

NSW GOVERNMENT WEEKLY UPDATE – 10 January 2014

FIRST KINGS CROSS BANNING ORDERS ISSUED

- The first two long-term banning orders have been issued in Kings Cross, sending a loud and clear message that thugs have no place in the precinct.
- A person who is subject to a long-term ban faces stiff penalties if they enter, or attempt to enter, a high risk venue in Kings Cross.
- Long term banning orders are one of the measures introduced to reduce alcohol-related violence and increase safety in Kings Cross. A further 14 long-term banning order applications are now being considered.
- The NSW Government has achieved significant reductions in alcohol-related violence with a range of tailored measures for Kings Cross.

NSW ROADS MAINTENANCE FUNDING AT HISTORIC HIGHS

- The NSW Government has announced record levels of funding for roads and bridges maintenance in NSW, including council-owned infrastructure.
- In 2013-14, the NSW Liberals & Nationals Government has committed \$1.54 billion towards the maintenance and repair of roads and bridges on state and council owned networks – this is the largest funding commitment for maintenance in the state's history.
- This historic funding is just not benefiting big state-driven projects like WestConnex, but also small council works such as repairing a timber bridge at Captains Flat, upgrading the Lismore-Bangalow Road at Howards Grass or restoring flood-damaged roads in North West NSW.
- This is part of the NSW Government's record \$60 billion infrastructure spend building for the future.

NSW HOUSING BOOM CONTINUES

- The housing boom in NSW is continuing with the NSW Government rezoning land at Catherine Field, which will allow a further 3,200 new homes to be built Sydney's south-west.
- The Catherine Field land release topped off a bumper year for housing in NSW. Figures from the Australian Bureau of Statistics show there were 45,707 dwelling approvals in the 12 months to November 2013 – the highest level since 2004.
- Average monthly approvals under the NSW Liberals & Nationals Government are 29 per cent higher than the last five years of the former Labor government.

- New figures also show first homebuyers are cashing-in, with the NSW Government's First Home Owner Grants helping more than 6,000 families into a new property – up about 80 per cent on last year.

REWARDING SAFE DRIVERS: 408,000 RECEIVE HALF PRICE LICENCES

- As part of the 'Fair Go for Safe Drivers' incentive scheme 408,000 motorists have been rewarded with half price drivers' licences.
- The scheme rewards motorists with a clean driving record for five years with a 50 per cent reduction on the price of their drivers' licence renewal.
- More women than men are being rewarded for their safe driving. The figures show 223,904 women have received the discounted licence while 184,443 men have done so.
- The new figures show Port Macquarie drivers are the state's safest with motorists from Dubbo and Orange not far behind.
- In the Sydney metropolitan area Castle Hill, Baulkham Hills and Blacktown are the areas where most people have obtained the discounted licence.

HELP FOR LONG-TERM RENTERS TO BUY IN THE BUSH

- City-based long-term renters looking to buy a home in regional NSW can now apply for \$7,000 in NSW Government funding.
- NSW Deputy Premier Andrew Stoner said a separate new incentive of \$10,000, aimed at encouraging more people to relocate from metropolitan areas to regional NSW for employment, also came into operation from the start of the year.
- The expanded Regional Relocation Grant and the new Skilled Regional Relocation Incentive will help ease Sydney's tight rental market and population pressures.
- The grants are designed to boost population growth in regional areas to meet the expected increase in demand for jobs being driven by the NSW Government's investment in regional infrastructure and business growth.
- For more information visit: <http://www.business.nsw.gov.au/invest-in-nsw/regional-nsw>.

LIGHT RAIL TO TRANSFORM NEWCASTLE

- The NSW Government has announced the first stage of the new Newcastle light rail line will link the beach with a new transport interchange at Wickham, as part of a transformational project that will revitalise the city centre.
- The NSW Government is now consulting the community on two short-listed light rail routes which connect Wickham to Newcastle Beach.
- Truncating the heavy rail line, creating a fully accessible transport interchange at Wickham and introducing light rail will enhance and accelerate many renewal initiatives - helping bring jobs, residents and visitors into the Newcastle city centre.

CHINESE LEADING A NSW TOURISM BOOM

- NSW begins 2014 as Australia's most popular destination for both domestic and international tourists – with recent figures showing visitors from China have increased 18 per cent in the past year.
- China has passed New Zealand to top the list of international tourists to NSW with the trend expected to gain momentum in 2014 in good news for our tourism operators, hotels, restaurants, retailers and taxis.
- The latest International and National Visitor Survey shows the NSW Government's tourism strategies, such as our investment in major events, are working with increases in visitor numbers, nights spent here, and expenditure.
- We remain the most popular State for international holidaymakers, recording growth in holiday visitor numbers (up by 8.2 per cent), nights (up by 7.5 per cent) and spending (up by 12.7 per cent).

NEW CHILD CARE VACCINATION LAW TAKES EFFECT

- New legislation has come into effect in NSW to help protect children in child care centres from preventable diseases.
- A child cannot be enrolled at a child care facility unless the parent or guardian provides an official immunisation record proving the child is fully immunised, or an approved exemption is provided.
- The changes send a clear message to parents the NSW Government is serious about protecting the health of our children from the devastating consequences of vaccine-preventable diseases, and the wider community.
- For more information, go to:
www.health.nsw.gov.au/immunisation/Pages/vaccination_enrolment.aspx.

DOWNWARD TREND: LOWEST ROAD TOLL SINCE 1920s

- The 2013 NSW road toll is the lowest since 1924 – a sign the increase in police highway patrol is making an impact.
- Provisional figures show the 2013 road toll is 339, down from 369 in 2012 and 2003 when the road toll was 539.
- Minister for Roads Duncan Gay urged the community play its part by sticking to the speed limit, driving to the conditions, wearing your seatbelt, making sure you're well rested before you set off and having a Plan B to get home if you're drinking.

NEWCASTLE CONTINUES TO SET RECORD COAL EXPORTS

- The Port of Newcastle continued to set records for its coal exports, reflecting the port's importance to the state and national economies in supporting jobs and growth.
- A record 150.5 million tonnes of coal was exported from Newcastle in 2013, with December being a record month for coal shipments.
- This strong result is an endorsement for the coordinated work of coal producers and service providers to continue to grow exports.

- In addition to the annual record, a new monthly coal export record of 15.1 million tonnes was achieved in December, exceeding the previous record of 14.2 million tonnes set last October.

SYDNEY FESTIVAL 2014 PROVIDES AN ECONOMIC AND CULTURAL BOOST

- More than half a million locals and visitors are expected to take part in both ticketed and free events as part of the Sydney Festival 2014, which runs until Australia Day, 26 January.
- The NSW Government is investing more than \$5 million to ensure the success of the 2014 Festival, showcasing a range of new and existing works from around the world.
- The Festival is an important part of Sydney's major events calendar, and will enliven our city with world-class arts and cultural activities and provide a boon for our economy - in particular hotels, restaurants and the retail sector.
- The 2014 program features 370 performances and 100 events, performed by more than 700 artists in about 30 of the city's finest venues and outdoor locations, including the Sydney Opera House, Seymour Centre, Carriageworks and Parramatta's Riverside Theatres.
- For more information and to book tickets for Sydney Festival 2014 visit www.sydneyfestival.org.au

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