



Chris Hartcher MP

Minister for Resources and Energy

Special Minister of State

Minister for the Central Coast

MEDIA RELEASE

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NSW MOVES AHEAD ON COASTAL MANAGEMENT

The NSW Government today announced significant changes to the way the NSW coast will be managed, giving more freedom to landowners to protect their properties from erosion and dropping Labor's onerous statewide sea level rise planning benchmarks.

Special Minister of State Chris Hartcher said the changes mean councils will have the freedom to consider local conditions when determining future hazards.

The first stage of the NSW Government's comprehensive coastal reforms will:

- Make it easier for coastal landholders to install temporary works to reduce the impacts of erosion on their properties;
- Remove the compulsory application of sea level rise benchmarks;
- Deliver clarity to councils on the preparation of section 149 notices by focusing on current known hazards; and
- Support local councils by providing information and expert advice on sea level rise relevant to their local area.

Mr Hartcher said the changes strike the right balance between protecting property and managing the State's vast coastline.

"The NSW Government has listened to the concerns of communities and councils about previous coastal erosion reforms and the uncertainties they caused for landholders," Mr Hartcher said.

"The Ministerial Coastal Taskforce has carefully considered the best ways to empower coastal communities to take preventative measures before erosion occurs.

"Our changes will mean landowners can more easily place sandbags on their properties to reduce impacts of erosion from smaller storm events.

"Landowners in erosion prone areas need to be allowed to take sensible measures to protect their land from coastal erosion and not be tied up in red tape.

"We will also halve the maximum penalties for offences relating the inappropriate use of these works, which were excessive."

Mr Hartcher said the heavy-handed application of Labor's sea level rise planning benchmarks for 2050 and 2100 would go.

“There has been concern about the negative impacts on property values from these unclear section 149 certificate notations,” Mr Hartcher said.

“The NSW Government will remove the need for councils to use state-wide sea level rise projections.

“We will be assisting councils by providing information on future sea level rise relevant to their local area and by giving councils access to expert advice.

“It is critical that the information contained in the section 149 certificates and the underlying mapping is clear and accurate.”

The NSW Government will issue advice to all councils to guide the preparation and use of section 149 certificates. This will provide much needed certainty for local communities on how these certificates refer to future coastal erosion hazard.

“This will give councils more certainty as the Government continues its reform of coastal management in NSW,” Mr Hartcher said.

The NSW Chief Scientist and Engineer has identified uncertainty in the projected rate of future sea level rise given that the scientific knowledge in the field was continually evolving.

Mr Hartcher said as an interim measure, all councils preparing coastal zone management plans will be given an extra 12 months to complete them and have suspended certification of any further plans.

The Coastal Ministerial Taskforce will continue to work with councils and communities on the second stage of reforms.

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