



Tirade: Graeme Sturges.

MP sorry for insult

A FOUL-mouthed Cabinet minister has been forced to apologise for a tirade against a security guard.

In what is being called the Apple Isle's Iguanagate, Tasmanian Infrastructure Minister Graeme Sturges has uttered the fateful words — "Don't you know who I am?" — to the guard.

Mr Sturges was stopped from walking straight through a security checkpoint at an official function last Thursday when he said: "Don't you know who I am? ... I'll have your f----- job."

The guard, an ex-unionist, said the outburst and language were inappropriate.

News of the tirade and Mr Sturges's phone call apology to the guard, which has been accepted, broke yesterday.

Mr Sturges said his "brain snap" was out of character but he won't seek professional help. And he declined to promise it wouldn't happen again.

"I will focus totally on my work and on the standard of my behaviour," he said.

He denied it was also now time to apologise for allegedly telling a persistent constituent "the best thing you can do is just f--- off", last December, citing other factors.

Opposition Leader Will Hodgman called on Premier David Bartlett to follow Prime Minister Kevin Rudd's lead in dealing with NSW MP Belinda Neal over her nasty outburst, dubbed Iguanagate, last year. He ordered her to take an anger management course.

Drinkers look blanc

Bob Hart

IT'S not just industry hearsay: chardonnay, the white that fuelled the Australian wine boom, is on the nose with drinkers.

A national survey of drinking preferences by one of the nation's largest hotel groups has revealed that sauvignon blanc, especially New Zealand versions, is now our tippie of choice.

In short: Oz chardy is out, Kiwi savvy is in.

The survey has been carried out over the past two years by the Mercure hotel group.

According to the survey chardonnay is Australia's fastest-declining white wine variety and sauvignon blanc is now the dominant white wine choice, showing an average growth of 47 per cent over the past two years.

New Zealand sauvignon blanc is still preferred, but Australian sauvignon blanc and sauvignon blanc-semillon blends are catching up — especially in Melbourne where 95 per cent of sauv blanc drinkers are now opting for Victorian wines.

Drinkers continue to ignore reislings.

There is a reluctance by drinkers even to try the varietal, which is still assumed to be too sweet.

The pinot gris and pinot grigio surges evident several years ago have slowed in the past year, while other white varieties retain popularity only in those states where they are prominent — verdelho in NSW and Queensland and chenin blanc in South Australia.

Um, I really am, um, telling the, um, truth

Those telling a lie may...

- Provide fewer details, ie, descriptions of people, places, events in their statements
- Make more negative statements
- Complain more
- Speak in a higher pitch
- Sound more uncertain, aloof, evasive and unclear
- Make less sense, ie, sound less plausible and have less logical structure
- Show more vocal tension
- Repeat words and phrases more

A case study

Scott Peterson

“It was a couple of days after Laci's disappearance I telephoned her and told her the truth. (in fact it was two weeks after)

***Lie: more adverbs and adjectives to qualify statements**

“Um and then when Laci disappeared um I called her and admittedly it wasn't immediately.

***Truth: more ums and more verbs**

Source: Charles Sturt University study by Gina Villar, various studies

LIARS change their language in an attempt to deceive.

Australian researchers found a US killer said “um” and used verbs more often when telling the truth.

When lying he used more adverbs and adjectives, which qualified his responses and suggested deception.

Researcher Gina Villar analysed the language of Scott Peterson, who killed his eight-months pregnant wife Laci in 2002.

After playing the grieving widower for the media, it emerged Peterson had been having an affair and he was convicted of murder in 2005.

Most striking in the Peterson case, which will be presented at this week's Australian Psychological Society conference in Darwin, was his use of “um”.

“Um” was used five times more frequently in his truthful statements to the media than his deceptive ones.

Cheryl Critchley

Ms Villar said other studies had offered more clues.

“Compared to truth-tellers, liars may provide fewer details, make more negative statements, complain more, sound more uncertain, aloof, evasive and unclear, make less sense, speak in a higher pitch, show more vocal tension and repeat words and phrases more,” she said.

Previous research had also suggested that, like Peterson, liars may use more modifiers to create an impression of vagueness or uncertainty.

“Modifiers are words such as adverbs and adjectives that typically qualify a response,” Ms Villar said.

“While these sorts of effects are so interesting and warrant further investigation, it is still a very subtle effect that would probably slide past the average person's awareness.

“There is no such thing as a single, clearly perceptible,

consistent and unequivocal indicator of lying that can be applied to every individual.

“The cues that have been identified as possible indicators of deception are often subtle, fleeting and changeable according to the situation.

“Because individuals may differ considerably in their natural language behaviour, the challenge for researchers is in establishing what constitutes an individual's usual, authentic pattern of communication and measuring any deviations from this when they are lying.”

Ms Villar conducted her study last year through Charles Sturt University, with Dr Joanne Arciuli from the University of Sydney and Dr David Mallard from Charles Sturt.

She is now doing her PhD on the influence of variables such as mental health on linguistic cues to deception, at the University of Sydney with Dr Arciuli.



Art with drive: BMW Australia managing director Stravros Yallouridis with the canvas, created by a BMW Z4 coupe. Picture: BRUCE MAGILTON

A canvas by a coupe, what a spin-out

A SET of colourful skid marks created by a banned hoon could contribute thousands of dollars to the fight against breast cancer.

It's a piece of automotive art created by luxury carmaker BMW for a TV commercial that was banned because it promoted irresponsible driving.

The canvas will be auctioned next weekend at a Melbourne event for the Make Breast Cancer History organisation.

The car maker's painting is

Neil McDonald

one of more than 20 unusual items that will be auctioned to raise funds for breast cancer research.

Both event organisers and BMW believe the piece — which measures 2.5m by 1.2m — will attract strong bids.

“Considering its history, it is unique so we hope it will fetch a good price,” fundraiser spokeswoman Rachel West said.

Apart from the BMW painting the charity will auction a

Kokoda Track walk in PNG, a private cocktail party for 30 and a year's supply of meat, fruit and vegetables.

“It is a charity auction with a twist,” Ms West said.

The BMW ad featured a Z4 coupe creating the giant artwork in a warehouse by driving with painted tyres. The work is now a part of BMW's Art Car Collection.

Company spokesman Toni Andreevski said the German car maker didn't normally donate pieces from its collection.

“It's certainly unusual but

it's for a good cause,” he said.

“Rather than leave it in storage, we thought we would donate it.”

Mr Andreevski welcomed the opportunity to turn the negative publicity surrounding the ad into a positive.

The ad was banned by the Advertising Standards Bureau in June because the stunts shown in the clip broke Australian road rules.

The bureau found it encouraged hoon driving by showing the car spinning its wheels and skidding.

The clip was used around the world but Australia was the only country to ban it.

BMW commissioned South African artist Robin Rhode and film director Ridley Scott's son, Jake, to make the huge canvas.

The company also has works by Andy Warhol, Roy Lichtenstein, Frank Stella and Ken Done.

The charity auction aims to raise \$100,000 and will be held tomorrow week.

carsGuide liftout inside