

## First Quarter 2010

Well, the first quarter of the financial year has gone by quickly – or it seems that way.

Now can be a good time to review your plans. With Christmas not far away it may be time for retailers to determine their marketing strategy or the image they portray to get customers through the door. Also time to plan a break if you get the opportunity to do so during the summer holiday period.

The balance of the calendar year and then the second half of the financial year promises to be interesting.

The reserve bank may raise interest rates – probably dependent upon Christmas sales. Hopefully those with loans to service can hold onto a few dollars in the next couple of months so that any rises in January along with credit card bills do not tip you over the edge.

The hung parliament will provide a distraction for those who enjoy the cut and thrust of politics. Will it lead to better government? Let's hope so.

Further to this issue, what is going to happen to the mining tax and/or Carbon tax/Emissions trading scheme (or whatever name they give to them)? The mining tax brought down a Prime Minister and nearly a government. The carbon tax debilitated the Liberal/National coalition for some time and saw Malcolm Turnbull ousted.

My observation on the mining tax was that I thought the government could easily sell an extra tax on non-renewable resources which hits companies that make a squillion from our natural assets and whose profits quite often go offshore. It shows that money and advertising are very influential. I don't want to start a debate – just a thought.

The other big issue is broadband. Maybe it will not affect some but for those of us who rely upon this technology it could make a huge difference to doing business. Also if it is done right, regional and rural Australia may become a much more attractive place for people to live if they can easily telecommute or larger businesses may move segments of their business to obtain cheaper land and offices.

For the local area we have had the best winter rains in a very long time. Fields are green and our 2 major dams (Boondooma and Bjelke-Peterson) are full or nearly full. If you don't live in the South Burnett region I trust your area has been suitably watered.

With some luck this will provide much needed income to farmers, draw the tourists back to our area and bring in some dollars for the retailers. Once this happens everyone benefits. Perhaps I am being optimistic but it appears that there are a lot more smiles and there is a sense of opportunity and confidence in the air.

All the best in your endeavours – if we can assist you in any way please call or email our office.

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