



The Hon Barry O'Farrell MP

Premier of NSW

Minister for Western Sydney

MEDIA RELEASE

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GETTING ON WITH THE JOB: NEW CONVENTION CENTRE A STEP CLOSER

NSW Premier Barry O'Farrell and Minister for Tourism, Hospitality and Major Events George Souris today announced a period of consultation to ensure the new convention centre will meet industries' needs.

"One of our key election commitments was a new convention centre for Sydney and we're getting on with the job," Mr O'Farrell said.

"Labor's failure to upgrade convention centre facilities has meant NSW has missed out on the economic equivalent of hosting a Rugby World Cup each year. Our economy can't afford to continue missing out," he said.

To kick-start this consultation period, a major industry forum will be held on 8 July to:

- make public the current design concept for the project;
- brief industry on the Government's timeframe, objectives and scope of the project;
- advise on potential development opportunities; and,
- facilitate industry feedback to confirm the functional brief, design concept, and procurement options.

"We're moving on this quickly, but are also aware we need to get it right – so I make no apologies for extensive consultation with the experts," Mr O'Farrell said.

Mr Souris said the forum will reinforce the NSW Government's commitment to delivering the project and will ensure Sydney becomes the premier destination for international conventions, exhibitions, entertainment, and business events in Australia.

"During the consultation period, the NSW Government will call for expressions of interest for the private sector to partner with government in delivering the new facilities – with a shortlist and request for formal proposals to be released in November of this year," Mr Souris said.

"By March, the tender period will be finalised and the NSW Government will be awarding the proposal to the successful private sector partner in July 2012.

"We expect construction to start by the third quarter of 2012, with the new facilities open for business by 2015.

“Hosting the meetings in Sydney will cement this city’s reputation as a global financial hub, and will provide an opportunity to utilise the new convention and exhibition facility and showcase the new developments at Barangaroo.

“This is another example of the NSW Government getting on with the job and implementing our election commitments,” Mr Souris said.

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