

NSW GOVERNMENT WEEKLY UPDATE – 27 September 2013

1,700 EXTRA WEEKLY BUS AND FERRY SERVICES

- The NSW Government has added 1,700 extra weekly bus and ferry services as part of a timetable coming into effect on 20 October – the same day the new train timetable begins, which delivers more than 1,000 extra weekly rail services.
- It will be the state's first ever fully-integrated timetable which aims to ensure bus, train and ferry services align.
- Benefits include 1,200 extra weekly bus services for Western Sydney, 429 for the Inner West, 119 for Northern Sydney, and 30 each for Newcastle and the Illawarra.
- There are 55 extra weekly ferry services with services catering for demand at Abbotsford, Cabarita, Balmain, Darling Harbour, Cremorne Point, Mosman Bay, Double Bay and Rose Bay and faster trips for many on the Parramatta River.

NEXT ROUND OF ENERGY ASSISTANCE NOW AVAILABLE

- NSW households could be eligible to receive up to \$250 to help manage their electricity bills with applications now open for the NSW Government's Family Energy Rebate for the 2013-14 financial year.
- The rebate increased from \$75 to \$125 on 1 July 2013, rising to \$150 by 2014, and is available to households receiving the Commonwealth's Family Tax Benefit A or B.
- More than 540,000 families across NSW are eligible to receive the rebate as a credit on their electricity bill.
- The process has never been easier with an online application form available at <http://www.energy.nsw.gov.au/customers/rebates>

PLAN YOUR TRANSPORT FOR SYDNEY'S HUGE WEEK OF MAJOR EVENTS

- Sydneysiders and visitors are urged to plan their travel around the city during the upcoming bumper week of major events.
- Trains and buses will be the best way to move around the city during the International Fleet Review from 3-11 October.
- The celebration, to be attended by Prince Harry, coincides with a number of other major events, including the NRL Grand Final and the One Direction and Bollywood superstar **Shahrukh Khan** concerts at Sydney Olympic Park.

- Our message to anyone wanting to enjoy the celebrations is to leave the car at home and use one of the extra 5,000 public transport services organised by the NSW Government. For transport information go to www.nsw.gov.au

OPAL CARD TRIAL FOR BUS CUSTOMERS BEGINS

- The first trial of the Opal card on a bus route will begin next week - three months ahead of schedule – on the 594/594H route between Hornsby, North Turramurra and Town Hall.
- The bus rollout is the most technically challenging mode because once complete the electronic ticketing system needs to be constantly communicating with more than 5,000 buses driving around Sydney and the regions.
- Benefits for customers include cheaper adult single bus fares of between two and five per cent, and an Opal Weekly Travel Reward, earned with eight paid journeys on buses, trains, ferries or light rail - making regular travel cheaper than a MyBus TravelTen.
- Electronic ticketing is already available on all Sydney Ferries services, and is at train stations from the CBD north to Chatswood, in addition to the City Circle and east to Bondi Junction.

HOME BUILDING REFORMS

- The NSW Government has released its proposed reforms to home building laws as part of our plan to stimulate the home building industry.
- The proposed reforms cover various aspects of the home building legislation such as dispute resolution, statutory warranties, home building contracts, owner-builders obligations and home warranty insurance.
- Fair Trading Minister Anthony Roberts says the NSW Government has struck a balance between providing homeowner protection while supporting home building activity and investment in NSW, which fell to record lows under Labor.
- The Position Paper is available at www.fairtrading.nsw.gov.au

INCREASED POWERS FOR POLICE TO TARGET CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE

- Police will be given more powers to target the sexual abuse of children – meaning officers will be able to randomly enter and inspect the homes of sex offenders.
- The registered sex offender must co-operate with police which may include providing officers with log-in details and passwords to allow on the spot checks on computer usage.
- If a registered person refuses to co-operate with police then they may be charged with failing to comply with reporting obligations.
- The new laws will also ensure anyone who is a registered sex offender is prohibited from working in a broader range of roles that may expose them to children, including volunteer roles, work as a self-employed contractor and educational vocational training.

POLICE TRANSPORT COMMAND CENTRE OPENS

- Minister for Police and Emergency Services Michael Gallacher, Minister for Transport Gladys Berejiklian, and NSW Police Commissioner Andrew Scipione officially opened the Police Transport Command (PTC) centre at Central Railway Station.
- It will serve as the command centre to monitor the rail network and assist in deploying police to trouble-spots.
- Since coming on line on May 1 last year, the NSW Police Transport Command has had a significant impact in reducing crime across the transport network.
- Since May 1, 2012, Police Transport Command officers have made nearly 2,900 arrests, laid more than 5,260 charges, issued some 53,620 infringements and conducted over 470 operations.

MINISTER URGES COUNCILS TO APPLY FOR INFRASTRUCTURE SUBSIDY

- Councils across NSW are urged to consider making an application in the third round of the Local Infrastructure Renewal Scheme (LIRS) - no matter how big or small the project.
- The NSW Government is providing \$100 million over six years to fuel investment in local infrastructure that was allowed to languish during 16 years of Labor neglect.
- The Local Infrastructure Renewal Scheme provides a 3 per cent interest subsidy on loans taken out to fund council infrastructure. The subsidy is provided for 10 years.
- The first two rounds of the scheme saw 87 councils receive interest subsidies for 138 individual projects throughout the State.
- Applications for round three of the LIRS will close on 31 December 2013, with guidelines for applications available at www.dlg.nsw.gov.au.

AUSTRALIAN FIRST PHONE JAMMING TRIAL AT LITHGOW JAIL

- Australia's first trial of mobile phone jamming in prisons is underway at Lithgow Correctional Centre, in a major security initiative to shut down illicit phone use by inmates.
- Mobile phone use in jails is a significant concern for authorities around the world and pose a threat to the security of correctional centres and the community as they are often used to facilitate criminal activity outside prison walls.
- Dozens of antennas have now been installed inside Lithgow Correctional Centre to jam the channels that would normally transmit mobile phone signals – the antennas are set so they do not affect mobile phone customers in the community.
- The nine month trial has the support of mobile phone service operators and the Australian Communications and Media Authority with the results to determine if the technology is rolled out in jails across the country.

NEW EDUCATION BODY CREATED

- The NSW Government is introducing landmark reforms which will bring together for the first time the three cornerstones of education standards: curriculum, student assessment, and teacher quality under a single authority.
- The reform will amalgamate the responsibilities of the Board of Studies NSW and the NSW Institute of Teachers to create a new governance body, the Board of Studies, Teaching and Educational Standards (BoSTES).
- In NSW we have great schools, great teachers and great students – but we can improve the way we capture information and data on standards, and how we apply that information to improving quality teaching and student outcomes.
- The new body will be in place for the start of the next school year.

PLENTY OF FISH TO CATCH THIS FISH STOCKING SEASON

- Large adult rainbow trout have been released into Pejar Dam, north of Goulburn, marking the start of the 2013 fish stocking season.
- The fish are the first of millions to be stocked into waterways across NSW as part of the NSW Liberals & Nationals Government's commitment to improving recreational fishing opportunities in regional NSW.
- The annual fish stocking programs are funded in part by the money raised by the NSW Recreational Fishing Fee.
- Fish being released into NSW waterways include Australian bass, brown and rainbow trout, golden and silver perch, and Murray cod.