

NSW GOVERNMENT WEEKLY UPDATE – 3 October 2014

EXTRA BUS SERVICES FOR SYDNEY'S NORTH WEST

- Another 520 extra weekly bus services have been announced for Sydney's North West, taking the total number of extra weekly public transport services introduced by the NSW Government to more than 9,500.
- The latest boost to bus services will benefit customers in the growing Hills district, including Baulkham Hills, Kellyville, Beaumont Hills, Rouse Hill, Seven Hills, Pendle Hill and Bella Vista.
- The number of customers catching buses in the North West is increasing at a rapid rate. The increase in bus services has been made possible by the NSW Government's multi-million dollar investment in brand new accessible buses.
- Since March 2011, the NSW Government has delivered more than 8,200 extra bus, 1,190 extra train and 220 extra ferry services.

BIGGEST HOUSING BOOM IN OVER A DECADE

- Official figures from the Australian Bureau of Statistics show housing approvals in NSW are at their highest level since the 12 month period ending in May 2000.
- In a major boost to housing affordability, more than 52,000 housing approvals have been recorded in the twelve months to August 2014 - around 1,000 new homes per week.
- With another two million extra people expected to be living in NSW by 2031, the State will require about a million additional homes.
- The NSW Government has already started work on delivering the homes needed for the future with more than 4,200 dwelling approvals in August.

CAMPAIGN AGAINST ALCOHOL-FUELLED VIOLENCE CONTINUES

- Latest data shows ID scanners at high risk venues in Kings Cross are serving their purpose in keeping banned troublemakers out and away from the precinct.
- More than 415,000 patron IDs have been scanned since the ID scanners were introduced in June this year, with the information only available to police.
- The system is proving to be an effective deterrent with the vast majority of banned troublemakers staying away, and only five people on temporary or long-term banning orders being identified through the system while trying to enter a venue.

- In another measure, the NSW Government has also launched an alcohol advertising campaign encouraging individuals to take responsibility to ensure people can enjoy a safe night out.
- For more information on the *Stop Before it Gets Ugly* campaign visit, www.nsw.gov.au/stopbeforeitgetsugly

TEN MORE SPEED CAMERAS TO BE REMOVED

- Ten more speed cameras are to be removed across NSW under the NSW Government's commitment to remove any speed camera lacking a proven road safety benefit.
- Locations where cameras are to be ripped out include Delhi Road at Macquarie Park, General Holmes Drive at Botany, the Hume Highway at Burwood and the M4 at Wentworthville.
- Safety works such as additional signage, barriers and markings are carried out before any camera is removed, and all revenue from speed camera fines is directed back into road safety programs.
- This year's Speed Camera Performance Review found fixed speed cameras have saved 53 lives and prevented 919 people from being injured in the last five years.

CHEAPER FARES FOR TAXI CUSTOMERS

- The taxi surcharge on card payments will be halved from 10 per cent to 5 per cent in time for the busy holiday season in a big win for customers.
- Currently, taxi customers are charged a surcharge when they pay their fare with a credit or debit card. This money goes to the provider of the taxi's electronic payment system.
- The new Passenger Transport Act passed through Parliament last month, paving the way for changes including a five per cent cap on taxi surcharges.
- The changes have been announced to begin on 12 December 2014, meaning customers will have more money in their pockets in time for the Christmas period, when taxis are at their busiest.

\$187 MILLION NEW BEGA HOSPITAL MILESTONE

- The construction of the new South East Regional Hospital at Bega has celebrated a milestone with a topping out ceremony on the roof of the \$187 million facility.
- Progress on the \$187 million development began in May when the first concrete was poured. The structure has now reached its highest point.
- The South East Regional Hospital will change the way health care is delivered to the Bega Valley. It will be a state-of-the-art hospital which will care for the community for decades to come.
- More than 130 inpatient beds will be available when the new hospital opens - more than the current Bega and Pambula Hospitals combined – and the facility is future-proofed to meet increasing patient demand.

MULTICULTURAL GRANTS PROGRAM LAUNCHED

- The new Multicultural NSW Grants Program has been launched with an additional \$200,000 increase taking total funding for the initiative to \$1.6 million.
- The grants will be awarded to initiatives promoting cultural harmony and social cohesion and across four categories - Unity, Celebration, Partnership and Sponsorship.
- The program supports Multicultural NSW's new three year strategic plan, Harmony in Action, supporting a harmonious multicultural society.
- Applications for Unity and Celebration Grants are now open and more information can be found on the website www.crc.nsw.gov.au

PIRTEK STADIUM UPGRADE

- The finalised scope for a \$29 million upgrade to Parramatta's Pirtek Stadium has been announced.
- After consultation and agreement with the two major hirers of the Stadium, the Parramatta Eels and the Western Sydney Wanderers, the tenders have gone out for the first package of works.
- Construction is expected to commence on the Stadium in mid-October.
- The upgrade includes: rebuilding the players change-rooms to contemporary international standards, an additional 2,000 seats behind the existing terraces at the north and south ends, a seating upgrade and replacement, and wi-fi connectivity.

BEST BOATING SAFETY RESULT IN MORE THAN 20 YEARS

- NSW has posted its best boating safety result in more than 20 years.
- For the 12 months ending 30 June eight fatalities were recorded state wide compared with 27 fatalities the year before.
- The initiatives being undertaken in NSW were reaping results including the roving lifejacket van taking new style lifejackets to boat ramps across the state.
- The boating safety program is the biggest this state has ever seen and included an increase in frontline Boating Safety Officers and Boating Education Officers, a major safety campaign, a roving lifejacket van, community events and a zero-tolerance approach to wearing a lifejacket when required.

**Follow the NSW Government on Twitter and Instagram @MikeBairdMP
And Facebook www.facebook.com/mikebairdMP**