



Andrew Stoner MP
Deputy Premier of NSW
Minister for Trade and Investment
Minister for Regional Infrastructure and Services

MEDIA RELEASE

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**CROWN LAND REFORMS TO SLASH RED TAPE & PRESERVE
COMMUNITY ASSETS**

The NSW Government will cut red tape, return decision making to local communities and protect community land uses such as surf clubs, scout halls and bowling clubs under the most significant reforms to Crown land management in a generation, Deputy Premier Andrew Stoner said today.

“Crown land delivers many social, environmental and economic benefits to the people of NSW and we are taking action to ensure these benefits continue well into the future,” Mr Stoner said.

“Crown land accounts for more than 40 per cent of the State, with tens of thousands of community groups, local businesses and farmers depending on Crown reserves across NSW.

“Unfortunately the management of Crown land has become overly-complex, which makes it difficult for the community to manage their reserves and facilities operating on Crown land such as CWA halls, men’s sheds, scout halls, surf clubs, kiosks, cafes and market gardens.

“The NSW Liberals & Nationals Government is determined to make managing Crown land easier and that is why we are announcing new reforms to better manage the Crown estate,” he said.

Mr Stoner said the Government’s response to the Crown Lands Management Review would include slashing the amount of legislation stifling Crown land management by repealing eight pieces of outdated and overlapping legislation and introducing a new single Act.

“With legislation dating as far back as 1890, now is the time to introduce clearer, simpler and more contemporary legislation to better manage Crown land,” Mr Stoner said.

“A White Paper detailing the proposed legislative amendments has been released for public comment, providing stakeholders and members of the wider community with the opportunity to comment on the proposed legislation before the Government proceeds.

“The White Paper can be found at www.crownland.nsw.gov.au and submissions will be accepted until 20 June 2014.

“A pilot program with local government and a stocktake of the Crown estate will proceed later this year following consultation with key stakeholders such as Local Government NSW.

“Recommendations on the future of Travelling Stock Reserves will be subject to a pilot program to help determine the best management outcome for these historic reserves.

“Work will get underway on building a better business model for the Crown Lands Division to make it more transparent, accountable and consistent in its dealings.

“The review made other broad ranging proposals that require consultation with stakeholders and communities before the Government can make a decision to proceed with them.

“Over the next 12 months the NSW Government will be conducting extensive consultation with key stakeholders to ensure any decisions are made with the right level of experience, expertise and knowledge.

“I encourage all interested parties to read the full Crown Lands Management Review report at www.crownland.nsw.gov.au and take the opportunity to let the Government know their views.”

Media: Ben Shine 0431 096 596