

## **NSW GOVERNMENT WEEKLY UPDATE – 8 August 2014**

### **GOVERNMENT TIGHTENS BAIL LAWS**

- Alleged offenders who pose an unacceptable risk to the community will no longer be eligible for bail under enhancements to the State's bail system.
- The NSW Government has adopted all recommendations from a review by former Attorney General John Hatzistergos, including a new onus on those accused of the most serious offences to show why their detention in custody isn't justified.
- New risk factors will be included in bail assessments, including whether an accused has organised crime associations, victims' views on their own safety, and an accused's history of compliance on "conditional liberty" such as bail or parole.
- The commonsense changes will ensure the new bail laws are doing precisely what they were intended to do, which is to place the potential risk to the community posed by an accused offender front and centre of the justice system.

### **NSW GOVERNMENT LAUNCHES CARERS STRATEGY**

- The NSW Carers Strategy has been launched and is set to benefit more than 850,000 carers across the State as part of a five-year plan.
- The plan is the result of extensive collaboration with more than 2,500 people, mostly carers, who shared their ideas on how government agencies, business and community groups could better support carers.
- It contains practical approaches that we hope will make a real difference in carers' lives, not only in the care they provide, but in important areas such as employment, education and health and wellbeing.
- To view the strategy visit [www.carers.nsw.gov.au](http://www.carers.nsw.gov.au)

### **\$38 MILLION REDEVELOPMENT OF HYDE PARK ANZAC MEMORIAL**

- A \$38 million plan to redevelop the ANZAC Memorial at Hyde Park has been announced, which will complete the original 1930 vision for the Memorial.
- The announcement marked the beginning of the State's Centenary of Anzac commemorations and coincided with the centenary of the start of WWI.
- The NSW Government will make an initial \$20 million contribution to the project, which will include an Education and Interpretation Centre beneath the ANZAC Memorial, and a water cascade.

- The Education and Interpretation Centre will connect with the school curriculum for students to learn about the Anzac legacy and Australia's war history.

## **STRIKING THE RIGHT BALANCE ON LIQUOR LAWS**

- The NSW Government is building on its alcohol policy measures in order to strike the right balance between industry and individual responsibility.
- New measures announced this week in our response to the five-year statutory review of the State's liquor laws include escalating sanctions for licensed venues caught selling alcohol to a minor, and introducing a package of 12 late trades a year – allowing some venues to drop 2am or 3am closing back to midnight, yet still be open later for key community events.
- A new licence sub-category will be created, providing reduced annual licence fees for small wineries, distillers and craft brewers to recognise their lower risk profile and contribution to regional tourism.
- These build on measures already taken to curb anti-social behaviour across the State so the community can feel safe when out enjoying our vibrant social life.

## **HALF A MILLION OPAL CARDS ISSUED**

- Customers are embracing Sydney's modern new transport ticketing system, with 500,000 Opal cards now issued as Opal goes live on another 520 buses, benefiting customers across Western Sydney and the Northern Beaches.
- Opal is available on all suburban and intercity trains, all Sydney Ferries, and around 5,000 buses by the end of the year, with light rail to follow early next year.
- With 14 paper ticket types being retired on 1 September, now is the time for customers to order their Opal card online, over the phone, at pop-up kiosks at more than 40 stations and shopping centres, and, from Sunday, at more than 1,000 retailers.
- When the Gold Senior/Pensioner Opal card is made available later this year, customers will be able to use Opal or continue buying paper Pensioner Excursion Tickets. Fares will also remain capped at \$2.50 a day for seniors and pensioners.

## **CONGESTION BUSTING PROGRAM SEES ANOTHER PINCH POINT FIXED**

- The M4 westbound off ramp and Russell Street intersection at Leonay has been completed, unblocking another bottleneck in Western Sydney.
- The off ramp was identified as part of the NSW Government's \$246 million Pinch Point Program, as westbound vehicles exiting the M4 were queuing back onto the motorway increasing the risk of a high speed crash.
- The NSW Government is investing in improvements such as the Pinch Point Program that will deliver immediate benefits to Sydney motorists, while also investing in major infrastructure such as WestConnex.
- Since March 2011, more than 200 pinch point projects have been completed. A further nine projects are planned to start this year and a further 20 are underway.

## **\$20 MILLION FARM FINANCE BOOST WELCOME**

- Farm businesses in NSW are set to benefit from an additional \$20 million boost to the Commonwealth Government's Farm Finance Concessional Loans Scheme.
- The announcement takes the amount allocated for the 2014-15 year for the Farm Finance Scheme to \$50 million.
- The Scheme assists farmers who have commercially viable businesses but are currently experiencing financial hardship, and allows eligible businesses to restructure existing debt in the form of low-interest loans.
- The Rural Assistance Authority (RAA) is administering the Schemes on behalf of the Commonwealth. For more information go to [www.raa.nsw.gov.au](http://www.raa.nsw.gov.au).

## **APPLICATIONS INVITED FOR HUMAN GENOMICS RESEARCH GRANTS**

- The NSW Genomics Collaborative Grants Program has been launched to support researchers undertaking ground-breaking research into whole genome sequencing.
- The NSW Government is providing \$7 million over four years for the grants program, with \$3 million available in 2014/15 alone.
- The ground-breaking program will provide NSW researchers with access to the latest whole genome sequencing technology as part of a world-leading human genomics collaborative research program.
- It will enable researchers to investigate gene disorders, rare and inherited genetic disease, cancer and complex disease with a strong genetic component.
- For more information go to, [www.health.nsw.gov.au/ohmr/pages/default.aspx](http://www.health.nsw.gov.au/ohmr/pages/default.aspx).

## **MAJOR INVESTMENT IN WATER SECURITY PROJECTS**

- The latest round of the Water Security for Regions program will provide \$17 million in funding for ten projects to help communities prepare for future drought conditions.
- The NSW Government is serious about improving water security infrastructure in the regions to help farmers and regional industries deal with drier conditions.
- The latest projects to be funded are located in the Brewarrina, Glen Innes, Liverpool Plains, Narromine, Parkes, Tumbarumba, Walgett and Warren Shire Councils.
- The next round of funding under Water Security for Regions, worth \$80 million, would be extended to a total of 60 Local Government Areas.
- Application and eligibility guidelines for Water Security for Regions 2014–15 can be found at [www.insw.com](http://www.insw.com).

## **NEWCASTLE AIR QUALITY MONITOR LAUNCHED**

- The Newcastle Local Air Quality Monitoring Network has been launched, providing information that will increase the understanding of air quality issues in the region.

- We use this air quality data to establish and monitor trends, inform longer term government actions and policies, and provide public access to reliable information.
- The Newcastle network will have three new sites at Mayfield, Carrington and Stockton.
- The NSW government takes air pollution very seriously and nowhere is this more evident than in the Hunter region, where we are investigating the sources and impacts of particulate pollution.

## **BOATING NOW: NEW FUNDING FOR SAFE AND ACCESSIBLE WATERWAYS**

- The NSW Government has announced a boost in funding to improve boating facilities across the State.
- NSW Boating Now will almost triple funding to the regions each year to help keep waterways safe and accessible for everyone to enjoy.
- Under a previous program, \$5 million per year was made available for boating facilities. Under the new scheme, \$14 million will be allocated each year for five years.
- The new funds will be allocated according to 11 new Regional Boating Plans being developed in consultation with councils, boating stakeholders and waterway users.

## **\$2.3 MILLION FOR ANTI-LITTERING PROJECTS**

- Environment Minister Rob Stokes has announced \$2.3 million for local action on littering hot spots across NSW.
- The community is fed up with litterbugs and the Litter Prevention Grants Program will fund 31 projects involving 43 councils.
- These projects will include new bins installed, innovative education strategies rolled out and a boost to compliance activity to deter litterers and enforce penalties.
- We are sending a very strong message that as a community we won't tolerate littering and those that do it will be caught.

## **RORY MCILROY RETURNS EXCLUSIVELY TO SYDNEY**

- Sydney is set to host the world's best golf tournament once again, with the NSW Government securing the current world number one and defending Emirates Australian Open champion Rory McIlroy for this year's event.
- Rory McIlroy's return to Sydney is great news for golf fans and it will provide another major boost to the State's major events calendar.
- McIlroy is in career best form and this will be the only opportunity for sporting fans in Australia to see him in action against some of the world's best golfers.
- The tournament will be played at the Australian Golf Club in Sydney from 27 to 30 November.

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