



# Fairfax

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**MICHAEL GAWENDA TO STEP DOWN  
AS EDITOR-IN-CHIEF OF *THE AGE*  
TO BECOME SENIOR CORRESPONDENT FOR  
*THE AGE* AND *THE SYDNEY MORNING HERALD***

MELBOURNE, April 15, 2004 -- Mark Scott, Editor-in-Chief, Metropolitan Newspapers for Fairfax, today announced that Michael Gawenda, Editor and Editor-in-Chief of *The Age* since 1997, will step down later this year to become senior correspondent for *The Age* and *The Sydney Morning Herald*.

"Michael is an editor's editor, and has provided superb leadership to *The Age* and its staff," Mr Scott said. "As a champion of *The Age*, and with his passionate commitment to journalism marked by integrity, fairness and balance, we are deeply appreciative for all he has done with the paper. At the same time, we are delighted that in this very important period in political and international affairs, this award-winning journalist will bring his insight on national and global events to our readers.

"We wanted Michael to stay on as editor for as long as he wanted to continue those responsibilities. But Michael has always been determined to return to writing and the time to do so has arrived. We eagerly anticipate his future contributions to our publications."

Mr Scott said that Mr Gawenda will relinquish the editorship in the second half of 2004, and will take up his position as special correspondent during the year. He will be based in Washington from January 2005, just prior to the presidential inauguration, and will travel extensively during his time in the US.

Mr Gawenda said that it had been a great privilege to edit *The Age*, the newspaper where he started his journalism career more than 30 years ago.

"I love *The Age* and what it has always stood for—journalism that is fearless, fair, and in touch with the needs and aspirations of its readers," he said. "*The Age* plays a vital role in the life of Melbourne, Victoria and Australia.

"I want to thank the paper's dedicated and talented staff for their support and for helping continue the great journalistic traditions of this great newspaper. I am sure that with their continued dedication *The Age* will go from strength to strength."

Fred Hilmer, CEO of Fairfax, said, "Michael has our highest respect and admiration. His editorship has embodied the values of quality, independent journalism that

distinguish Fairfax and our publications. He has restored a sense of balance and diversity to the paper, and put *The Age* on a path of excellence not only in Victoria, but once again as a great national paper in its own right. We are also appreciative for his representation of the company in Victoria. We now have the opportunity to bring his distinguished brand of journalism to a wider audience in Sydney as well as Melbourne."

During his tenure as editor, *The Age* has won over 280 awards and commendations – more than any other newspaper in Victoria – including 23 Walkley Awards, 46 Quills (including 4 Gold Quills), and 2 Australian Journalist of the Year awards. *The Age* broke major stories, including the Geoff Clarke rape allegations story for which Mr Gawenda won a major journalism award for editorial leadership.

*The Age* produced outstanding coverage of the September 11 terrorist attacks in America, the Bali bombings, and the war in Iraq. Its coverage of the 2000 Olympics was another highlight of the Gawenda era.

During the seven years of his editorship, Mr Gawenda introduced major new features and sections across all editions. Monday-Friday circulation of *The Age* increased steadily during his tenure, with circulation gains reported for the last 10 audit periods for the weekday edition. More than 45 young journalists were hired under *The Age* traineeship program. Many of these journalists are now making major contributions to *The Age*.

Mr Scott said that a comprehensive search process has been initiated.

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