HISTORIC $7.5 BILLION BUDGET FOR NSW ROADS, MARITIME AND FREIGHT

Minister Gay today announced a historic $7.5 billion investment in this year’s NSW Budget to support the huge infrastructure program currently underway to build and upgrade critical road, maritime and freight networks.

“For nearly two decades under previous Labor governments, NSW went backwards on building and upgrading the road, maritime and freight infrastructure desperately needed to support and grow our communities and businesses,” Mr Gay said.

“Today’s announcement brings the overall funding commitment in this portfolio since March 2011 to $27.5 billion – the largest series of investments in the state’s history.”

The 2015-16 NSW Budget for roads, maritime and freight infrastructure and services represents a $2 billion increase in annual funding compared to last year’s investment.

Mr Gay said budget highlights include $4.1 billion for Regional NSW including $1.9 billion to continue fast tracking major upgrades of key regional highways such as the Pacific, Princes, Great Western, Newell, New England, Oxley, Mitchell, Kings, Central Coast, Silver City and Cobb. It also includes $1.7 billion to build a world class motorway for Sydney called WestConnex and $180 million towards easing city congestion.

“Not only are we well advanced in delivering the biggest infrastructure program in the state’s history, we’re also investing record levels – $1.5 billion this financial year alone – to repair and maintain existing road and maritime assets,” Mr Gay said.

Mr Gay said grants to local government will total $326 million in 2015-16, meaning councils can get on with the job of building and maintaining their local and regional road networks.

“Government initiatives such as Fixing Country Roads are starting to reverse decades of under-investment and neglect of council-owned roads and bridges,” Mr Gay said.

“Wherever you look across the state we are Rebuilding NSW to provide the critical transport and freight infrastructure our communities and businesses need and deserve.”
Budget highlights for roads and maritime for urban NSW:

- $275 million (including $51 million for enabling road works and land acquisitions) in state and federal funding towards construction of the NorthConnex Motorway, with twin tunnels under Pennant Hills Road to connect the M1 Pacific Motorway at Wahroonga to the M2 Hills Motorway at West Pennant Hills.

- $180 million towards easing Sydney’s congestion, including delivering additional clear ways and fixing notorious traffic pinch points and planning to develop the next package of works ($62 million), continue planning for the Smart Motorways program ($15 million) and delivering real time travel information for motorists ($9 million).

- $167 million for continued road upgrades to support population and economic growth in Western Sydney, including completing the final section of Camden Valley Way ($16 million) and ongoing upgrades of Schofields ($44 million), Richmond ($30 million) and Old Wallgrove ($30 million) roads.

- $164 million in joint funding with the Federal Government to upgrade roads to help support Sydney’s second airport at Badgerys Creek, including continuing construction on Bringelly Road between Camden Valley Way, Leppington and Kings Street, Rossmore ($50 million) and on the Werrington Arterial Road between the M4 Motorway and the Great Western Highway ($30 million).

- $57 million for cycling and pedestrian infrastructure, including towards the Nepean River Green Bridge near Penrith ($14 million) and Arncliffe Pedestrian Tunnel ($12 million).

- $42 million to start delivering major road upgrades to support the new Northern Beaches Hospital at Frenchs Forest.

- $36 million to progress planning and identification for future links on the Sydney motorway network including: Western Harbour Tunnel; Gateway to the South – M1 (Princes Motorway) Extension (includes the F6 corridor study); Outer Sydney Orbital; Bells Line of Road – Castlereagh Connection.

- $32 million to continue upgrading commuter wharves, including at Rhodes and Cabarita.

- $17 million to complete planning and commence construction of major road upgrades in the Sydney Airport precinct, including the Wentworth Avenue extension and Marsh Street upgrade, to reduce congestion and complement the operation of the future WestConnex Motorway.
Budget highlights for roads and maritime for regional NSW:

- $1.4 billion in joint funding with the Federal Government to continue fast tracking the duplication of the Pacific Highway to a four lane, divided road between Hexham and the Queensland border; including construction of the final section of the upgrade between Woolgoolga and Ballina.

- $182 million to continue major upgrades on the Princes Highway, including construction of the Foxground and Berry bypass ($140 million), completing the Gerringong upgrade ($12 million) and realignment of the highway at Termeil Creek near Ulladulla ($12 million).

- $87 million to continue upgrading the Great Western Highway, including finishing the upgrade at Bullaburra ($3 million) to complete a four-lane highway between Emu Plains and Katoomba, major safety improvement works from Katoomba to Mount Victoria and Forty Bends and Hartley Valley ($53 million in state and federal funding) and $27 million for upgrades at Kelso.

- $69 million for upgrades to Central Coast roads, including completing the upgrade of the intersection of Central Coast Highway with Brisbane Water Drive and Manns Road at West Gosford ($7 million), completing the upgrade of the intersection of Terrigal Drive and Charles Kay at Terrigal ($6 million), continued upgrade of the intersection of Wyong Road and Enterprise Drive at Chittaway Bay ($10 million), commencing construction of the Pacific Highway upgrade between Lisarow and Ourimbah ($10 million) and planning for upgrades of the Pacific Highway at Narara and Lisarow ($5.5 million).

- $50 million for upgrades to Hunter roads, including widening Cormorant Road between Industrial Drive to Stockton Bridge ($10 million in state and federal funding), ongoing upgrades to roundabouts on the New England Highway at Maitland ($19.5 million), continued planning for the Newcastle Inner City Bypass ($4 million), and planning for the extension of the Pacific Motorway to Raymond Terrace ($3 million).

- $35 million for a series of key upgrades on the Newell Highway, including completing the final section of the Moree Town Bypass ($3.9 million in joint state and federal funding), realignment of the highway at Grong Grong (east of Narrandera) and Trewilga (south of Peak Hill) ($12 million) and additional overtaking lanes along the length of the highway ($5.5 million).

- $23 million to continue the Bells Line of Road Corridor Improvement Program, including extra overtaking lanes at Kurrajong Heights and Bilpin.
• $12 million for upgrades on the Oxley Highway, including completing construction of a new bridge across Tangaratta Creek near Tamworth ($1.5 million) and improvement works at the intersection of the highway and Wrights Road, Port Macquarie ($6.7 million).

• $9.8 million to continue sealing the Cobb and Silver City highways, $9 million towards construction of the Queanbeyan Ring Road (Ellerton Drive Extension), $6 million to realign the Kings Highway at River Forest Road, $5 million for safety works on the Riverina Highway and $5 million to start major work to realign the Mitchell Highway at Guanna Hill.

**Budget highlights for urban and regional freight:**

• $209 million for the upgrade and maintenance of Country Rail Network assets, including replacement of old timber sleepers with modern long-life steel sleepers, resurfacing track and replacement of bridges and culverts (includes $56 million for grain rail lines).

• $124 million (state and federal funding) for the Northern Sydney Freight Corridor to improve freight rail access through the Sydney-Newcastle rail corridor between Strathfield and Broadmeadow.

• $76 million to continue the Bridges for the Bush program to replace or upgrade weight-restricted bridges on key regional freight routes, including completing construction of a new ‘road over rail’ bridge on the Olympic Highway at Kapooka ($24 million in joint state and federal funding), continue planning for a new Gunnedah Bridge on the Oxley Highway ($3 million), completing construction of the Tulladunna Bridge over the Namoi River near Wee Waa ($3.7 million) and finishing the widening of the Bemboka River Bridge at Morans Crossing on the Snowy Mountains Highway ($3.7 million).

• As part of a $20 million initiative to deliver upgrades on key sections of the Country Rail Network, $5 million will be invested to expand on the existing program to deliver rail siding extensions to improve train loading rates for grain.

• $15 million to progress upgrading Gocup Road to support increasing numbers of heavy vehicles carrying timber and general cargo to and from the forest products mills in the Tumut Valley.

• As part of the overall $50 million for Hunter roads, $2 million has been allocated for planning bypasses of Singleton and Muswellbrook on the New England Highway, $1 million for planning a grade separation of the intersection of the New England and Golden highways at Belford, and $500,000 to plan the widening of the railway underpass at the Gowrie Gates near Singleton.
• $5 million for the NSW Cargo Movement Coordination Centre, which will improve efficiency and reliability of freight rail operations throughout NSW and increase rail mode share.

• $4.25 million to upgrade Kidman Way south of Cobar.

MEDIA:
Emma Higginson | 0467 743 192
Vanessa Juresic | 0419 618 081