



John van Wisse

## Channel No. 4

ON Wednesday John van Wisse will try to become the first Australian and fourth person in history to complete a triple crossing of the English Channel.

The Beaumaris swim coach, 37, plans to finish the 100km swim in 15C water in under 28 hours.



**New approach:** an image from the new, more encouraging anti-smoking TV advertisement.

# Quit offers smokers a helping hand

# Giving a positive smoke signal

## Marianne Betts

health reporter

RESEARCH showing most smokers want to give up has prompted Quit Victoria to adopt fresh tactics in persuading them to kick the habit.

The anti-smoking group last night launched its first positive campaign in nearly 20 years.

Recognising the difficulties facing smokers, it is designed to build smokers' confidence rather than focus on the negatives of smoking.

The approach of the campaign, which urges smokers to "never give up giving up", has not been seen in Australia before.

New research from the Cancer Council Victoria found that eight in 10 of 741 Victorian smokers surveyed had tried to quit at least once, and more than half had tried many times.

Quit executive director Fiona Sharkie said most smokers wanted to quit but often lacked the confidence and resolve needed.

"Many smokers don't realise it can take multiple times to give up smoking for good. So during that quitting cycle, they can start to feel beaten and helpless," Ms Sharkie said.

"We understand what those smokers are going through, and are saying to them: you can succeed.

"No matter how many times you've tried before, give quitting another go today. Every time you quit you get a little better at it.

"So never give up giving up," she said.



**Big ask:** many smokers often try to quit.

VicHealth chief executive Todd Harper said those who quit at age 50 halved their risk of smoking-related death; those who quit at 30 avoided almost all of the risks linked to smoking.

However, the new approach did not signal the end of graphic downbeat advertisements, which had been a major force in driving down smoking rates, Ms Sharkie said.

They would continue to feature in campaigns, she said. But smokers also had to be supported and encouraged to quit.

The new TV advertisement follows a smoker caught up in the cycle of quitting and relapsing. He initially quits for three days, and finally is smoke-free for three years.

The campaign, part of a \$10 million Quit program financed by the State Government and VicHealth, also features radio and internet advertising, a website, and social media tools to support smokers in quitting and staying smoke-free.

## 'Brain drain' claims wrong

### John Masanauskas

CLAIMS that Australia is suffering a major "brain drain" have been refuted by a Monash University study to be released today.

The report found the number of people leaving the country permanently has been grossly exaggerated because the Immigration Department has been using unreliable passenger-card data.

The mistake has wide implications for the population debate because supporters of a high migrant intake have pointed to big immigration numbers to justify their stance.

The department has said the number of residents leaving Australia permanently in 2007-08 was at least 76,000, based on what people wrote on

their passenger cards. But Monash demographers Bob Birrell and Ernest Healy found a much lower figure — about 15,000 — by following the actual movement of people from migration data supplied by the Australian Bureau of Statistics.

"Clearly, departing residents have been exaggerating their intentions to depart permanently," said the researchers.

"The net loss of Australian citizens and of permanent residents is remarkably small.

"Those who think that Australia needs a big migration intake because it is suffering a serious brain drain are mistaken."



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