

NSW GOVERNMENT WEEKLY UPDATE – 29 January 2016

SCHOOLS SAFER FOR START OF SCHOOL YEAR

- The NSW Government has delivered on another election commitment with more than 2,400 school zone flashing lights having had been installed since 2011.
- Every eligible school in NSW – from Eden to Tweed Heads, from Bondi to Broken Hill - is now serviced by flashing lights which provide an important warning to motorists as they are entering a school zone and greatly reduce the risk and potential severity of a crash.
- The next stage of the rollout will be to install additional flashing lights for about 400 schools with multiple busy entrances.
- The NSW Government is welcoming back school students for another safe year of learning.

NSW REMAINS STRONGEST STATE IN THE NATION

- NSW has retained the number one position in CommSec's State of the States report.
- The report, which compares the states and territories by analysing key economic indicators, has put NSW first when it comes to retail trade, population growth, housing finance, housing starts, business investment and employment.
- The NSW Government will continue to work hard to deliver the infrastructure and services that will drive jobs and growth in the economy.

FAST-TRACKING OF ST GEORGE HOSPITAL REDVELOPMENT

- The NSW Government has fast tracked the construction of the Acute Services Building by up to six months which will save taxpayers about \$30 million without any reduction in the size of the project or the clinical services delivered.
- The new Acute Services Building will include a new intensive care department, eight new operating theatres, about 120 new inpatient beds, two cardiac catheter laboratories, a new sterilising service department and a new helipad.
- The estimated total cost of the redevelopment, including the Acute Services Building, is now \$277 million. Construction is expected to be completed by mid-2017 with commissioning to follow.

SCHOLARSHIPS TO PREPARE YOUNG PEOPLE FOR THE JOBS OF TOMORROW

- Minister for Skills John Barilaro has announced students will have access to \$25 million worth of scholarships for those undertaking vocational training in technology based growth industries.
- The scholarships are part of the 'Jobs for Tomorrow' program that encourages more vocational education and training students to enrol in and complete courses in science, technology, engineering and mathematics.
- Almost 70 qualifications at Certificate IV and above are eligible for the scholarships, while current industry partners include the NSW Business Chamber, the Association of Consulting surveyors, the Australian Computer Society Foundation and the Australian Industry Group.

NEW ERA OF SOCIAL HOUSING

- NSW is embarking on a new era of social housing with a large scale building program which will generate \$22 billion in construction activity in NSW and produce better social outcomes for the community.
- The program, 'Future Directions in NSW Social Housing', will ensure better outcomes for the community through:

- 23,500 new and replacement social and affordable housing dwellings to help reduce the waiting list;
 - Increasing the use of private rental assistance products by 60% to help vulnerable households avoid or leave social housing;
 - Delivering new mixed communities where social housing blends in with private housing;
 - Producing better amenity and environment and improved safety for public and private residents;
 - Transferring management of up to 35% of social housing to a community housing providers with longer term leases to be determined on a case by case basis.
- The Liberals & Nationals Government has made reducing homelessness and making social housing sustainable a state priority.

HISTORIC DEAL PUTS SURF CLUBS ON SOLID GROUND

- Minister for Lands and Water Niall Blair has announced an historic agreement between the NSW Government and Surf Life Saving NSW which will cut red tape for surf clubs so they can focus on doing what they do best: keeping our beaches safe.
- About 80 per cent of surf clubs are located on Crown land and this landmark agreement allows surf clubs and councils to sign a standard lease agreement of a minimum 20 years period.
- The agreement will ensure that surf clubs across NSW have affordable and secure tenure without the need to negotiate new arrangements regularly.

350 SCHOLARSHIPS FOR DIPLOMA OF ENROLLED NURSING

- Health Minister Jillian Skinner today encouraged school leavers or anyone interested in a career change to advantage of 350 NSW Government scholarships for the 2016 Diploma of Nursing (Enrolled Nurse) program.
- Scholarship holders will train at metropolitan and rural TAFE NSW Institutes as well as the NSW Health Registered Training Organisation at Rozelle and Liverpool and will undertake clinical experiences in the NSW Health System.
- Applications close on February 10 and successful applicants will commence their Diploma from April 2016 with the program running between 12 and 18 months.