

## **NSW GOVERNMENT WEEKLY UPDATE – 8 JULY 2016**

### **GREYHOUND RACING TO BE SHUT DOWN IN NSW**

- NSW will become the first Australian state to shut down greyhound racing following a Special Commission of Inquiry found overwhelming evidence of systemic animal cruelty including mass greyhound killings and live baiting.
- The Special Commission of Inquiry into the Greyhound Racing Industry in NSW has found between 48,000 and 68,000 greyhounds – at least half of all greyhounds bred to race – were killed in the past 12 years because they were deemed uncompetitive.
- The report also states that up to 20 per cent of trainers engage in live baiting and 180 greyhounds sustain catastrophic injuries during races, such as skull fractures and broken backs that resulted in their immediate deaths.
- The NSW Government will announce a detailed industry shutdown plan during the second half of 2016 following consultation with stakeholders in industry and animal welfare organisations.
- A summary of key findings and observations of the inquiry are attached and the Commission of Inquiry's report is available at <http://www.greyhoundracinginquiry.justice.nsw.gov.au/>

### **NSW CHILDREN PROVIDED WITH COMPASSIONATE ACCESS TO CANNABIS-BASED MEDICINE**

- In an Australian first, NSW children with severe treatment-resistant epilepsy will be provided with compassionate access to a cannabis based medicine called Epidiolex which is manufactured by GW Pharmaceuticals.

- The Compassionate Access Scheme forms part of the agreement between the NSW Government and GW Pharmaceuticals to explore the use of cannabinoid medicines for children with severe treatment resistant epilepsy.
- For more information about the NSW Government's commitment to exploring the possible therapeutic benefits of medicinal cannabis visit [www.health.nsw.gov.au/cannabis](http://www.health.nsw.gov.au/cannabis).

## **NEW RESIDENTIAL TENANCY LAWS TO PROTECT VICTIMS OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE**

- The NSW Government has announced greater protections for victims of domestic violence under proposed changes to the state's residential tenancies laws which will support victims in leaving their violent partners without penalty in future rental applications.
- Proposed changes will:
  - Allow tenants to terminate residential tenancy agreements immediately by providing evidence of domestic violence through a provisional, interim or final AVO, or court order; and
  - Ensure domestic violence victims are not penalised for property damaged or rental debt caused by a violent partner. Landlords and agents will be prohibited from listing victims on tenancy databases holding such information.
- The reforms follow a review of the *Residential Tenancies Act 2010* which included a public consultation process.
- Further information is available at [www.fairtrading.nsw.gov.au](http://www.fairtrading.nsw.gov.au)

## **NEW TOURISM NETWORK FOR REGIONAL NSW**

- The NSW Government will invest \$43 million over four years – including the creation of six new Destination Networks - in a major overhaul in the way regional and rural areas attract visitors throughout NSW.
- The new networks were created after consultation with 93 key industry associations and stakeholders and will work closely with local government, tourism organisations and operators, as well as collaborate on campaigns with Destination NSW and a new Destination NSW regional division.
- Regional tourism contributes \$6.7 billion to NSW and employs 73,900 people – this new plan will boost regional investment in tourism and strengthen the operation of local tourism bodies.

- Other new initiatives include a regional conferencing unit within Destination NSW and an increase over the next four years to both the Contestable Pool of the Regional Visitor Economy Fund (\$3.5 million) and to the Regional Flagship Event Funding (\$4 million).

### **KIDS PROTECTION UNIT GETS STRONG RESULTS**

- The NSW Government is improving the safety of children in remote communities with the trial of a mobile child protection unit in Western NSW.
- The team of seven Mobile Child Protection Unit caseworkers are based in Dubbo and travel to communities to complete child protection assessments as the primary caseworker – in the first nine months of operation from April to December 2015 there were 1,250 home visits compared with 459 during the same period in 2014.
- The NSW Government is funding 2128 caseworkers as part of the record \$1.9 billion Budget to safeguard children from abuse and neglect.

### **BOOST IN TRAVEL AND ACCOMODATION SUPPORT FOR REGIONAL TRAINEES AND APPRENTICES**

- The NSW Government has announced a \$6 million package that will increase subsidies for travel and accommodation for trainees and apprentices in NSW.
- The Vocational Training Assistance Scheme accommodation subsidy will double from \$28 per night to \$56 per night and the fuel subsidy will increase from 12c to 33c per kilometre.
- These subsidies will ease some of the financial pressure for trainees and apprentices particularly for those in regional areas who need to travel long distances to access their training.
- Increases to Vocational Training Assistance Scheme subsidies will take effect from Friday 1 July 2016 and more information is available at [www.training.nsw.gov.au](http://www.training.nsw.gov.au)

### **NAIDOC WEEK: FUNDING TO HELP PRESERVE ABORIGINAL LANGUAGES**

- Aboriginal Affairs Minister Leslie Williams has announced funding for six projects to preserve Aboriginal languages as NAIDOC Week celebrations begin around NSW.
- This funding will help more people learn, practice and teach Aboriginal languages as well as supporting the development of community owned resources like dictionaries and videos.

- This year's NAIDOC theme is *Songlines – the living narrative of our nation*.
- For more information visit the Aboriginal Affairs NSW website at [www.aboriginalaffairs.nsw.gov.au](http://www.aboriginalaffairs.nsw.gov.au)