



**Niall Blair**

Minister for Primary Industries  
Minister for Lands and Water

## MEDIA RELEASE

Wednesday, 26 August 2015

### **NEW BILL SET TO ENHANCE DAM SAFETY IN NSW**

The NSW Government today introduced the *Dams Safety Bill 2015* to the NSW Parliament, which will further improve dam safety standards.

Minister for Primary Industries, Lands and Water, Niall Blair, said the new Bill will modernise the approach to regulating dam safety in NSW and will protect the community from the risk of dam failure.

“These dams are the lifeblood of our regional communities, providing clean drinking water to our towns and cities, sustaining productive irrigation and farming industries and providing recreational benefits to the community,” Mr Blair said.

“That’s why these reforms are so important – they ensure the ongoing maintenance and construction of our dams and this critical infrastructure can be managed safely and sustainably in to the future.”

The proposed reforms seek to retain important elements of the current dam safety regime, to modernise the legislation and provide a best practice framework for the ongoing regulation of dam safety.

The introduction of the *Dams Safety Bill 2015* follows an independent review into dam safety and extensive community consultation.

There are 378 dams in NSW prescribed under current legislation and the Bill introduces a number of improvements to current dam safety regulation.

The regulator will become a merit-based board comprising expertise in dam engineering, cost benefit analysis, public safety risk analysis and emergency management.

The Bill will enable new dam safety standards to be developed that all prescribed dam owners will have to comply with. These standards will underpin the new regulatory framework, and will be developed in consultation with key stakeholders.

Implementation of the reforms will replace the *Dams Safety Act 1978* with new legislation.

It will remain business as usual for the Dams Safety Committee with implementation of the new Act expected to take some time. Dam owners will continue to be regulated under the existing Act until the new Bill is commenced.

**MEDIA: Siobhan McCarthy 0407 791 802**