In 2008-09, Tasmania exported AUD 37.81 million worth of goods to Canada, making it Tasmania’s 15th largest export destination.

The state’s economy has historically been underpinned by primary industries. The west coast of Tasmania is one of the most heavily mineralised regions in Australia and its mineral industry has played a significant part in economic and cultural development for well over 150 years.

Tourism is a growing economic contributor as visitors from around the world are drawn to the state’s unique natural beauty.

Minister Rudd addresses Millennium Development Goals Summit

On 22 September, Minister Rudd addressed the Millennium Development Goals Summit.

In his speech, Mr Rudd urged all wealthy nations to contribute more to nations suffering from extreme poverty. He also outlined Australia’s recent foreign aid record.

“The today, Australia’s aid budget is double what it was in 2005 – including a 200 per cent increase in our aid to Africa alone. By 2015, on current projections, our aid budget will double again.”

The full text of Mr Rudd’s speech is available on his website:

foreignminister.gov.au/speeches/

Minister Rudd at the podium in the United Nations building, New York.

Photo: UN PHOTO/Ky Chung
The months of April, May and June were focused on preparations for the G20 Summit. After some unexpected domestic political developments, the High Commissioner was pleased to welcome to Canada the Deputy Prime Minister and Treasurer, Wayne Swan, as leader of the Australian delegation to the Summit.

In addition to his participation in the Summit, Mr Swan participated in a policy roundtable that focussed on Australia’s economic performance and delivered a major speech at a very well-attended event co-hosted by Canada 2020 and the Canadian Australian Chamber of Commerce. Mr Swan’s ‘Davos-style conversation’ with Don Newman after his speech was a particular highlight.

July saw the High Commissioner return to Australia for his mid-term consultation program (sometimes referred to as a ‘re-education program’). He travelled to Canberra, Sydney, Melbourne, Adelaide and Perth and met with a wide range of government and business contacts. He delivered two speeches, one in Sydney on the G20 to the Australian Institute for International Affairs, and the second in Perth focussed on developments in Canada’s mining and energy sector.

The High Commissioner hosted a breakfast on 21 August to watch the election coverage, and he was delighted to welcome a number of senior people from government, business, media and the diplomatic corps. The close result kept the coverage interesting until 10am Ottawa time (midnight in eastern Australia). Australia has now joined Canada as members of the ‘minority government club’.

In August, the High Commissioner officiated at a citizenship ceremony for four new Australians, and he and Caroline were pleased to host the annual summer reception for members of the Australian Wine Society.

The High Commissioner gave a number of media interviews in August, including with the Business News Network (BNN) Headline program, which ran an edition focused on Australian and Canadian trade relations with China.

In August, the High Commissioner travelled to Toronto on 17 September for a speech by International Trade Minister Peter Van Loan to the Canadian Australian Chamber of Commerce. The incoming Canadian High Commissioner to Australia, Michael Small, was also present.

The High Commissioner delivered a presentation on the intersection between trade and climate change policy at Queen’s University Trade Policy Institute, and joined other heads of mission at the Diplomatic Forum in Charlottetown.

The High Commissioner also welcomed a number of official Australian visitors to Ottawa including a delegation from the University of Melbourne, lead by Deputy Chancellor, Professor Sue Elliott, the head of the Defence Intelligence and Research Division of the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, Michael Shoebridge, and Australia’s Chief Medical Officer, Professor Jim Bishop.

September also saw visits from Innovation Counsellor, Rachel Stephen-Smith, and Education and Science Counsellor, Mark Darby, both of whom are based at Australia’s Embassy in Washington DC and have responsibility for Canada.

In aid of the Pakistan flood victims, the High Commissioner attended the Pakistan flood victims fundraising event. They also joined other diplomats at a farewell reception for Governor General Michaëlle Jean.