

NSW GOVERNMENT WEEKLY UPDATE – 15 November 2013

AGREEMENT FOR CROWN RESORT FACILITY AT BARANGAROO

- The NSW Government has entered a binding agreement with Crown Resorts Limited to develop a VIP restricted gaming facility at Barangaroo, following the completion of negotiations under Stage 3 of the Unsolicited Proposals policy.
- Statutory approvals are still needed from the Independent Liquor and Gaming Authority and planning consent for construction of the hotel resort, which will include the usual opportunity for public consultation.
- The independent assessment committee found the Crown project would result in an estimated 1,250 additional jobs after construction, increased international tourism, and an increase in Gross State Product of \$442 million per annum by 2025.
- It found Sydney was falling short of its potential share of the growing international gaming and tourism market and has underperformed compared with Melbourne.

NEW POLICE POWERS WORKING IN TARGETING CRIMINALS

- New laws giving Police greater search powers has resulted in nearly 40 members and associates of the Rebels outlaw motorcycle gang - the “Brothers for Life” gang - being served with Firearm Prohibition Orders in the last week.
- Under the new laws police can immediately stop and search a person who is subject to a firearm ban for guns, with officers also able to search their cars and their premises for firearms.
- These new laws also increase prison terms from 10 to 14 years for the possession and/or supply of a firearm or pistol for a person who is subject to a firearm ban.
- This Government is proud to have worked closely with the NSW Police Force and Crime Commission to deliver these powerful new weapons to help tackle criminals with guns.

PROPOSED NEW LAW FOR UNLAWFUL ASSAULTS

- Attorney General Greg Smith SC is proposing a new stand-alone offence for deadly unlawful assaults, with a maximum penalty of 20 years imprisonment.
- The proposed unlawful assault law will be based a Western Australian law, and remove ambiguity by explicitly recognising situations where an assault directly or indirectly causes the death of a person.

- The new law will remove the clutter that applies to all the other types of manslaughter, which covers a wide range of offences ranging from medical negligence to long term neglect of a child leading to their death
- Mr Smith said the proposed offence will send a clear message to the courts that this is a very serious offence, and they should head towards the top end of the 20 year scale.

LIGHT RAIL A BIG BOOST FOR TRANSPORT, JOBS AND INVESTMENT

- Sydney's new light rail project linking Circular Quay, Central, Randwick and Kingsford would deliver 10,000 jobs and more than \$4 billion in economic benefits to the State, according to the business case released this week.
- Light rail will play a crucial role in addressing the significant congestion challenges we face in Sydney.
- Light rail will be able to carry up to 9,000 people per hour in each direction, with additional high capacity services to cater for major events at the SCG, Sydney Football Stadium and Randwick Racecourse.
- Light rail is one of many key infrastructure projects being delivered by the NSW Government including the North West Rail Link, South West Rail Link, WestConnex, Inner West Light Rail and Wynyard Walk.

A NEW ERA FOR STRATA LIVING

- The NSW Government has announced proposed reforms to improve the everyday things that affect people living in strata units like noise, smoking, pets, parking and governance.
- With more than 72,000 strata schemes in NSW and five new schemes registered every day, the reforms will ensure NSW has a set of modern laws that accurately reflect 21st Century strata living.
- Within 20 years half of the State's population is expected to be living or working in a strata or community scheme so the NSW Government is acting now to meet this challenge and make life simpler and easier for NSW strata residents.
- Details of the proposed reforms can be viewed at www.fairtrading.nsw.gov.au

CSG ACTIVITIES ON HOLD TO PROTECT SYDNEY CATCHMENT

- A hold has been implemented on exploration and extraction of natural gas from coal seams in the 'Special Areas' zone within Sydney's drinking water catchment - effective immediately.
- The NSW Government recognises community concern that accessing and performing drilling in these pristine areas may have an effect on the drinking water supplies to Sydney and the Illawarra.

- The immediate hold will stop any activities under the Petroleum Onshore Act related to the commercial exploration or extraction of natural gas from coal seams within the Special Areas.
- The hold will be imposed pending an investigation by the NSW Chief Scientist and Engineer into the impact of coal seam gas activities and other contributing factors on water in the Special Areas.
- For information on existing regulations covering coal seam gas visit: www.csg.nsw.gov.au

MORE POST-BUSH FIRE HELP FOR THE BLUE MOUNTAINS

- The NSW and Australian Governments have announced further assistance for communities affected by the Blue Mountains bush fires - with funding provided to clean-up and remove all debris from destroyed homes at Springwood, Winmalee, Mount York / Mt Victoria and Lithgow.
- This practical assistance means that if someone has lost their home in the bush fires the cost of the clean-up will not be deducted from a resident's insurance payout.
- The NSW Government has also announced it is developing new rules so that home owners in designated bushfire prone areas will not need to get permission to clear trees from within 10 metres of their homes, and shrubs and other vegetation within 50 metres of their house on their own land.
- Changes are also being planned to give the RFS Commissioner the power to carry out hazard reduction on land without the consent of the owner, after reasonable attempts to contact the landowner have failed.

WALSH BAY ARTS PRECINCT MASTER PLAN RELEASED

- A spectacular waterfront square for public events and performances forms the centrepiece of a proposal for an enhanced Walsh Bay arts precinct
- The Walsh Bay Arts Precinct Master Plan aims to more than double the precinct's arts offerings with new and upgraded production, rehearsal, studio and performance venues.
- With Darling Harbour and Barangaroo rapidly progressing, it is time to focus nearby Walsh Bay. Together they will form the western expansion of the ribbon linking arts and cultural venues around Sydney Harbour and the CBD.
- The master plan can be viewed and comments provided via the Arts NSW website www.arts.nsw.gov.au or for more information visit the NSW Government's Have Your Say website at www.haveyoursay.nsw.gov.au

NSW GOVERNMENT LAUNCHES NEW BEREAVEMENT SERVICE

- A trial has begun of a new free bereavement service to help NSW residents receive the assistance and support they need when dealing with NSW Government agencies after the death of a loved one.

- The Service NSW bereavement team can assist by providing a checklist of NSW Government agencies to notify, information on how to organise a funeral and advise on what to do when someone you know has suffered a loss.
- This initiative will make it much easier for someone who needs to organise a death certificate, cancel a driver licence, or transfer a vehicle's registration.
- It comes as NSW Premier Barry O'Farrell officially opened the 11th Service NSW 'One Stop Shop' at Gosford. Like the other centres it is open 7am-7pm weekdays and 9am-3pm Saturdays – making it easier for people to do their business with the government at a time that suits them.
- For more information call 13 77 88 or visit www.service.nsw.gov.au

POOL REGISTER REMINDER

- Pool owners have until Tuesday to register their backyard pools and spas on the NSW Swimming Pool Register or risk a fine as part of NSW Government efforts to protect young children from drowning deaths and injuries.
- Registration is free and easy on the online register or your local council can also help you register for a fee of up to \$10.
- To date over 250,000 pools have been registered and the register will stay open after the deadline passes for people to register their existing pools and as new pools are built in NSW.
- The NSW Swimming Pool Register is available to be accessed online at any time at www.swimmingpoolregister.nsw.gov.au

\$11 MILLION INJECTION FOR WAR ON WEEDS

- The full list of ongoing noxious weed control projects– worth more than \$11 million – have been announced, which the NSW Government will fund in the 2013-14 financial year.
- Close to 200,000 kilometres of weed pathways – covering an area of 800,000 hectares – has been inspected for new invasive weeds as part of the NSW Government's Weed Action Program.
- Thirteen Weed Management Authorities will share in \$8.5 million in funding to carry out weed management, while the Department of Primary Industries and other partners will lead a range of State-wide projects totalling more than \$1.5 million.
- The NSW Government is investing more into weed management than ever before, up from the \$10.8 million allocated last financial year.

PREMIER WELCOMES MAJOR INDIAN CONFERENCE TO SYDNEY

- NSW Premier Barry O'Farrell has today welcomed an Indian Government delegation to Sydney while officially opening the Regional Pravasi Bharatiya Divas – or Overseas Indian Convention.
- The 2013 Convention is the first to be held in Australia, marking the contribution the overseas Indian community makes to the development of India.

- The decision to choose Sydney to host this gathering indicates the strong and long-standing friendship that India and Australia are fortunate to enjoy.
- The Regional Pravasi Bharatiya Divas is organised by the High Commission of India and the Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs.

PREMIER'S AWARDS FOR PUBLIC SERVICE

- NSW Premier Barry O'Farrell has congratulated the winners of the 2013 NSW Premier's Awards for Public Service, recognising the achievements of the public service and its partners in the private and non-government sector.
- Among the winners was The Sydney Children's Hospitals Network, NSW Public Works and the Head Teacher of Automotive at Wagga Wagga TAFE, Wayne Jenkins, who received the Premier's Award for Individual Excellence and Achievement.
- Each of the winners were recognised for going the extra step in their contributions to the public service to help improve the services being offered.
- Details on the winners can be found at: www.publicserviceawards.nsw.gov.au

***Want to know what the NSW Liberals & Nationals Government is up to this week?
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