

NSW GOVERNMENT WEEKLY UPDATE – 9 SEPTEMBER 2016

\$80M CLASSROOM BOOST FOR WESTERN SYDNEY

- About 40 new classrooms will be built and almost 900 additional students accommodated at Auburn North Public School, Lidcombe Public School and Marie Bashir Public School as part of the NSW Government's \$1 billion boost over four years for the construction of new classrooms and schools infrastructure.
- These three projects bring the total announced education expenditure so far this year to almost \$80 million for Western Sydney.
- Other projects announced in the 2016-17 Budget include a new school in North Kellyville, as well as new permanent classrooms at Rosehill Public School and Oran Park Public School.
- As Western and South Western Sydney continue to grow, so too will the NSW Government's investment in new schools and classrooms.

MAXIMISING BENEFITS FROM THE INFRASTRUCTURE BOOM

- The NSW Government will ensure its record infrastructure investment provides new job opportunities for young people and helps existing workers learn new skills.
- The Infrastructure Skills Legacy Program will help fill skills shortage in the construction industry.
- Minimum targets for major projects include:
 - 20% of the total project labour force to be 'learning workers';
 - 20% of all trades positions to be apprentices;
 - Double the number of women in trade related work (to 2%);
 - 1.5% of the total contract value to support Aboriginal participation; and
 - 8% of the total project workforce aged 25 years.

- The Government will also develop strategies to ensure projects employ and train people from the local area – for more information visit www.industry.nsw.gov.au

ADMINISTRATOR APPOINTED FOR GREYHOUND RACING NSW

- The NSW Government has appointed an experienced corporate advisor, Mr John Gibbons, as Administrator of Greyhound Racing NSW (GRNSW) to manage the corporate transition of greyhound racing's governing body and affected clubs.
- Mr Gibbons will also prepare and implement a business plan for the winding up of the industry and GRNSW which will be released publically and will provide detailed guidance on measures to manage the business and regulatory functions of the industry's closure.
- Further, Greyhounds Transition Taskforce Coordinator General Dr John Keniry will continue his important work in developing the transition package that will assist industry participants.

CATCH PUBLIC TRANSPORT ALL THE WAY WITH CHEAPER MULTI-MODE TRAVEL

- Opal has now removed the penalty for customers who interchange between modes when travelling making it cheaper to switch between trains, buses, ferries and light rail.
- The new \$2.00 'transfer discount' is given every time an Adult Opal card customer changes a mode of transport as part of the same journey.
- In a lot of cases, it will be cheaper to catch the bus to the station and then jump on the train, encouraging commuters to leave the car at home.
- Opal card fares will remain frozen until July 2017 which means fares won't have increased on buses and light rail since January 2014 and on trains and ferries since January 2015.

STRONGEST GROWTH, STRONGEST ECONOMY

- The latest ABS figures show that NSW remains the nation's economic powerhouse, with our State experiencing its strongest financial year growth since before the global financial crisis.

- The NSW State Final Demand grew 3.7% in the 2015-16 – the highest rate since 2007-08.
- The figures also showed that international exports from NSW jumped 8.3% over the past 12 months, boosted by tourism and education with housing investment also rising through the year by 8.7%.
- The NSW Government is working hard to make our State the strongest in the nation.

MOVING AHEAD ON NEW LAW TO STOP REVENGE PORN

- The NSW Government will seek to criminalise ‘revenge porn’, the distribution of intimate or sexually explicit images without consent.
- This decision reflects the NSW Government’s recognition of concerns about privacy recently expressed by the Legislative Council Committee on Law and Justice and is part of the Government’s response to the Committee’s report on remedies for serious invasions of privacy.
- Consultation will start soon on a range of issues, including the definition of ‘intimate’ images, how they are shared or distributed, and what penalties should apply, including the how the offence should apply to children and young people.
- A discussion paper will be available on <http://haveyoursay.nsw.gov.au> from mid-September.

NSW CRIME CONTINUES TO FALL OR REMAIN STABLE

- The latest quarterly crime statistics reveal 15 of the 17 major crime offences remain stable or are falling while two categories saw upward trends across NSW.
- Six categories remain stable while nine categories showed downward trends:
 - *murder* (down 32.1 per cent);
 - *robbery without a weapon* (down 25.9 per cent);
 - *robbery with a firearm* (down 41.7 per cent);
 - *robbery with a weapon not a firearm* (down 22.2 per cent);
 - *break and enter dwelling* (down 7.2 per cent);
 - *motor vehicle theft* (down 12.6 per cent);
 - *steal from dwelling* (down 6.6 per cent);
 - *steal from person* (down 9.9 per cent);
 - *malicious damage to property* (down 3.2 per cent).

- The number of murder victims has declined significantly in the two years to June 2016 with just nine murder victims recorded in the second quarter of 2016, the lowest of any quarter since 1995.

\$8 MILLION TO SUPPORT PEOPLE AT RISK OF SUICIDE

- The NSW Government has opened expressions of interest for an \$8 million suicide prevention program to run over the next four years.
- The announcement coincides with *R U OK? Day 2016*, a day dedicated to encouraging Australians to connect with people around them and support those who may be struggling.
- Non-government organisations (NGO's) from across NSW are being encouraged to submit proposals for services or programs that connect and care for people at risk of suicide in their local community.
- For more information on the fund visit: <http://tenders.nsw.gov.au/health/>

GET INVOLVED WITH PREVENTING HOMELESSNESS

- The NSW Government is calling on everyone with an interest in preventing homelessness to have their say on a new discussion paper called *Foundations for Change – Homelessness in NSW*.
- The discussion paper would be the foundation for the Government's blueprint for tackling homelessness over the next decade and will explore how government, the private and community sectors can work together to intervene earlier, and ensure fewer people experience homelessness.
- The Homelessness Strategy will assist in delivering other new initiatives including the NSW Domestic and Family Violence Blueprint for Reform 2016-2021 and Future Directions for Social Housing in NSW.
- Consultation will take place across NSW throughout September and October 2016 and the discussion paper and further details can be found at <https://www.facs.nsw.gov.au/homelessnessstrategy>

NSW TO BID FOR 2018 INVICTUS GAMES

- The NSW Government has launched an historic bid to host the 2018 Invictus Games – founded by Prince Harry – for wounded, injured or ill military personnel.

- The Invictus Games would bring more than 500 service personnel from 16 nations to compete over 8 days in 11 sports such as swimming, wheelchair rugby and sailing in Sydney.
- NSW will compete against Queensland to host the Invictus Games and the successful city will announced later this year.

'THOR' RETURNS TO HAMMER FIRES FROM THE SKY

- The NSW Government has welcomed by Thor – the Hercules C130 – in preparation for the 2016/17 bush fire season.
- Housed at Richmond RAAF Base, Thor will be able to reach anywhere in the state in under an hour and has a huge capacity to drop a lot of water or fire retardant quickly and accurately.
- The return of the aircraft reflects the ongoing investment of the NSW Government towards protecting lives and property in NSW.
- Communities are encouraged to begin preparing for bus fire season now and to talk with their local brigade at events at the upcoming *Get Ready Weekend* on 10 and 11 September. To find out more visit www.rfs.nsw.gov.au

VIVID SYDNEY INJECTS \$110 MILLION INTO NSW ECONOMY

- Recent figures confirm that Vivid Sydney 2016 injected \$110 million of visitor spend into the State's economy.
- This year's festival included an extra five nights, three new precincts and delivered a huge \$110 million result that is up 75% on last year's figure.
- Vivid Sydney 2016 also became Australia's largest event with 2.31 million attendees, with almost 184,000 visitors who travelled to Sydney for the event.
- Vivid Sydney 2017 will be held from Friday 26 May to Saturday 17 June.