



# **The Hon Katrina Hodgkinson MP**

## **Minister for Primary Industries**

## **Minister for Small Business**

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# **MEDIA RELEASE**

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Monday, 2 April 2012

## **NSW GOVERNMENT DELIVERS HISTORIC CEMETERY REFORMS**

Minister for Primary Industries, Katrina Hodgkinson today announced an historic reform program for the management of the State's cemeteries and crematoria on Crown, local government and privately owned land to ensure burial needs are met now and into the future.

"This is the most significant cemeteries and crematoria reform this State has seen in more than 150 years," Ms Hodgkinson said.

"As the first phase of the reform process, the NSW Government will streamline the management of the 300 hectare Rookwood Necropolis by establishing a two Trust management structure – down from the current seven Trusts.

"I commend the Anglican, General, Independent, Muslim and Jewish Trusts on their inspirational efforts and willingness to join forces. The amalgamation of the Trusts will enable greater cooperation, achieve operational efficiencies and will provide access to accrued capital for acquisition of new burial lands.

"The Catholic Trust will remain separate in the management structure and each Trust will retain their religious practices and burial rituals within the new Trust structure.

"The NSW Government has also commenced the development of a single piece of legislation to streamline the management and governance of NSW cemeteries and crematoria on Crown, Local Government and privately-owned land, which will significantly reduce red tape.

"A vital part of the consolidation of the disparate pieces of legislation is the establishment of a new NSW Cemeteries & Crematoria Board, which will replace the current, narrowly-focused, Crown Cemetery Advisory Committee (CCAC).

"A NSW Cemeteries & Crematoria Chair will also be appointed to:

- ensure that no faith is disadvantaged in the reform agenda of NSW cemeteries;
- address the immediate shortage of burial space in NSW;
- co-ordinate the commencement of the wider cemeteries reform process to ensure burial needs for our future generations are met now and into the future, and
- establish accountable financial, governance and operational systems to ensure Trust funds and assets are managed efficiently and transparently.

“These reforms represent a significant way forward in securing and solving short and long term burial needs for the people of NSW.

“The NSW Liberals & Nationals Government has achieved in 12 months what successive State Governments have never been able to accomplish.

“I am very proud to deliver these reforms after just one year in Office and I am confident the extensive reforms will lead to more streamlined, cost-effective and accountable management of cemeteries and crematoria in NSW,” Ms Hodgkinson said.