



POLICE ASSOCIATION OF NEW SOUTH WALES

PO Box A1097, Sydney South, NSW 1232

PHONE: (02) 9265 6777 FAX: (02) 9265 6789

EAGLENET 57070

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Police Strength Must Match Population Growth

PRESS RELEASE

The Police Association of NSW has welcomed today's announcement by the Baird Government of additional police numbers as a move in the right direction in demonstrating the Government's ongoing commitment to ensuring public safety in NSW.

We also welcome the Government's announcement to build a new police station at Mount Druitt and the commitment for more Specialist Police and the extra \$100 million for "Policing For Tomorrow Fund". The extra funds will focus on much needed Body Worn Video, Tablet computers and future technology to protect the community and reduce crime.

Police Association President, Scott Weber, said, "This is a good start, but our members look forward to further announcements in respect to more first response officers, especially in regional locations.

"Our 2015 Pre-Election Submission; *A Plan to provide NSW Police Officers with the resources to protect our community*, highlights it should be a realistic expectation for the people of New South Wales that, as the total population of the state increases, the proportion of police numbers should increase at the same rate.

"The Government have already committed to 60 staff for the North Coast, to be delivered in May this year.

"However, we need urgent action on police numbers in Wagga and Nowra which are both desperately short-staffed. At Wagga there is a heightened terrorist threat to the local community, with critical infrastructure and the RAAF and Army bases located there, and with the current staffing levels local police may not be able to respond appropriately.

"We owe it to local police and these communities to secure a commitment from the Government on the allocation of General Duties officers to focus on priority areas including the Wagga Wagga and Shoalhaven Local Area Commands, where Police Officers are overextended and additional resources are required. Local police are at breaking point and these communities are suffering due to a lack of police numbers. This needs to be addressed as a matter of urgency.

"Putting aside any real increase in police numbers, for police number ratios to simply remain stable an increase in police Authorised Strength of some 247 officers per year would be required to match a 1.5% per annum increase in population based on the January 2015 Authorised Strength of 16,485 officers.

"The Police Association of NSW seeks a commitment to increase on an annual basis the Authorised Strength of the NSW Police Force to, at a minimum, match the annual percentage increase in the population of New South Wales.

"The Association seeks to have this commitment commence immediately at the conclusion of the delivery of additional police officers to reach 16,665 authorised strength positions in August 2015.

"We look forward to additional commitments from the Baird Government to support police in protecting the people of NSW."

Media contact, Alison McLaughlin – 0414 918 470