



# The Hon Barry O'Farrell MP

## Premier of NSW

### Minister for Western Sydney

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## MEDIA RELEASE

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Tuesday 31 May 2011

### **YOU SPRAY, YOU PAY: NSW GOVT TO GET TOUGH ON GRAFFITI VANDALS**

Courts will be given powers to disqualify graffiti vandals from driving under new legislation to be introduced into Parliament today, honouring another election commitment, NSW Premier Barry O'Farrell and Attorney General Greg Smith SC said.

"The public are sick and tired of waking up to find trains, schools, fences and other buildings marred by ugly graffiti tags. It's costing the community well over \$100 million a year, including around \$50 million just by RailCorp," Mr O'Farrell said.

"The time has come to not only make offenders clean up their mess but also face tough penalties – and as the father of a teenager, I understand there's nothing more valuable to young people than their driver's licence," he said.

"Magistrates will be empowered to put offenders on licence restrictions, reduce the offender's number of demerit points or disqualify them from driving altogether."

The NSW Government will:

- **require juvenile graffiti vandals to appear before the court for a graffiti offence;**
- **gives courts the power to:**
  - **extend the time graffiti offenders spend on learner or provisional licences, or**
  - **suspend a driver licence, or**
  - **limit the number of demerit points they are able to accrue over a specific period;**
- **Require cleaning up graffiti a condition of any court imposed Community Service Orders on graffiti offenders.**

"BOCSAR figures show over two-thirds of graffiti offenders identified by police are under the age of 18 and over 50 per cent were young males," Mr O'Farrell said

Mr Smith said graffiti imposes a real cost on businesses, individuals and local councils. It also makes our communities less attractive places to live and families feel less safe.

"Our plan to tackle graffiti in local communities balances penalties for young people who do the wrong thing and offers positive incentives to break a developing juvenile habit," he said.

"The introduction of stronger penalties for offenders and a scheme to ensure graffiti is promptly detected and removed will discourage vandals, improve public safety and build community pride," Mr Smith said.