

## **NSW GOVERNMENT WEEKLY UPDATE – 18 July 2014**

### **TRANSFORMING SYDNEY: THE BAYS PRECINCT**

- The NSW Government will host an international summit in November, to hear from world-leading urban renewal experts about the best ways to revitalise the area in Sydney's inner harbour known as The Bays Precinct.
- The NSW Government will ensure underutilised and degraded waterfront areas in and around Blackwattle Bay, the Sydney Fish Market, Rozelle Bay, Rozelle Rail Yards, and the heritage-listed White Bay Power Station are regenerated to provide a vibrant new harbour front.
- The Bays Precinct is two kilometres west of the Sydney CBD, and presents possibly the most exciting and ambitious urban renewal and city building opportunity in the world today.
- For more information visit, [www.urbangrowthnsw.com.au](http://www.urbangrowthnsw.com.au).

### **RECORD-BREAKING HOUSING COMMENCEMENTS**

- New Australian Bureau of Statistics figures show levels of new residential construction in NSW have hit 10-year highs – which is great news for homebuyers and tradies employed in the construction sector.
- Residential construction commencements for the last 12 months hit 46,035 - the highest level since September 2003. This is almost double the low of 24,166 recorded in September 2009 under the previous Labor government.
- This is yet another sign of confidence in the NSW economy, stemming from smarter planning and the strong economic leadership of the NSW Government.
- The NSW Government is boosting housing supply in key growth areas and supporting young families with the purchase of their first home. On July 1, the threshold of the First Home Owners Grant increased to \$750,000, giving first-time buyers a much needed boost to break into the property market.

### **M5 RELIEF FOR MOTORISTS TO ARRIVE MONTHS EARLY**

- The first section of the M5 West Widening Project will open to motorists in the next fortnight and is on schedule for final completion by the end of the year.
- The \$400 million project to widen the M5 West by a lane in each direction was a key election commitment made by the NSW Liberals & Nationals to cut congestion and improve travel times for motorists in South Western Sydney.

- In the next fortnight, we will open to motorists commuting eastbound a third lane for a stretch of four kilometres from the Camden Valley Way eastbound entry ramp to the Georges River Bridge, Liverpool.
- Shortly after, we will open an additional lane westbound, which will extend from Georges River Bridge in Liverpool to the Beech Road exit.

### **OPAL ROLLOUT CONTINUES PACE**

- The number of buses with Opal climbs to 1,700 from next week as Opal is switched on for every bus in the Eastern Suburbs.
- The latest Opal roll out covers 580 buses which carry more than five million customers every month from areas including Randwick, Maroubra, Watsons Bay, La Perouse and Mascot.
- This week 220 Transit Systems buses went live with Opal across 80 suburbs including Liverpool, Greystanes and Parramatta and Punchbowl Bus Services have gone live across 35 suburbs including Hurstville, Roselands and Bankstown.
- Customers have taken more than 25 million journeys with Opal with 400,000 cards issued and thousands more signing up every week.

### **AUSTRALIAN-FIRST CURTAIN PROJECT COMPLETED**

- Construction of Australia's first temperature control curtain at Burrendong Dam in the State's Central West has been completed on time and on budget.
- The \$4 million curtain is the first of its type in the world and allows warmer surface water to be released downstream - instead of cold water from the bottom of the dam - improving the temperature of the river and increasing fishing and recreational use.
- The award-winning project is a result of the NSW Government, State Water, the Office of Water and NSW Fisheries working together.
- Following the results from this project, the technology may be rolled out at other dams across the state.

### **NDIS TRIAL EXPANDING TO INCLUDE LAKE MACQUARIE**

- The National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) trial site has expanded to Lake Macquarie.
- One of the biggest benefits of the NDIS is that it gives control back to people with disability. Each participant has full choice and control over their funding and the supports they choose to access.
- The NSW Government is committed to a disability service system that increases choice and control for people with disability, which is why we were the first state to sign the agreement with the Commonwealth.
- More than 2,000 participants in the Hunter are now receiving disability support through the new scheme and, as it becomes available in Lake Macquarie, a further 2,000 participants are expected to start receiving benefits under the NDIS banner.

## **FIRST STAGE OF RICHMOND ROAD UPGRADE OPENS**

- Stage One of the NSW Government's upgrade of Richmond Road has been opened to traffic one month early and \$7 million under budget.
- Richmond Road is a key arterial road for Sydney's North West Growth Centre – the upgrade has been fast tracked because of its importance to supporting new housing and job creation in Western Sydney.
- Stage One provides two lanes in each direction and will slash travel times for Western Sydney motorists travelling on Richmond Road between Bells Creek and north of Townson Road at Marsden Park.
- The NSW Government has allocated \$96 million for Stage Two of the upgrade which began this week and is expected to be progressively opened to traffic by the end of 2016.

## **HOSTAGE RESPONSE SQUAD PUTS THE ORDER INTO LAW AND ORDER**

- An elite team of 70 correctional officers devoted to responding to any major emergency in NSW prisons have proved they are more than ready to maintain order.
- Corrective Services NSW' specialist Security Operations Group (SOG) successfully resolved a mock hostage scenario at Windsor's John Morony Correctional Complex last week.
- Fortunately, this type of hostage scenario has rarely occurred in NSW prison history. However, it's reassuring to know these men and women are prepared to respond to the worst as they uphold the very best security standards for our prisons.
- The SOG is also prepared to deal with the potential scenarios of barricaded cells, escapes and riots and has helped train other officers throughout the prison system to respond to potential security threats.

## **CONSTRUCTION TO BEGIN ON SUTHERLAND CAR PARK**

- Construction will begin next month on a 340-space multi-storey commuter car park at Sutherland Station.
- The free and untimed commuter parking spaces are part of more than \$30 million worth of upgrades at the station, which also include a new lift and recently completed interchange upgrade.
- Sutherland is a key interchange station for locals and commuters in the Illawarra, and these works will go a long way to help customers connect and move easily between different transport modes.
- St George and Sutherland have been big winners under the Government's Transport Access Program, with upgrades underway along the Illawarra Line. A major station upgrade is underway at Waterfall Station, with another huge upgrade announced at Oatley and Arncliffe and a commuter car park extension underway at Rockdale.

## **PEST ANIMAL CONTROL PROJECTS NOW UNDERWAY**

- Local Land Services is in the process of delivering \$2.4 million of innovative and essential pest animal management projects across NSW.

- The funding will enhance existing projects, and commence new initiatives to significantly reduce the impact of pest animals on farm businesses and the environment.
- The Commonwealth Government allocated the funds earlier this year as part of a range of support measures for drought-affected farmers in NSW.
- Projects will be delivered across the Central Tablelands, Central West, Hunter, North Coast, Northern Tablelands, North West and Western Local Land Services.

### **CROWN RESERVE FUNDING COMING TO A SHOWGROUND NEAR YOU**

- Showgrounds across NSW are set to be upgraded with a \$2.4 million funding allocation from the NSW Government's Public Reserve Management Fund (PRMF).
- The PRMF provides funding for improvements, maintenance and protection of Crown Land reserves in NSW.
- Showground trusts will be able to carry out improvements to increase their potential to host more events and generate more income for the local economy.
- The PRMF is one example of the NSW Government's commitment to the cultural, sporting, environmental, economic and recreational life of communities across NSW.

*Follow the NSW Government on Twitter @MikeBairdMP and  
Facebook [www.facebook.com/MikeBairdMP](http://www.facebook.com/MikeBairdMP)*