**D-DAY FOR DONS**
Mid-January ruling on the Essendon supplements scandal

**THE AGE**

INDEPENDENT. ALWAYS.

**Ghost station**

Apartment towers planned for Flemington Racecourse land would house thousands of residents, but the Andrews government will not provide a train service to the station at their doorstep.

The racecourse station is used only on a handful of race days, and for special events like the Royal Melbourne Show. Public Transport Victoria and the state transport department reject use of the station for commuters.

Public transport advocates say that “defeatist and disappointing”.

**Defence knew of malaria drug fears**

Henry Belot

An antimalarial drug was given to Australian soldiers for at least 14 years after the Australian Defence Force first became concerned about its serious side effects, previously classified documents show.

The documents, released under freedom-of-information laws and obtained by Fairfax Media, have surfaced as more veterans detail trauma after taking the drug mefloquine, which they say scarred them with permanent psychological damage, anxiety, vertigo, nightmares, suicidal thoughts and hallucinations.

Fairfax Media has reported growing soldier fears about the drug over recent weeks, however these new heavily redacted records reveal those concerns have been held inside Defence since 2001.

Mefloquine remains the third choice antimalarial for the ADF despite it being banned from prescription to US Special Forces in 2018 and the subject of an ongoing British House of Commons defence select committee hearing. It is also under investigation by the Inspector-General of the Australian Defence Force.

The drug has been used on up to 200,000 Australian personnel since a controversial trial in East Timor in 2001-02.

Senior ranks have resisted banning the drug because it would prevent some deployment opportunities. The Department of Defence has insisted the drug is “essential. Those who experience confusion, restlessness, depression or anxiety are urged to contact their medical officer immediately.”

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**Weather**

- **Today** Mostly sunny
- **Tomorrow** Mostly sunny
- **Friday** Mostly sunny

**Odd Spot**

People are coming from as far away as Birmingham (570 kilometres) to the Brass Pig in Southport, England, for the restaurant’s Christmas burger – a bun with a meatloaf, beef patty, onion, cheddar, pickles and crunchy Yorkshire pudding, a slice of turkey, a bacon-wrapped apricot, stuffing and cranberry sauce. Only 875 are made.

**Business Day**

CBA takes crown from BHP

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**Moss River**

**FINAL CHRISTMAS SALE**

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