

NSW GOVERNMENT WEEKLY UPDATE – 23 SEPTEMBER 2016

NSW GOVERNMENT INVESTS \$340M IN QUALITY TEACHING

- The NSW Government has invested \$340 million in education to help ensure students have the essential literacy and numeracy skills needed to succeed at school and later in life.
- The new Literacy and Numeracy Strategy 2017-2020 will also deliver extra support to students from Kindergarten until they complete their HSC by focusing on:
 - Increasing focus on early intervention, with experts supporting the literacy and numeracy skills of at-risk Kindergarten to Year 2 students in nearly 700 schools;
 - Evidence-based literacy and numeracy progressions that map student learning from Kindergarten to Year 10;
 - Introduce a 'Best Start' Year 7 literacy and numeracy assessment on entry to high school, to identify students needing additional assistance and plan the support they need to succeed; and
 - Ensure graduating primary and secondary teachers are better prepared to teach literacy and numeracy by strengthening initial teacher education programs.
- This \$340 million investment will work towards realising one of the 12 Premier's priorities, to increase the proportion of NSW students in the top two NAPLAN bands by 8 per cent.

WYNYARD WALK OPENED TO PEDESTRIANS

- The NSW Government has opened Sydney's newest pedestrian tunnel, the Wynyard Walk, boosting convenience and safety for pedestrians in the heart of the CBD.
- The Wynyard Walk provides a six-minute journey by foot between one of Sydney's busiest transport interchanges and the new jobs precinct at Barangaroo.
- Features of the Wynyard Walk include:
 - A nine-metre wide, 180 metre long tunnel
 - A six minute walk that avoids inclines and busy roads
 - Capacity for 20,000 people an hour
 - The upgraded pedestrian precinct Napoleon Plaza

- Sussex Street pedestrian bridge with lifts and escalators
- With Barangaroo booming, the ferry hub now started and light rail under construction, the NSW Government will continue to ensure pedestrian capacity matches these major new projects.

TOWARDS ZERO: 28 BRAND SPANKING NEW HIGHWAY PATROL VEHICLES ON NSW ROADS

- The NSW Government has allocated \$4.8 million to roll out 28 new highway patrol vehicles across the state to crack down on dangerous drivers and help drive down the road toll.
- The new high visibility vehicles are being deployed to key crash hotspots on major routes and highways across the state including: Bathurst, Wagga Wagga, Tamworth, Armidale, Tweed, Dubbo, Byron Bay, Grafton, the Hunter, Nowra, Goulburn, Gundagai, Albury and Lismore.
- Funding has come from the Community Road Safety Fund – which is supported by speed and red light camera fines – and is designed to support road safety initiatives such as high visibility police enforcement.
- With 186 fatalities on rural roads so far this year, compared to 157 this time last year, those driving in country NSW will see these National Route vehicles and hopefully think twice about their driving behaviour.

UNSOLICITED PROPOSAL RECEIVED FOR AUSGRID

- The NSW Government announced it has received an unsolicited proposal for the partial long-term lease of Ausgrid from a consortium comprising AustralianSuper and IFM Investors.
- The NSW Government has established an experienced cross-agency panel to thoroughly assess the proposal as part of the standard process.
- This unsolicited proposal is another indication of the strong market interest for Ausgrid.
- Further information on the NSW Government's unsolicited proposals process can be viewed at: www.nsw.gov.au/your-government/unsolicited-proposals

BOOSTING COMPETITION IN THE RETAIL GAS MARKET

- The NSW Government will promote further competition in the retail gas market for households and small businesses by deregulating prices from 1 July 2017.
- More than 80 per cent of the state's 1.3 million residential gas customers have already switched away from the regulated price.
- The successful deregulation of retail electricity prices has boosted competition in the market, put downward pressure on prices and now those benefits will be further replicated across the retail gas market.

- The NSW Government has worked with industry and stakeholders to improve competition in the regional gas market, in order to drive down the cost of living in regional areas.
- Visit the Australian Energy Regulator's (AER) free and independent price comparison website www.energymadeeasy.gov.au to compare retail gas offers.

NSW RESIDENTIAL CARE GETS MULTI MILLION-DOLLAR OVERHAUL

- Vulnerable children will receive intensive intervention to help them recover from trauma under a NSW Government plan to overhaul residential care.
- The NSW Government will put the new services out to tender, with a focus on evidence-based, therapeutic care. There will also be new requirements of mandatory training and qualifications for those working with children.
- The reforms are backed by \$8.5 million in new funding over four years for trauma treatment services for children. This year, the NSW Government is spending approximately \$160 million on residential care.

STRENGTHENING BUILDING CERTIFICATION IN NSW

- The NSW Government will overhaul the building certification system in response to the Statutory Review of the Building Professional Act 2005, supporting 72 of the Review's recommendations.
- The Government will introduce legislation to enhance certifier accreditation, including clarifying a certifier's roles and responsibilities, improving the independence of certifiers and strengthening complaints processes.
- Fire safety reforms will be prioritised, including consulting on options for additional inspections during and after construction and tighter controls on who performs certain fire safety roles.
- The Independent Review of the Building Professionals Act 2005 Final Report and NSW Government response are available at www.bpb.nsw.gov.au.

BEEFED UP BIOSECURITY TO PROTECT PRIMARY INDUSTRIES

- A new \$1.13 million partnership will ensure a greater biosecurity presence in the Greater Sydney region to keep farmers in business, maintain export markets and provide greater protection for the broader NSW community.
- The Greater Sydney region is one of the State's key food bowls, producing \$1.5 billion in food and agricultural products every year.
- The funding will see a new full time District Vet and a dedicated Plant Biosecurity Officer service the region and a further two full time field officers.

- The NSW Government will continue to invest in biosecurity to protect our economy, environment and community from the impacts of pests, diseases, weeds and contaminants.

PARRAMATTA PROPOSAL BRINGS MORE HOMES AND JOBS

- A planning proposal approved for the heart of Western Sydney will inject \$291 million into the local economy, create 275 new homes and close to 300 new jobs.
- A new slim line 43-storey building will be among Parramatta's tallest with a mixture of apartments, offices and shops,
- The project is expected to create up to 229 construction jobs and 65 ongoing jobs.
- This is an example of how the NSW Government can create places where people can live, work and have good access to transport, public facilities and open spaces.