

NSW GOVERNMENT WEEKLY UPDATE – 22 August 2014

NSW GOVERNMENT DELIVERS AN EXTRA 170 FRONTLINE OFFICERS

- Congratulations have been extended to 170 members of “Class 322” who have this week attested from the NSW Police Academy at Goulburn.
- The probationary officers, made up of 111 male and 59 female recruits ranging from 19 to 48 years, will now begin their careers across 50 Local Area Commands.
- The graduates join an elite group of women and men who selflessly dedicate their lives on a daily basis to serve and protect the community.
- NSW Police Force numbers are at a record high – with an authorised strength of 16,396. Since 2011, the NSW Liberals & Nationals Government has employed an additional 590 police officers.

OPAL BUS ROLLOUT REACHES HALFWAY MARK

- The Opal card is about to go live on another 720 buses in Western Sydney, North Sydney and Sutherland.
- This means customers will be able to “tap on” and “tap off” on 2,890 buses, as well as trains and ferries.
- With 5,000 buses set to be Opal ready by the end of the year, this week’s milestone means the program’s halfway mark has been passed.
- NSW Transport Minister Gladys Berejiklian took the occasion to remind commuters of the retirement of 14 paper ticket types at the end of this month.

MINISTERIAL CODE OF CONDUCT TOUGHENED

- The Code of Conduct for NSW government Ministers will become an “applicable Code” for the Independent Commission Against Corruption under changes announced this week by Premier Mike Baird.
- The changes mean a Minister could potentially be found to be corrupt by ICAC on the basis of a substantial breach of the code.
- In addition, new provisions in the Code will prohibit Ministers from pressuring civil servants into changing their recommendations – a reform Mr Baird said would strengthen the provision of “frank and fearless” advice in NSW.
- The changes, which implement recommendations in a 2013 report by ICAC, come into force next month.

SMARTER PLANNING LOCKS IN JOBS AROUND SECOND SYDNEY AIRPORT

- The NSW Liberal and Nationals Government is planning for the future by expanding the Western Sydney Employment Area (WSEA) to take advantage of the second Sydney airport announced by the Commonwealth.
- The Western Sydney Employment Area is the area set aside for industrial and commercial purposes that is serviced by strong road links and infrastructure.
- The proposed expansion of WSEA will lock in land for more than 57,000 jobs - 36,000 industrial jobs and 21,000 office jobs over the next 30 years.
- Expanding the Western Sydney Employment Area will safeguard the land to provide the jobs we will need in coming decades and ensure we make the best use of the land around a new Western Sydney airport.

PREMIER BAIRD TO MAKE FIRST OFFICIAL VISIT TO CHINA

- NSW Premier Mike Baird will lead his first official visit to China next month to strengthen economic and cultural ties with the world's second-largest economy.
- The visit from 3-5 September will be Mr Baird's first overseas mission as Premier and will promote trade between NSW and China, particularly in the areas of tourism, education and financial services.
- Mr Baird will visit Guangzhou, Shanghai and Beijing to reinforce the message that NSW is open for business with China, which is our number one trading partner and biggest source of international tourists and visitors.
- Mr Baird will also push the case for Sydney to become a Renminbi settlement hub to make it easier for Australian firms to do business with China.

WAGGA WAGGA BASE HOSPITAL REDEVELOPMENT SURGES AHEAD

- Health Minister Jillian Skinner and Wagga Wagga MP Daryl Maguire toured the \$282.1 million redevelopment of Wagga Wagga Base Hospital this week.
- The new hospital will deliver an enhanced emergency department, operating theatres, new intensive care and high dependency units, additional inpatient beds and a rooftop helipad.
- The \$282.1 million redevelopment is a jointly-funded project between the NSW Government and the Australian Government through its Health and Hospitals Fund Program.

FIREFIGHTERS START AT NEW ALBION PARK FIRE STATION

- Full-time firefighters have commenced work at Fire & Rescue NSW's brand new Albion Park Fire Station on a 24/7 roster, boosting fire and emergency protection for residents in the Illawarra.
- The 16 permanent firefighters join retained (on-call) firefighters at the new \$2.5 million Albion Park Fire Station, which houses two fire trucks, including a specialist rescue fire engine that was previously stationed at Shellharbour.

- The new Fire Station was designed to accommodate permanent and retained firefighters to service the future fire and emergency response needs of the region.

PROTECTING NSW'S PRECIOUS WATER RESOURCES

- For the first time in Australia state-of-the-art computer modelling will be used with groundwater baseline data to map and protect the State's precious underground water resources.
- The Water Monitoring Framework will provide NSW with honest, independent and consistent oversight and further strengthen the toughest regulations for mining and gas in Australia.
- Water is the lifeblood of communities across the State and that is why the NSW government is increasing mapping and monitoring to make informed decisions that ensure our water resources are protected.
- Further information on the Groundwater Baseline Project is available at www.water.nsw.gov.au.

NSW JAILS TO GO SMOKE FREE

- NSW Attorney General and Minister for Justice Brad Hazzard has declared NSW jails will become smoke-free from August 2015.
- About 17 per cent of the community smoke and the rate is declining. Yet 75 to 80 per cent of inmates continue to smoke.
- The move was supported by the Cancer Council and Health Minister Jillian Skinner and a pilot program was conducted at Lithgow Correctional Centre.

MORE FUNDING FOR CHILDREN WITH DISABILITY

- Children with disability will be given more support to attend community preschool under an overhaul of funding arrangements announced by the NSW Government.
- The new Preschool Disability Support Program will make \$17 million available to community preschools in NSW — including an extra \$2 million directly going to support young children each year.
- Funding for children with the highest needs will increase by 30-70 per cent, assisting children who previously were not getting the level of support they need.
- For the first time in NSW, all community preschools will receive funding to support children with low-level disabilities. This will be distributed according to the total number of children included in the Preschool Funding Model and preschools will not have to apply to receive it.

MULTICULTURAL NSW: A NEW VISION FOR HARMONY

- The NSW Government has outlined a new vision for our multicultural state as part of a three-year plan that will also see what is now known as the Community Relations Commission renamed 'Multicultural NSW'.
- Key reforms under the plan - Harmony in Action - include a revitalised grants program and an improved community engagement strategy, which will maintain

regular contact with multicultural communities, religious leaders and sporting codes to promote social cohesion.

- The new approach will support initiatives that address racism and discrimination and will place greater emphasis on the beliefs and values that unite us as Australians.
- The strategic plan, Harmony in Action, can be found by visiting www.crc.nsw.gov.au.

PLANS FOR NEW BYRON CENTRAL HOSPITAL GO ON PUBLIC DISPLAY

- Health Minister Jillian Skinner and Ballina MP Don Page this week inspected plans on the new Byron Central Hospital, valued at more than \$80 million.
- The NSW Government committed \$1.5 million in the 2014/15 Budget for construction to get underway, with ground works on the Ewingsdale site on track to begin in the coming months.
- The Byron Central Hospital will work with the new ambulance station, which has been providing fantastic care for the community since opening in 2012.
- Plans are now on display until Friday 19 September at the Byron Shire Council and via the Department of Planning and Infrastructure website www.planning.nsw.gov.au.

NEW LIFE FOR OLD EXPORT ABATTOIR

- Deniliquin could see up to 460 full time jobs created over the next five years with the announcement that the local abattoir will be refurbished and reopened, with support from the NSW Government.
- The NSW Government has been working with Australian Meat Group Pty Ltd on a multi-million dollar investment plan for the facility, which will breathe new life into the community.
- In the first year, it is anticipated that jobs for up to 130 full time equivalent staff will be created. This is expected to increase to up to 460 full time equivalent staff by year five of the project.

RESOURCES FOR REGIONS RECEIVES EXCELLENT RESPONSE

- The NSW Government's 2014-15 Resources for Regions program has had a strong response from eligible communities, with 81 expressions of interest received for a share of the \$87 million available this year.
- Infrastructure NSW received EOIs from across the 11 local government areas eligible for this year's program, including Broken Hill, Cessnock, Cobar, Lithgow, Maitland, Mid-Western Regional, Muswellbrook, Narrabri, Newcastle, Singleton and Wollongong.
- The Resources for Regions program recognises the need for the NSW Government to provide tangible support to mining communities to ensure their long term economic viability.

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