

Drivers urged to fill up on cheaper days

Exclusive

John Rolfe
COST OF LIVING EDITOR

MOTORISTS could save as much as \$200 a year on fuel by boycotting the bowisers on Thursdays and Fridays.

One of the most comprehensive independent studies of petrol prices ever undertaken in this country has revealed the end of the working week is the peak in 90 per cent of 114 cities and towns analysed.

There was not a single place where either Thursday or Friday was the cheapest day to fill up, yet that was when demand peaked, the study's author, University of New England economics professor Abbas Valadkhani, told *The Courier-Mail*.

The ACCC also found that Thursday was the day of highest demand in Sydney, Melbourne, Brisbane and Adelaide last year.

By shifting purchases to the cheapest days, "motorists can counter-attack" against petrol retailers, Prof Valadkhani said.

"Everyone in Australia avoid Thursday and Friday - that is the message," he said.

In nearly two-thirds of locations, the cheapest day to buy fuel was Tuesday. Sunday was best in one-in-five places.

Publicly funded and published in the journal *Energy Policy*, Professor Valadkhani's analysis of seven years of data identifies 16 sites where the potential savings are significant. These have the strongest price cycles and all are either mainland state capitals or major regional centres.

In Queensland, they are Brisbane, Caboolture, Caloundra, Gold Coast, Ipswich and a region including Maryborough and Gympie.

The largest price differen-



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Professor Abbas Valadkhani

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tials identified by Prof Valadkhani offer a motorist who buys on the day with the cheapest average an annual saving of up to \$200 if filling a family-sized car weekly.

"Motorists can certainly get a better deal if they are conscious of the fuel price cycle," Australian Automobile Association executive director Andrew McKellar said.

He said the "constraint" on Prof Valadkhani's findings was that the price cycle had "changed substantially in the past 18 months".

ACCC research suggested the changes began in 2010.

The cycle is now less predictable. Rather than being seven days in length, it tended to be 10-12 days long. That meant the day of the peak and trough changed.

"The fact that it's less predictable works to the advantage of the major retailers in the market," Mr McKellar said. "The unfortunate reality for many motorists is that they get ripped off by the vagaries of the cycle."

In Brisbane, the ACCC's monitoring of petrol prices in 2012 found the peak of the cycle was most common on a Saturday and least common on a Tuesday or Wednesday. The low occurred most often on a Wednesday.

Prof Valadkhani said his research showed that motorists in rural areas "never enjoy the discount day".

And he found that the price impact of long weekends and public holidays were "insignificant" when compared to day-of-week differences. This is consistent with earlier findings by the ACCC.

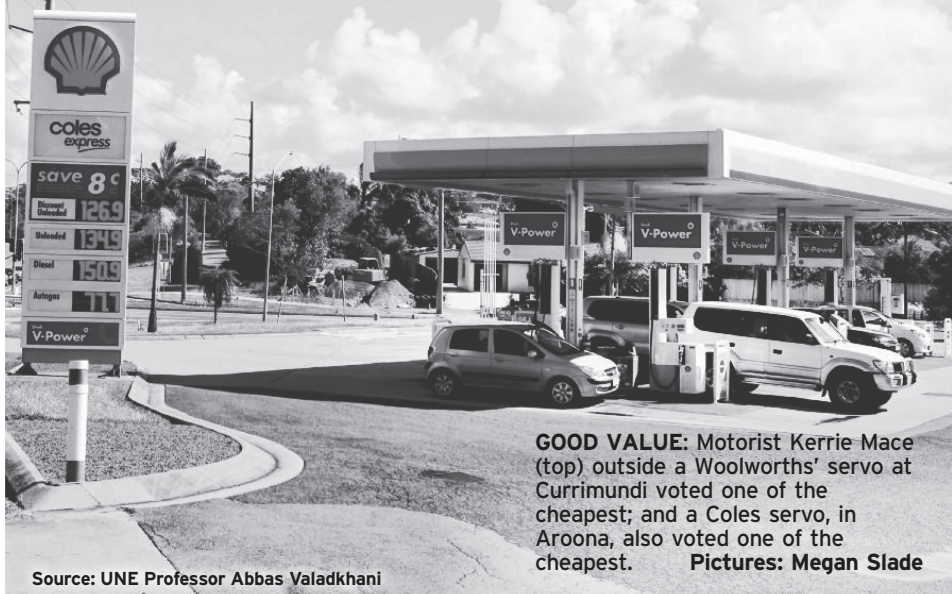
The Australian Institute of Petroleum - which represents BP, Mobil, Caltex and Shell - did not respond to repeated requests for comment.

Mr McKellar said he supported the ACCC's probe, which was launched last year, into the way fuel retailers shared information.

FUEL FOR THOUGHT



	Caloundra	Caboolture	Gold Coast	Brisbane metro	Ipswich
SAT	123.7	124.5	124.6	125.0	125.4
SUN	123.6	123.8	123.9	124.4	124.8
MON	122.5	122.6	122.7	123.2	123.7
TUE	121.2	121.3	121.5	121.9	122.5
WED	120.6	121.4	122.0	121.9	122.4
THU	123.6	125.4	125.8	125.6	126.0
FRI	124.3	125.3	125.5	125.7	126.1



GOOD VALUE: Motorist Kerrie Mace (top) outside a Woolworths' servo at Currumbundi voted one of the cheapest; and a Coles servo, in Aroona, also voted one of the cheapest. Pictures: Megan Slade

Source: UNE Professor Abbas Valadkhani

Judge in \$2m halt to native title cash

Renee Viellaris
LEGAL AFFAIRS

JUDGES are worried about how lucrative native title payments are spent and distributed because there are no provisions for transparency under the law.

Indigenous woman Lynette Landers asked the Federal Court sitting in Brisbane yesterday to follow the extraordinary orders handed down on Monday by Justice Steven Rares, who demanded the accounts of a native title recipient be supervised by a court-appointed trustee.

Ms Landers' court action relates to the Wangan and Jagalingou people, who have made a native title claim over parts of the Bowen Basin.

Ms Landers is not a registered claimant and would not be entitled to any money paid by resources companies. The matter was adjourned to July 9.

Justice Rares is believed to be the first judge in Australia to order native title monies be held in trust while infighting between a group - the Mandandanji people - continued.

Santos, Origin Energy and Queensland Gas Company have paid the registered claimants of the Mandandanji people at least \$2 million.

Queensland South Native Title Services chief executive Kevin Smith said there was "nowhere to go" if claim group members had concerns about how their payments and assets were being managed.

"(After 21 years of native title), this issue is now percolating to the top (and) people are concerned how money is being paid and used for the benefit of the broader claim group," Mr Smith said.

"They've complained to me, (federal) ministers, the Law Society - it's an issue that's not going to go away."

"There's no way to pierce the corporate veil of companies that receive these monies."

Mr Smith said no amendments had been made to the Native Title Act despite the Federal Government being aware of the issue.

He congratulated Justice Rares for his "interventionist" measure, which centred on transparency.

"It's time people realised that when they're making native title applications they're not doing it to feather their own nests, they're doing it to benefit the whole of the group," Justice Rares said in proceedings on March 1.

An Origin spokesman said it would share concerns about how monies were distributed.

Coffee Club director gives African community a shot in the arm



HELPING HAND: John Lazarou in Kenya.

Kylie Lang
QWEEKEND EDITOR

AS THE flamboyant director of one of Australia's largest franchise groups, The Coffee Club, John Lazarou is quick to spot an opportunity.

He just never expected it to be in a poverty-stricken part of Kenya, a country already famous for coffee.

But Mr Lazarou doesn't intend to open a Coffee Club

outlet in East Africa - there are already three in Egypt, four in China, 12 in Thailand, 44 in New Zealand and 280 in Australia.

He has instead committed to personally financing the establishment of a cafe, to be run by school leavers desperate to escape the crippling poverty that plagues most young people in their village.

Mr Lazarou was motivated to assist while on a

12-day Gone Fishing immersion in Kenya with the Edmund Rice Foundation.

"Seeing first-hand the slums of Nairobi made me realise how fortunate we are here in Australia," says the father of four, one of 10 Brisbane professionals on the inaugural program.

Mr Lazarou - who's joined in the start-up venture by fellow Gone Fishing participant Rachael Trihey, direc-

tor of Brisbane's Avantgarde Recruitment - estimates it will cost \$1500 a year to rent a site and to buy tables, chairs and coffee machines, a pittance compared with setting up an operation here.

Since leaving Kenya three weeks ago, Mr Lazarou has remained in constant contact with the budding entrepreneurs.

"Everything they'll be using will be local," he said.



Queenslanders help African kids escape the poverty trap

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