

Herald Sun



EXCLUSIVE

POLICE CALL ON GANG WAR FIGURES TO TELL ALL ON MOTEL MURDER

COME CLEAN ON ROOM 18



VICTIM RICHARD MLADENICH

POLICE have launched a major review of the murder of Richard Mladenich, the crime credited with signing Carl Williams' death warrant. The execution of Mladenich in room 18 at the Esquire Motel in St Kilda 19 years ago is regarded as one of Melbourne's most significant underworld killings. The *Herald Sun* can reveal the murder weapon was a tiny .25 calibre pistol — barely bigger than the palm of a hand. Detective Sgt Jesse Maxwell, of

MARK BUTTLER
Purana taskforce, said Mladenich was an intelligent, much-loved man whose family deserved justice. "He was no angel but he was never one of those really bad people," Sgt Maxwell said. "He had some bad associations, made some stupid decisions." Mafia figure Rocco Arico has in the past been named as a suspect in the killing. One theory is that he acted on the orders of his one-time mate Williams,

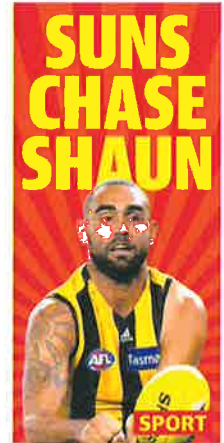
who was angered over a \$120,000 drug debt. Williams and Mladenich had earlier argued publicly at Crown Casino. There are suspicions part of the reason for the 2010 jailhouse hit on Williams was his knowledge of the Mladenich killing. But organised crime investigators say they are not wedded to one line of inquiry. Purana taskforce detectives are pulling apart the entire Mladenich file in an effort to make an arrest. They say there were three groups

of people who would have know what happened. They are people involved in its planning, the witnesses and people who helped later or were told what had happened. Investigators hope the passage of time, shifting allegiances and the lure of a \$1 million reward will break the silence. Witnesses will be reinterviewed and police say the May 2000 crime is solvable. Williams has long been suspected of organising the Mladenich murder. **CONTINUED PAGE 4**

Toxins detected in tunnel

EXCLUSIVE MATT JOHNSTON AND JAMES CAMPBELL

THE \$6.7 billion West Gate Tunnel faces delays after soil on a worksite was found to be contaminated with a chemical that shut down the Fiskville CFA training college. Crisis talks have been held between workplace safety officials and workers, but work is continuing in non-affected areas despite unions' growing angst over the safety issue. Traces of industrial chemicals known as PFAS have been found in soil on site, and some of the affected material has been removed. It is believed union officials called for protective suits — called "moon suits" — to be worn as an added precaution, but this was rejected for fear motorists on the West Gate Freeway would be spooked. Authorities have told workers the contamination was not high enough to stop work site-wide. However, an increasingly volatile CFMEU is moving onto a war footing over the issue and is believed to be considering mounting a public campaign. The union declined to comment last night. One senior industry source said the contamination was "no Fiskville" but was still being treated seriously and concerns must be resolved. **CONTINUED PAGE 8**



Uber's charge 'unfair'

UBER Eats has been rapped over the knuckles by the competition watchdog for being able to charge restaurants after issuing refunds to customers for botched deliveries. "The food delivery service has agreed to change its contracts with restaurants after the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission warned they were unfair." George Calombaris, whose Helenic Republic restaurants use the

JOHN DAGGE AND DAN STOCK
platform, said there needed to be a better understanding of where accountability started and finished. "Our guests are so important and we pride ourselves on their experience when dining with us. When our product leaves the premises we must be able to rely on that service level being continued." **CONTINUED PAGE 8**



SKILLS TESTS GO ONLINE

NEW, regular online tests will help teachers crunch the numbers on Victorian students' numeracy skills. The maths tests, which could start as early as next year, will be rolled out for students from Prep to Year 10. It is expected to later be expanded into other areas of learning. The Victorian Association of

ASHLEY ARGON
State Secondary Principals has backed the move as a useful tool for teachers. Parents Victoria said it was important schools communicated with families so there was not any alarm or concern about the tests, which will not be mandatory or publicly reported. **FULL REPORT, PAGE 11**

TOXINS FOUND IN WEST GATE TUNNEL

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"Delays to the project are possible," the source said.

A spokeswoman for the West Gate Tunnel Project, which will link the West Gate Freeway to CityLink via a tunnel and elevated bridge, said "finding contaminated soil is part and parcel of construction in industrial areas" and there were "strict safety measures in place to deal with it".

"Low levels of PFAS have been identified in soil being dug up in industrial areas for

the West Gate Tunnel Project," she said. "It is being removed from the sites to be disposed of safely at licensed landfill sites."

The other major union on site is the Australian Workers' Union, and state secretary Ben Davis said the matter must be dealt with urgently.

He also hit out at the way the project builders were dealing with industrial matters, including walking away from a tunnelling EBA and using labour hire instead.

The Joint Venture did not respond last night.

A WorkSafe spokeswoman said the PFAS matter was being monitored.

"WorkSafe has visited the site numerous times to ensure health and safety regulations are being complied with," she said.

High levels of chemicals known as PFAS, which are used in some firefighter foams, were blamed for a cancer cluster at the CFA's Fiskville training centre, which was shut down in 2015.

Uber Eats charges 'unfair'

FROM PAGE 1

The contentious clauses gave the local arm of US food delivery and transport giant Uber the power to refund customers, but still charge the restaurant even when the problem with the food was the result of poor delivery. This included issuing refunds and charging restaurants after complaints a hot food item arrived cold or a cold one hot.

Restaurants were also held responsible for delivery of food

as they hired Uber Eats as a "technology service provider" rather than a logistics service.

"We consider these terms to be unfair because they appear to cause a significant imbalance between restaurants and Uber Eats," ACCC chairman Rod Sims said. "The terms were not reasonably necessary to protect Uber Eats and could cause detriment to restaurants."

The new contracts will clarify that restaurants only have to cover customer refunds

when they are the result of an error the eatery has committed, such as supplying the wrong food or forgetting an item.

Restaurants will also gain the ability to dispute responsibility for Uber Eats refunds.

Uber Eats Australia and New Zealand manager Jodie Auster said the contract changes would make the company's operations more transparent and "better reflect the way we operate".



Melbourne father of three Stephen Jones, 40, who died in a tragic boating accident in Spain, with wife Fiona.

TRIBUTES FLOW AFTER DAD'S DIVING DEATH

A BELOVED Melbourne father killed in a holiday tragedy has been remembered for his big heart and zest for life.

Stephen Jones, 40, died last Friday after being hit by a boat while diving near Formentera, a small Spanish island.

His father, businessman Russell Jones, yesterday described his son as wonderful.

"Stephen was a wonderful son to his mother Lesley and myself ... an adored brother to his sister Felicity and her husband Chris, the most fabulous husband to his wife, Fiona, and just the best dad to Will,

MONIQUE HORE AND ALANAH FROST

Jean and Herbie," he said in a statement.

"Together with all our family and his many, many friends, we will miss him and mourn his loss deeply."

Mr and Ms Jones were celebrating their 40th birthdays when the tragedy unfolded.

Friends yesterday described the keen golfer and avid Hawks fan as a gentleman and "a very, very fine man" who had "left behind a beautiful family". Hawthorn Football Club also paid tribute to Mr

Jones, saying its staff and players were deeply saddened by his death.

"Stephen was a passionate Hawthorn supporter, member of the club's Young Executive Wing and a much loved member of the brown-and-gold family," the club said.

Mr Jones was an executive director at investment banking and finance firm Canaccord, which paid tribute to him yesterday.

"The outpouring of emotion and messages from people who have become aware of this tragedy has been overwhelming, which is a testament to his fine

character and big heart," the company said.

Among extended family honouring Mr Jones was hero pilot Richard de Crespigny, who saved more than 400 lives in 2010 when he safely landed a Qantas plane suffering engine failure.

"It was a monumental tragedy. He was taken far too soon," Mr de Crespigny said.

"Everyone will be surrounding Fiona and helping her in whatever way they can.

"We miss him, and are sending our love and best wishes to her, her children and friends."

Dodgy builder random checks

Cladding crisis reforms

BUILDING inspectors will blitz construction sites with surprise inspections as part of a renewed effort to weed out dodgy operators in the wake of the cladding crisis.

About 80 rogue builders have been prosecuted in the past two years but the state's cladding taskforce wants the Victorian Building Authority to be given tough new powers to carry out random checks at worksites.

The building industry is also facing sweeping new "duty of care" laws to allow authorities to proactively demand safety improvements to projects — instead of only stepping in after problems are exposed.

The statutory duty would be similar to workplace safety laws, covering any gaps in the building code to force builders, architects, surveyors, designers and all others involved in construction projects to ensure the safety of residents and owners.

The state government is now investigating the major overhaul — proposed by the cladding taskforce led by Ted Baillieu and John Thwaites — which would be backed by the threat of prohibition notices, heavy fines and even jail.

"A general duty is flexible, enduring and able to apply to new hazards that emerge," the taskforce's report states.

As part of its recommendations to clean up the building industry, the taskforce also called on the government to close a loophole that means the VBA can only compel

TOM MINEAR, NATHAN MAWBY AND ALEX WHITE

builders to fix defective works before a final inspection certificate or occupancy permit is issued.

Opposition planning spokesman Tim Smith wants a parliamentary inquiry into the "total failure in regulating the building industry" by the government and the VBA.

The government this week announced a \$600 million package to remove flammable cladding from hundreds of buildings. Mr Smith said that amount would probably represent "the tip of the iceberg", but Treasurer Jim Pallas said \$600 million was the "best assessment at the moment".

It comes as real estate experts warn the city's rental home supply could be overwhelmed if hundreds of residents are forced to move out while cladding is removed. Figures from realestate.com.au show there are just 852 furnished flats for rent in the city — and not all of them will accept leases under 12 months.

"Some of these towers are massive, there are thousands of apartments that will be affected potentially," chief economist Nerida Conisbee said.

"We aren't just talking three-storey walk ups, some of these are 30 or 40 storey buildings ... There might not be that much short-term stay accommodation. I do think there would be capacity issues."

tom.minear@news.com.au