



Katrina Hodgkinson MP Minister for Primary Industries Minister for Small Business

MEDIA RELEASE

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NSW GOVERNMENT RESPONSE TO THE DUNN REPORT

Minister for Primary Industries and Small Business Katrina Hodgkinson today announced the NSW Government will adopt the key recommendations of the *Governance Review of the Game Council of NSW* report by Mr Steve Dunn.

Ms Hodgkinson said the NSW Government will implement a broad range of reforms to ensure the effective management of game and pest animals whilst also restoring public confidence and the legitimacy of hunting as a recreational activity.

The NSW Government will implement the key Report recommendations which are to:

- disband the Game Council Division;
- transfer the regulatory, enforcement, education, policy and licencing functions into the NSW Department of Primary Industries (DPI); and
- establish an advisory Game Board that will undertake stakeholder engagement and representation, advocate hunting, advise on research priorities and commissioning research, and provide independent advice to government.

“The Director General of NSW Trade & Investment, Mr Mark Paterson, will become the Division Head of the Game Council Division in the interim to oversee the integration of functions into DPI,” Ms Hodgkinson said.

“The NSW Government will immediately suspend hunting in all 400 State Forests and 2 Crown Lands areas, pending the transfer of functions and the outcome of a risk assessment.

“The Report found the Game Council had an *‘inherent conflict associated with its functions to both represent the interests of hunters, and to regulate their activities’*.”

“Game Bird Management regulatory functions will continue to be undertaken by the Office of Environment and Heritage in 2013 and transferring to DPI in 2014.

“The governance arrangements of the Game Council are a product of the former Labor Government - another Ian Macdonald, Tony Kelly and Steve Whan legacy.

“The reforms announced today by the NSW Liberals & Nationals Government provide the opportunity for our primary producers, conservationists and volunteers to work in a coordinated manner across all land tenures to manage this costly and environmentally destructive problem.

“The overall direct economic impact of the pest animals has been conservatively estimated at \$740 million annually.

“Pest animals threaten 40% of fragile biodiversity in NSW. There are 388 threatened species at risk, including 154 plants, 186 animals, 17 endangered populations and 31 endangered ecological communities. It is impossible to place a value on this cost to the environment.

“Pest animals do not respect boundaries. For the first time, the NSW Government will be able to attack this problem by working with one set of regulations across all lands, irrespective of whether they are National Parks, State Forests, Crown Lands or private property.

“We are taking a similar ‘tenure-blind’ approach to the way bushfires are managed - better coordination of government agencies and the use of all available resources, including volunteers and professional pest management service providers,” Ms Hodgkinson said.