

Force is with NSW for studio

A DISNEY-owned visual effects film company will set up its Australian headquarters in Sydney, creating 500 local jobs after the NSW Government clinched the deal by offering a tax break.

A 10 per cent tax subsidy helped convince Industrial Light and Magic — the digital effects giant founded by Star Wars creator George Lucas — to set up at Fox Studios at the Entertainment Quarter in Moore Park.

The deal is a coup for the state, with Queensland also trying to lure the film house.

It is understood Industrial Light and Magic will start recruitment immediately to complete the post, digital and visual effects for the next Star Wars feature film — *The Rise of Skywalker* — out of the new Sydney headquarters.

Securing the deal for Industrial Light and Magic to set up locally is expected to deliver \$333 million in post production business in the first five years and \$100 million each year after that.

More police on the beat

VICTORIA Police numbers have exceeded 15,000 for the first time.

The State Government says there are 15,295 police on the beat, a 16 per cent increase over the past 4½ years.

It says 100 new officers graduate the force's academy every month.

Police and Emergency Services Minister Lisa Neville said there had been a record \$3 million in funding for police.

"We know there is more work to be done, which is why our latest Community Safety Statement is driving a stronger frontline police presence, delivering new laws and funding to crack down on speeding and dangerous driving," Ms Neville said.

The Government said it had put an extra 319 members into country areas and 700 more would hit the beat by the middle of next year.



PET CRITTERS: Greg Macpherson with Elmo, a 14-year-old black-headed python. Picture: ALAN BARBER

IT'S DAY OF THE SNAKE

THIS slithering creature may bite, but it does not bark — which makes it the perfect pet, according to a Corio snake catcher.

Snake catcher Greg Macpherson has about a dozen pythons in 20 enclosures at his Corio home. In light of World Snake Day tomorrow, Mr Macpherson says no creature could make a better pet.

"They don't bark, they don't make much mess and you can have them in rental properties as they aren't going to upset anyone," he said.

Mr Macpherson, who has owned snakes for around 20 years, said being bitten was a regular ordeal in his household.

"It's a pretty regular sort of thing, but I try to avoid it if I can," he said.

"I've had one strike through the glass twice," he said.

"I've walked past the enclosure and it's smashed right through."

But despite what some would describe as terrifying encounters, snakes mean the world to Mr Macpherson.

He has caught them in several unusual places, including in toilets, kitchens and refrigerator motors.

"It is my adrenaline rush," he said.

Jobless crisis in northern suburbs

HARRISON TIPPET

CORIO-NORLANE is the unemployment capital of Australia, "disturbing" data reveals.

There were 2543 jobless residents in Corio-Norlane in March, the latest Australian Bureau of Statistics Labour Markets data shows.

Of Australia's 2090 "small areas", nowhere else has a larger unemployed population — with the 2145 jobless in Craigieburn-Mickleham the next closest.

The ABS data also showed more than one-in-five people in Corio-Norlane were jobless, with an unemployment rate of 21.6 per cent — the worst in Victoria and 18th worst in Australia.

G21 chairman Bill Mithen said the figures were "disturbing".

"You can't believe that in a place that's going as well as Geelong ... that you have a small area with the highest unemployment in Australia — it's utterly extraordinary for all the wrong reasons," Mr Mithen said.

"It goes to show the growing inequality that is occurring, not just in our region and city, but right across the country — where the gap between the haves and have nots is widening every day."

Northern Futures chief executive Lyn Morgan said an exodus of manufacturing jobs from the traditionally blue collar area had never been properly replaced.

"I think it's a dreadful thing

OUT OF WORK
AUSTRALIA HIGHEST UNEMPLOYED POPULATION (by Small Area Market, at March 2019)
1. Corio-Norlane, VIC (2543)
2. Craigieburn-Mickleham, VIC (2145)
3. Caboolture, QLD (2140)
4. Balga-Mirraboooka, WA (2098)
5. Armadale-Wungong-Brookdale, WA (2057)
6. Werribee, VIC (2041)
7. Dandenong, VIC (2026)

that this has been a known problem for such a long time, and Geelong has kind of left these suburbs behind," Ms Morgan said. "The reality is they're so far behind we need an intervention that is more than just jobs."

"It's time for us to think bigger and more clearly about what this problem is, it's not just unemployment now, it's the complexity of social issues that arise from that long-term generational unemployment that needs to be addressed."

Mr Mithen said a "systemic change" was needed.

"There are multiple things that need to be tried and attacked at the same time," he said. "We need to think about the people who are long-term unemployed and have multiple barriers to work, and we need to talk to those people and ask them what they need from an employment services industry to help them get into meaningful sustainable work."

A woman with long dark hair, wearing a dark blue polka-dot shirt, is smiling and pointing her right index finger upwards. She is positioned on the left side of a blue banner.

There's a new Banking Code.

Banks must offer low-fee or no-fee accounts to low income customers.

• Ask your bank if you are eligible