

## **NSW GOVERNMENT WEEKLY UPDATE – 28 February 2014**

### **MANDATORY MINIMUMS FOR SERIOUS INTOXICATED ASSAULTS**

- The NSW Government will introduce mandatory minimum sentences for serious drug and alcohol-fuelled assaults as part of our comprehensive package of reforms aimed at changing our culture and promoting personal responsibility.
- This package of mandatory minimum offences sends the clearest possible message that those who engage in drug or alcohol-fuelled assaults in public will face the full force of the law.
- All the offences attracting a mandatory minimum sentence will also include a two year increase to the maximum penalty when the offence is committed in public by an intoxicated offender.
- For full details of the proposed laws go to [www.nsw.gov.au](http://www.nsw.gov.au).

### **HISTORIC MURRAY DARLING BASIN AGREEMENT SIGNED**

- Prime Minister Tony Abbott and NSW Premier Barry O'Farrell have signed the historic Murray Darling Basin agreements hailing it as a positive outcome for NSW and the broader national interest.
- By signing the Basin agreements, the NSW Government has secured an additional \$80 million funding over the next eight years for Basin communities throughout the State.
- Deputy Premier Andrew Stoner said the funding will boost water infrastructure in NSW, including significant projects at the Menindee Lakes and in the Nimmie Caira area of the lower Murrumbidgee Valley.
- The funding will not only benefit NSW, but the entire Murray-Darling system, and will help rural and regional communities be better prepared for future droughts.

### **\$40 MILLION TO SAFEGUARD REGIONAL WATER SECURITY**

- Regional infrastructure projects aimed at promoting water security will receive \$40 million in funding under a new program, *Water Security for Regions* announced by Deputy Premier Andrew Stoner.
- *Water Security for Regions* will offer funding for projects that improve water efficiency or enhance water security, such as dam augmentation, pipeline and bore works.
- So far, five high priority projects in regional NSW have already been identified to shore up water supplies in Bourke, Cobar, Cooma, Forbes and Wilcannia.

- The projects have been recommended based on their level of priority and readiness, and will be subject to normal assessments including environmental approvals where appropriate.

## **FINAL TESTING UNDERWAY FOR INNER WEST LIGHT RAIL EXTENSION**

- The Inner West Light Rail Extension is another step closer to completion with all nine new stops complete, tracks and infrastructure ready, and vehicle testing currently underway.
- The \$176 million extension will connect to the existing light rail service from Central to Lilyfield, and will run along the former Rozelle freight rail corridor to Dulwich Hill.
- The project will provide an important transport link for commuters in Sydney's Inner West – and is being delivered on time and on budget.
- Vehicle testing will continue in the coming weeks before passenger services begin next month, pending the outcome of the tests.

## **GETTING SYDNEY MOVING: MORE CLEARWAYS**

- The NSW Government's drive to get Sydney moving has progressed to the next phase with four new weekend and extended weekday clearways for King Georges and Roberts Roads, Lane Cove and Mona Vale Roads as well as the Princes Highway now open for public consultation.
- This is a government that is getting on with easing congestion through immediate measures such as our \$246 million pinch points program and our clearways strategy – at the same time that we are delivering vital infrastructure projects like WestConnex.
- New weekend and extended weekday clearways have been proposed for some of Sydney's busiest road corridors to improve traffic flow, particularly on weekends when we are now seeing more than 15 million trips by car across the city each weekend.
- Clearways can help reduce congestion for more reliable and efficient travel with improved traffic flow, reliable travel times for buses and freight vehicles and a safer road network.
- To have your say go to [www.transport.nsw.gov.au/clearways](http://www.transport.nsw.gov.au/clearways).

## **AN AUSTRALIAN FIRST: LANE FILTERING FOR MOTORCYCLISTS**

- NSW will be the first state or territory in Australia to legalise motorcycle lane filtering which will help ease road congestion.
- Last year, we held a successful trial in Sydney CBD of motorcyclists being exempt from existing lane filtering laws in an attempt to ease road congestion and measure potential safety issues for other road users.
- As a result of the trial we will introduce a new law permitting fully licenced motorcyclists to legally filter past stationary vehicles at intersections when it is safe to do so.

- Riders will be able to filter at a speed limit of 30km/h, but it is important to note the new law will not apply to school zones during hours of operation where there might be an increase in pedestrian activity.

## **DOMESTIC VIOLENCE TASKFORCE TO EXAMINE SENTENCING AND SUPPORT**

- Minister for Women Pru Goward has announced the formation of the Violent Domestic Crimes Taskforce to examine if current sentencing options for perpetrators of domestic violence are effective, reduce recidivism, reflect the seriousness of the crime, and reflect community expectations.
- The Taskforce will also study whether the current system provides appropriate support for those reporting and witnessing domestic and family violence, and also the link between alcohol and domestic violence.
- How alcohol contributes to the frequency and severity of domestic violence is a question we need to answer. Whether it is violence on the street, or violence in the home, a woman has the right to feel safe.
- Domestic and family violence is the number one cause of death and disability for women under the age of 40. One woman on average is killed by her partner or former partner every week in this country.

## **NSW GOVERNMENT BACKS TAMWORTH - \$7.86 MILLION FOR AIRPORT UPGRADES**

- The NSW Government has committed up to \$7.86 million to support Tamworth Regional Council's efforts to secure a 25-year Australian Defence Force contract for new pilot training facilities at Tamworth Regional Airport.
- We have made the case for the retention of the Basic Flying Training School in Tamworth – the NSW Government has now put its money where its mouth is.
- The NSW Government assistance for infrastructure upgrades is essential to ensure the airport's competitiveness as a location for the facilities.
- Without the necessary infrastructure upgrades, there is a risk these flight training services may be moved out of NSW – we are determined that does not happen.

## **NSW SECURES AUSTRALIAN PREMIERE OF MATILDA THE MUSICAL**

- NSW has secured another musical and major events coup, with West End and Broadway favourite 'Matilda The Musical' to make its Australian Premiere in Sydney in 2015.
- The Royal Shakespeare Company's stage musical adaptation of the much-loved novel by best-selling author Roald Dahl, Matilda, will play at the Lyric Theatre from August 2015.
- Featuring music and lyrics by Australian comedian, musician and composer Tim Minchin, Matilda The Musical is the story of an extraordinary girl who dreams of a better life and dares to take a stand and change her destiny.
- Matilda The Musical will be a fantastic addition to the NSW Events Calendar and help generate tens of millions of dollars in economic activity by attracting interstate and international visitors to Sydney to see the show.

## **NEW PEDESTRIAN BRIDGE FOR MOORE PARK SPORTS PRECINCT**

- A new pedestrian and cycling bridge paying tribute to Australia's Anzac and cricketing history will be constructed at the Moore Park sporting precinct with delivery expected in time for the 2015 Cricket World Cup.
- The bridge will span Anzac Parade and be known as the Albert (Tibby) Cotter Walkway – named after the former Australian Test cricketer who was killed in action during World War One.
- This is an important project to improve safety for the hundreds of thousands of spectators and visitors to our major sporting venues every year and follows the delivery of the new Noble and Bradman Stands at the Sydney Cricket Ground.
- Moore Park is one of Sydney's key cultural precincts with the Sydney Cricket Ground, Allianz Stadium and The Entertainment Quarter attracting almost 1.5 million spectators and event patrons and up to 350,000 pedestrian and cyclists annually.

## **HONOURING OUR VETERANS: UPGRADES TO A DOZEN WAR MEMORIALS**

- Minister for Citizenship and Communities Victor Dominello has announced 12 war memorials in towns and suburbs across NSW will be upgraded and maintained, thanks to NSW Government funding grants.
- The Community War Memorials Fund was established to help protect and restore war memorials across NSW and grant applications are open twice a year.
- As we move toward the start of the Centenary of Anzac (2014-2018), it is more important than ever that we ensure our community war memorials stand proud and strong around the state.
- Inverell, Taree, Thirroul, Kiama, Woronora, Cowra, and Belmont are among the areas to receive the upgrades.

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