

# Housing boom set to go on

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But another major factor was that Cairns had started from behind when the housing boom began and had not experienced massive annual rises as had occurred in most other markets.

"When the rise started, in the first few years Cairns didn't really go at the same rate as the rest of the country," Mr Dale said.

He said as a result it was enjoying a more sustained run than had been the case nationally.

Mr Dale said he expected the burgeoning renovation market to track rises in house prices.

"Whenever house prices keep going up renovations keep booming," he said.

"But as soon as there is easing in house prices people stop leveraging on their homes."

However, while Mr Dale said he did not expect prices to slump when the current positive growth ended.

He said it might take years before the Cairns market emulated the growth of the past seven years.

"It may take a number of years before it takes off again," he said.

# Tiger attacks Jetstar plans

UPSTART carrier Tiger Airways has bared its claws in response to reports of a pumped up Qantas domestic fleet.

Qantas last week revealed it would retain four Boeing 767-300s slated for sale and splash out on nine new Airbus A320s for Jetstar.

In a written statement Tiger branded the move a knee-jerk reaction to its impending entry into the domestic market.

Tiger Airways CEO Tony Davis said the airline remained committed to offering low fares.

# Truckload of pollies

## Road safety and driving hours top list of concerns

Gavin King

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POLITICIANS and big rigs will converge on the Cairns Convention Centre next week for Australia's biggest trucking convention.

Deputy Prime Minister Mark Vaile and more than 600 delegates will discuss issues such as road network access, driving hours and safety at the convention.

Far North trucking fans can also get up close and personal with the latest and greatest vehicles and associated technology and products at 70 exhibition stands.

Australian Trucking Association chief executive Stuart St Clair said information sessions would focus on the rapid growth in demand for freight and the



Showtime: The latest trucks will go on show during the trucking convention in Cairns next week.

industry's ability to increase productivity. "The whole focus of the convention is productivity, and one of the reasons for holding it in Cairns is to highlight its importance as

a freight hub," Mr St Clair said. "Another important element of the convention will be safety.

"Research has found that improvements in productivity can result in better safety outcomes."

Mr St Clair said the convention provided an important opportunity to formulate the industry's position on issues such as rules and regulations across state borders.

"We have some states that are more progressive than others and the convention is an important place where we can discuss the issues.

"The convention is also a way of informing people in the industry about changes and new innovations."

The convention will be held from April 11 to 14 at the Convention Centre.

# Toddlers go wild about early education

TODDLERS are learning to become wet and wild – and it is all in the name of education.

The latest childcare facility in Cairns, Tadpoles Early Learning Centre at Raintrees Shopping Centre in Manunda, opened last week to the joy of youngsters who get to play in its water park.

Tadpoles operation's manager Darlene Juleff said the centre was the seventh the company had built but it was its first foray outside of the southeast corner of Queensland.

She said it was different from any other childcare centre in Cairns.

"It has squirting and dolphins, an enormous octopus and dumping buckets," she said.

"It's a fun way to cool children down in warmer weather."

But Ms Juleff said the centre – owned and built by the Comiskey family – was not just about fun and games.

The ex-teacher and primary school principal veteran of 15 years with Education Queensland said the centre had a strong education focus and state-of-the-art facilities.

She said enrolments had reached 80 per cent and welcomed any parent wishing inspect the centre.



Cool: Kids play in the signature water feature at Tadpoles Early Learning Centre yesterday.

Picture: MARC McCORMACK

### COMMODITIES

FINAL prices for commodities at the close of trading yesterday:

GOLD: The price ex Perth Mint yesterday was \$A814.66 an ounce, equivalent to \$A26.19 a gram.

SILVER: The base selling price ex Perth mint yesterday was \$A16.31 an ounce.

SUGAR: The New York price yesterday was US9.70c a pound.

COPPER: The Comex price yesterday was US317.90c a pound.

OIL: The London price yesterday was US66.03 a barrel.

All prices courtesy of ABN AMRO Morgans Ltd in Cairns phone 4052 9222

### ASX INDEX

STOCK	Apr 3 +/-	VAR
All Ordinaries	5997.6	+89.4
All Ords Gold	4698.5	+47.6
Metals & Mining	3950.5	+80.9
S&P/ASX 20	3181.7	+45.4
S&P/ASX 50	5823.0	+97.9
S&P/ASX100	4859.7	+79.4
S&P/ASX200	6013.4	+97.6
S&P/ASX300	6024.2	+95.3
S&P/ASXMidCap50	6234.8	+92.6
Small Ords	3627.5	+39.5
CnsmrDiscr(GIC)	2889.1	+38.4
CnsmrStapl(GIC)	8206.6	+130.1
Energy(GIC)	12898	+91.3
Financials(GIC)	7003.5	+124.6
FinxPropTr(GIC)	7216.4	+108.4
HealthCare(GIC)	8461.4	+165.8
Industrial(GIC)	6729.6	+108.3
Info Tech(GIC)	649.2	+12.4
Materials(GIC)	11668	+235.3
PropertyTr(GIC)	2399.9	+65.6
TelService(GIC)	1650.5	-11.7
Utilities(GIC)	7533.7	+83.4

ALL ORDINARIES	Jan 8	5484.5
2007 low	Feb 26	6021.9
2007 high	26/02/07	6021.9
Peak		6021.9

### EXCHANGE RATES

\$A1eq:	BUY	SELL
Bahrain Dinars	0.3110	0.3031
Canadian \$	0.9539	0.9304
CFP Francs	74.9700	69.4200
Cyprus £	0.3625	0.3390
Czech Koruna	17.3780	15.5760
Danish Kroner	4.5968	4.4559
Euro	0.6168	0.6013
Fiji \$	1.3549	1.2813
Hong Kong \$	6.4388	6.3013
Indian Rupees	36.2480	33.5000
Japanese Yen	97.2100	94.7300
Kenyan Shilling	58.4900	50.8500
Kuwaiti Dinars	0.2398	0.2268
Maltese Lira	0.2701	0.2446
NZ £	1.1380	1.1118
Norwegian Krone	5.0417	4.8918
PNG Kina	2.5616	2.0282
Pakistani Rupees	51.0800	37.9400
Philippine Pesos	40.3700	37.1330
Polish Zloty	2.3936	2.1661
S. Arabian Riyals	3.0918	3.0215
Singapore \$	1.2539	1.2205
Solomon Is. \$	6.5904	5.2080
Sri Lanka Rupees	90.6200	83.1400
Sth African Rand	5.9973	5.7960
Swedish Krona	5.7913	5.6264
Swiss Francs	1.0037	0.9784
Thai Bahts	27.0210	24.0550
UAE Dirhams	3.0275	2.9504
UK £	0.4160	0.4082
US \$	0.8197	0.8113
W. Samoa Tala	2.3420	2.0282

Published exchange rates vary from day to day and anyone wishing to convert foreign currency should check with their bank for the latest rate. The rates above are opening rates only and may vary across the counter during the day.

### TOURISM STOCKS

COMPANY	LAST SALE	MOVE	VOL.
AllBrands	.265	-.01	255
ABC Learn	7.05	-.03	17078
ABC Learn cvprf	7.49	+0.08	134
Ainsworth	-.565	-.01	858
Ainsworth uc09	.86	+0.01	317
Aircrusin	.195	-	-
Aristocr	16.23	-.11	20503
CFKChild	.265	-.01	640
Centrebet	2.63	+0.09	176
Cypress	.215	-	-
CapIntell	.08	-	-
CapIntell opt09	-	-	-
Celtex	.50	-	325
Dominos	2.83	-.07	1190
Eumundi	.31	-	-
Ebet Ltd	.155	+0.01	1402
Energiltd	.026	-	2000
Energiltd opt08	.001	-	-
EasyCall	.62	-.03	281
FlightCtr	16.30	+1.10	883
IAllSport	.28	+0.01	398
IBTEducate	1.95	-.03	12710
Invocare	5.70	+0.07	1219
Jetset	2.05	-.04	25
KipMcGrat	1.47	-	546
Lasseters	.045	-.01	140
MacroCorp	.035	-	-
MFS Ltd	5.28	-.03	6928
MFS Ltd stpld	104.75	-	-
Morn Star	.057	-	380
Newhaven	2.00	-	-
NatLeGam	.39	+0.01	3309
OceanCap	.505	-	-
OdyGaming	.34	-	100
PlanetPit	.13	-	-
Old T&I	.56	-	-
ReefCsino units	4.17	-.12	32
RilFood	1.40	-.02	19291
S Aquarium	5.53	+0.05	17
SkyCitAce aces	103.50	+4.0	2
SkyCity	4.16	+0.01	338
SkyCity def	-	-	-
Tabcorp	16.48	+2.9	24065
Tranmetro	.76	-	-
TattsLtd	5.10	+0.07	53425
TravelCom	.34	-.01	1114
Viagold	2.00	-	-
Webjet	.325	-	7053

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## Become a Discerning Collector

Brian Tucker CPA presents:  
A workshop by Accountant and art collector Brian Tucker (Brisbane) about investing in art and where to start.

Thursday 5 April 2007, 6 - 8pm

KickArts, Centre of Contemporary Arts, 96 Abbott St

cost: \$10 (to cover light refreshments)

Limited seating available. To book, call 4050 9494.

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# Wesfarmers in box seat to buy Coles

THE sale of Coles Group Ltd began in earnest yesterday after Wesfarmers Ltd grabbed a major stake of Australia's second-biggest retailer.

Its stake set a floor price for Coles of \$19.7 billion.

The move by the industrial, a leader in home improvement and building supplies, is a direct challenge to a consortium led by US outfit Kohlberg Kravis Roberts, which made a failed \$18.2 billion offer last year.

It is set to be the biggest takeover in Australia's corporate history.