

Baird too busy with spotfires

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Linda Silmalis



Is the honeymoon over for Mike Baird and the people of NSW? Picture: AAP Image/Lukas Coch

“DON’T embarrass yourself. Don’t embarrass the Premier.”

If there was to be a sign not all is well within the once untouchable Baird government, it was last week’s almost comical email warning to staffers in relation to their social media use.

Within days of the memo, a staffer to Energy Minister Anthony Roberts was forced to resign with Coalition sources claiming it was in relation to a Facebook post criticising Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull.

One bemused staffer said the memo should have gone to the Premier himself, given the unfortunate “Tweet/FB option, Sydney, and all of NSW, stands with you Brussels” tweet in the wake of the Belgium terror attacks.

“It’s not as if his office is squeaky clean,” the staffer said.

Internal tensions aside, the tide does appear to be turning. Baird’s social media defence of the lockout laws led to more than 11,000 Facebook users posting their outrage.

Last week, during a series of interviews to mark a year since being elected in his own right, Baird found himself combating rumours of his plans to quit.



Mike Baird
@mikebairdMP

Tweet/FB option.

Sydney, and all of NSW, stands with you
Brussels.

22/03/2016, 9:04 PM

The embarrassing Tweet. Picture: Twitter

After almost two years in the top job, the honeymoon is over for the man once ranked as one of the nation's most popular leaders.

The lockout laws have clearly failed to read community sentiment and become almost laughable in the wake of Lord Mayor Clover Moore scrapping alcohol-free zones last week.

The moves to water down landclearing laws have the Nationals in a group hug, but the subsequent outcry from city dwellers to trees being cut down for the light rail and bushfire prevention has more than a few Liberals jittery.

In the Snowy Mountains, there is tension between local Monaro MP John Barilaro and Environment Minister Mark Speakman over what to do with up to 8000 "feral" horses.

Pile on the backlash over plans to force service stations to boost ethanol sales, party strife over donations and council amalgamations, and it appears Baird has unwillingly found himself at the centre of a game of stacks on.

One Baird supporter says the Premier is too busy dealing with spotfires, and, given the lack of opposition from Labor leader Luke Foley, he may well ride out the storm. Just so long as his ministerial staff do not embarrass themselves. Or him.

Tell us your thoughts below

Comment

Margaret

Mike Baird's problem is that he hasn't lived up to the expectations of the electorate. For any good things he has done he has negated their effect by the number of poor decisions he has made - starting with the council amalgamations.

It's too easy to get carried away by positive opinion polls but, as many political leaders know, that can change in a heartbeat.

<http://www.dailytelegraph.com.au/news/opinion/linda-silmalis-premier-mike-baird-too-busy-with-spotfires/news-story/4bbb62ceb6428ade765adcd04842b56b>