



# State Connection

By The Hon Thomas George MP, Nationals Member for Lismore  
September 2011

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## Events around the electorate & in Sydney

Some events I have attended in the electorate during the past month include -

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- Caroon Fete
- Presentation Sisters Thanksgiving Mass
- Youth Environment Council meeting
- Lismore Parish Preschool new playground opening
- Tweed Banana Festival
- Murwillumbah Festival of Performing Arts 80<sup>th</sup> Anniversary
- Legacy Wreath Laying Ceremony at Murwillumbah
- Launch of Starkles Wigs at Shartan, Lismore
- Lismore Performing Arts Festival

In Sydney I had the honour of attending -

- Memorial Service for Margaret Hannah Olley AC AO
- Racing's Night of Champions
- Friends of Bravehearts Annual Dinner

## NSW Budget

The Liberals & Nationals' first Budget is about rebuilding New South Wales, including improved health, transport and disability services and roads.

The Budget delivers an additional 900 teachers, 2475 nurses and 550 police officers and a record infrastructure investment to address the building backlog left by Labor.

Locally this included -

- \$4 million to deliver plans for Stage 3 of Lismore Base Hospital

- \$2 million for a feasibility study for North Coast Rail to look at reinstating services on the Casino to Murwillumbah line, including integration with the wider regional transport network
- Lismore regional cancer centre - \$6.8 million to complete the centre
- Lismore fire and rescue - \$295,000 allocated for the regional office
- Bridge upgrades -
  - \$1.2 million to repair bridge over Wilsons River on Bruxner Highway at Lismore
  - \$1.1 million to upgrade bridge over Clarence River at Tabulam
- Kyogle High School upgrade to be completed in 2013
- Murwillumbah TAFE refurbishment - \$2 million and due to be completed in 2013
- Murwillumbah ambulance station - \$1.9 million and due to be completed in 2012
- over \$1 million in new disability facilities including five-bed co-located accommodation in Lismore for people with high support needs

## Government Reviews

### Environmental Planning & Assessment Act

The *Environmental Planning & Assessment Act* (EP&A Act) was written in 1979 and outlines how decisions are made about what people can do with their land.

A review is being undertaken by former Ministers The Hon Tim Moore & The Hon Ron Dyer and they are seeking views on what should be the broad underpinning principles of legislation to replace the Act.

A statewide listening & consultation process is occurring and sessions will be held in Ballina on 29 September and Murwillumbah on 30 September.

At the end of this consultation process, the panel will produce an initial discussion paper setting out the results of the consultation and what the panel thinks should be the principles considered for the new planning system. The consultation process will run until mid-November 2011 and the discussion paper is expected to be released in early December 2011.

Future stages of the review for 2012 include:

- Release of an options paper; and
- Release of a 'white paper' with detailed policy options (and draft legislation) followed by the introduction of a bill into the NSW Parliament.

Further information can be found at [www.planningreview.nsw.gov.au](http://www.planningreview.nsw.gov.au)

### **Livestock Health & Pest Authority**

Landholders, farmers and the public are being encouraged to have their say on the review of the NSW Livestock Health & Pest Authority (LHPA) model.

An Issues Paper has been released and identifies some of the major areas which will be considered and also provides some guidance in making a submission.

Submissions must be received by 30 September to either [secretary@lhpareview.com.au](mailto:secretary@lhpareview.com.au) or

Secretariat - LHPA Review  
PO Box 8731  
GUNDAROO NSW 2620.

The Issues Paper can be found at [www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/aboutus/about/legislation-acts/review/lhpa](http://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/aboutus/about/legislation-acts/review/lhpa)

### **Health & Medical Research Strategic Plan**

A discussion paper has been released which will lead to the development of the state's first Health & Medical Research Strategic Plan.

The Issues Paper brings together more than 200 submissions from institutions and individuals and is now available for public comment.

Submissions close on 26 September and copies of the paper can be found at [www.health.nsw.gov.au/omr/review](http://www.health.nsw.gov.au/omr/review)

### **Regional and Rural School Bus Safety**

The independent chair of the School Bus Safety Community Advisory Committee is calling for public submissions as part of work to examine school bus safety in regional and rural NSW.

Parents, schools, bus drivers, bus companies, students and other individuals and groups are invited to have their say on the issue.

Transport Minister Gladys Berejiklian established the School Bus Safety Community Advisory Committee to examine issues relating to the safe transportation of children to and from school.

The committee consists of road safety experts, transport operators, parents and school representatives and the Independent Chair is Carolyn Walsh - a Commissioner of the Australian Transport Safety Bureau.

Terms of reference are:

- Assess the status of school bus safety in regional and rural NSW;
- Consider the full range of school bus safety measures, with reference to national and international experience;
- Recommend the most effective ways to make school bus travel as safe as possible.

The closing date for submissions is 23 September 2011.

Submissions can be submitted via email to: [carolynwalshnsw@gmail.com](mailto:carolynwalshnsw@gmail.com) or mailed to:

Carolyn Walsh  
Independent Chair  
School Bus Safety Community Advisory Committee  
C/- Department of Transport  
PO Box K659  
HAYMARKET NSW 1240

More information is also available at:

[www.transport.nsw.gov.au/school-bus-safety-community-advisory-committee](http://www.transport.nsw.gov.au/school-bus-safety-community-advisory-committee)

## Parliamentary Inquiry

### School Zone Safety

The Staysafe (Road Safety) Committee is seeking submission until 30 September on school zone safety. Its terms of reference are as follows -

That the Committee inquire into NSW school zones to determine whether current measures are effective and/or what else can be done to optimise safety for students and simplify school zones for motorists, with particular reference to:

- a. The effectiveness of school zones in reducing pedestrian casualties during school zone times;
- b. The major contributing factors to pedestrian casualties in school zones;
- c. Age as a factor in pedestrian crash risk and the major contributing factors for casualties by age cohort around school zones;
- d. The deployment of alternative facilities to reduce reliance on school zones, such as grade separation, traffic lights and fencing;
- e. The appropriateness of a single approach school zone regime as opposed to modifying zones based on existing infrastructure and other current safety measures employed around schools;
- f. The availability and effectiveness of current road safety education programs in NSW schools; and
- g. Any other related matters.

Further information is available at

[www.parliament.nsw.gov.au/prod/parliament/committee.nsf/V3Home](http://www.parliament.nsw.gov.au/prod/parliament/committee.nsf/V3Home)

## Tom Harvey Award for Citizenship

The Tom Harvey Award for Citizenship recognises the outstanding contribution of a young Australian between the age of 15 and 30 to citizenship.

The Award comprises a cash prize of \$2000 and is presented at the annual Commonwealth Day Luncheon held at Parliament House, Sydney.

Nominations close on 2 December 2011. Further information can be obtained by ringing 92386866 or email [jcollins@matrixcorporate.com](mailto:jcollins@matrixcorporate.com).

## Starkles Wigs @ Shartan

I was honoured to attend the launch at Shartan Hair Studio in Lismore recently of their new range Starkles Wigs.

Owner Keryn Bryen is proud to be offering this new service, particularly to help local oncology patients purchase a wig locally instead of having to drive to the Gold Coast or Brisbane.

## World Parks Day

Entry to every national park in NSW will be free on World Parks Day on September 17, as New South Wales celebrates the International Year of Forests. Free entry is just one of the initiatives by the NSW Government aimed at promoting visitation to our national parks.

For a full list of events go to [www.wildwildworld.com.au/forests](http://www.wildwildworld.com.au/forests).

## Holiday Activities

### Kids' Camps

Bookings are open for October school holiday Kids' Camps at seven Sport & Recreation Centres around NSW.

Kids' Camps give children aged seven to 15 the opportunity to learn and master new skills while making new friends. Trained staff supervise children at all times.

For more information and booking visit [www.dsr.nsw.gov.au/kidscamps](http://www.dsr.nsw.gov.au/kidscamps) or ring 131302.

### Parliament Family Fun Day

NSW Parliament's Family Fun Day will be held on Friday 7 October from 10am -3pm.

Entry is free and gives the public the opportunity to look at Australia's first and oldest Parliament and enjoy fun activities at the same time.

Call 9230 2047 for more information.

## Congratulations

- to Robyn Edwards, former Principal at Murwillumbah Public School, on her recent retirement.
- Mitchell Lambert, Brenton Trembath & Chris Brooker, all teachers at Wollumbin High School on receiving "Excellence in School Drug Education", National Drug & Alcohol Award from the Australia Drug Foundation

## Media Releases

Following is a list of media releases I have issued during the past month. Follow the link to my website to view in full.

2012 Senior Week Achievement Awards Now Open

Dental Health Taskforce Announced

Hendra Claims Another Horse

George Encourages People to have their say on Planning

Thomas George Welcomes \$35000 Boost for Lismore Electorate Preschools

Budget to Rebuild NSW includes Health, Transport & Disability Services Boost for Lismore

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**THE NATIONALS**  
*for Regional NSW*