



# **Don Page MP**

## **Minister for Local Government**

## **Minister for the North Coast**

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### **MEDIA RELEASE**

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Tuesday 31 May, 2010

## **MINISTER DETAILS GOVERNMENT PLANS TO REDUCE COUNCILS' INFRASTRUCTURE BACKLOG**

The Minister for Local Government Don Page has outlined the State Government's commitment to helping Councils alleviate their vast backlogs of infrastructure projects.

Addressing State Parliament today, Mr Page said the Liberals & Nationals Government is working with local governments to identify required infrastructure projects, and develop strategies to help Councils fund and build them.

"The State Government has started Council audits of the total local government infrastructure backlog and, once completed, we will know exactly what projects need funding, and in what order," Mr Page said.

"Councils will then be able to determine financial plans to address the backlog."

Mr Page said the NSW Government and the Division of Local Government will support Councils with their finances and their financial planning as they aim to reduce their infrastructure backlog.

The NSW Government will do this by:

- Providing financial assistance for Councils as they conduct their infrastructure audits
- Consulting with Councils to improve their long-term asset management and financial planning capacity
- Establishing a strategy that will provide subsidies to Councils to assist them with the cost of debt
- Helping Councils with training in financial planning and asset management, in partnership with the Local Government and Shires Association, Local Government Managers Australia, and the Institute of Public Works Engineering Australia.

"Also, the infrastructure audits will help Councils to review their rates, and allow them to plan for special variations on their council rates for specific infrastructure programs in the future," Mr Page said.

Mr Page said about half of NSW Councils had completed infrastructure audits and all Councils were expected to have them completed by early 2013.