

PLAY
ON THURSDAY

Pyjamas in Paradise star Jane Scali ahead of the show's world premiere on the Gold Coast

Gold Coast Show cooking with local band Gas



PARADISE
ON SATURDAY

Rebecca Ovenden talks with Wallaby cult figure Radike Samo and his family



Chopper alarm ignored

THE Queensland Government was warned two years ago of a serious flaw in three rescue helicopters grounded last week.

The three AW139 helicopters, used by Emergency Management Queensland, were last week taken out of service after two of the same model crashed in China and Brazil, killing eight people.

Manufacturer AgustaWestland issued an order to ground the aircraft, citing failing tail rotor blades as the cause of the crashes.

But in 2009, Emergency Services

Minister Neil Roberts dismissed warnings from the Liberal National Party about the helicopters as scare-mongering.

"In what can only be described as grubby political scaremongering of the lowest order, the LNP's Ted Malone claimed tail booms on the three AW139 helicopters in Emergency Management Queensland's fleet could simply fall off," he said in a statement at the time.

Opposition emergency services spokesman John-Paul Langbroek says the helicopters have a list of

problems "as long as your arm" that the Opposition had warned of in 2009, 18 months after the purchase of the helicopters was announced.

The Opposition in 2009 raised questions about problems with the tail boom, a blind spot for pilots underneath the craft and under-strength searchlights, labelling their purchase "akin to buying Ferraris for ambulances".

Mr Langbroek said pilots and rescue crew were never consulted about the choice of aircraft and were unhappy with the model.

The rescue helicopters were rolled out between 2007 and 2009 at Brisbane, Cairns and Townsville to replace the existing Bell 412s.

At the time Mr Roberts said the aircraft was the first of its kind in Australia and would be faster, able to fly longer and have a bigger cabin.

But in November 2009, EMQ began daily inspections of the helicopters' tail booms on instructions from the manufacturer.

Four people died after a police helicopter crashed in Beijing on August 17, 2011, and another four

died when an AW139 crashed into the Atlantic Ocean off Brazil just two days later.

EMQ has never linked the grounding to these crashes, referring only to "incidents" in both countries.

The accidents prompted the grounding of the Queensland fleet, leaving just two rescue helicopters, both Bell 412s.

Mr Langbroek called on the Government to admit it had made a mistake in buying the helicopters.

Mr Roberts has been approached for comment.



Angie Burke puts her champion dog Inka through some trick routines at the VIP Petfoods Dog Club in Yatala

Photo: JAY NEL-MCINTOSH

Angie has Inka leaping to state championships

JESSICA HUXLEY
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WHEN Angie Burke quit her job as a horse trainer in 2007 she had little idea the direction her animal skills would lead her.

Since then Angie has found a successful new passion – training her five-year-old belgian shepherd malinois, Inka, to dance, weave and jump unlike any other dog in Australia.

Inka has become the only dual

champion for freestyle and heelwork to music in Queensland, wowing audiences with her precise routines.

VIP Petfoods Dog Club trainer Maree Field says Angie and Inka are the most outstanding duo she has helped train in her 30 years as a coach.

"Angie has picked up dog training so well due to her experiences with horses and we are very proud to have her and also my own dog Mutley – they hold the only two

championship titles in the state," Ms Field said. "Dog obedience is still very popular but VIP Petfoods Dog Club has seen more and more people coming to teach their dogs to dance and have fun."

For more info visit petfoods.com.au

To enter your pet in the Bulletin's 2011 Pet Book, visit goldcoast.com.au, submit a photo and complete the online form before Tuesday. The book will be released on September 14.

Wenden wins another year at 'his' pool

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FORMER Olympian Michael Wenden will run the Palm Beach pool that has been his passion for 34 years for at least one more year.

But a council report released yesterday shows ratepayers could have to fork out almost \$300,000 extra for pool management after negotiations with other pool operators left the council out of pocket, despite no changes being made.

Council pool leases were up for renewal at the end of June but the process was delayed after the community rallied around Mr Wenden when it was revealed he had missed out, despite having operated Palm Beach Aquatic Centre for 34 years.

The council had planned to give control of the Palm Beach pool, as well as other council pools, to Victoria-based Belgravia Leisure but the backlash forced it to halt the tender process.

A three-month temporary extension on leases was granted to all pool operators while the tender process was sorted out and now it has been extended until the end of June next year.

It means Mr Wenden will continue to operate the Palm Beach pool but will have to re-tender for it next year.

Mayor Ron Clarke said BlueFit Leisure, which operates five pools in the city, negotiated \$260,000 in payments from the council because the three months of the initial extension period were in the quietest time of the year and there was no guarantee they would be operating the pools over the lucrative summer months.

Cr Clarke said even though the contracts had now been extended until June, the premium payments still stood.

He said last-minute negotiations were taking place to have those costs credited but had not been finalised.

Mr Wenden, who did not apply to be paid a premium for the three-month interim contract, said he was surprised the council agreed to the extra money.

He said he would reapply to keep running Palm Beach pool when it came up for tender again next year.

"I'm certainly pleased that we're still here and we're looking forward to working with council staff," he said.

BlueFit Leisure operates pools at Miami, Helensvale, Mudgeeraba, Nerang and Woongoolba.

