



# **The Hon Barry O'Farrell MP**

## **Premier of NSW**

### **Minister for Western Sydney**

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## **MEDIA RELEASE**

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Tuesday 30 August 2011

### **QUEENSLAND AND NSW GOVERNMENTS SIGN HISTORIC CROSS-BORDER MOU**

Queensland Premier Anna Bligh and NSW Premier Barry O'Farrell today signed an historic Memorandum of Understanding to strengthen cross-border arrangements and improve responses to natural disasters in both states.

Ms Bligh and Mr O'Farrell said the MOU would reinforce the relationship between the two States by including all Government services that were affected by cross-border issues, and covering the entire NSW-Queensland border.

The MOU goes beyond the current agreement, which only applies to areas such as health care, emergency services and transport in the Gold Coast-Tweed region. The new agreement encompasses areas including policing, social services, primary industries, water, emergency management and response.

Ms Bligh said the MOU ensures the Queensland Government is implementing some of the Queensland Floods Commission of Inquiry's recommendations.

"In its interim report, released on August 1st, the Commission of Inquiry recommended that the Queensland Government work with its NSW counterparts to set up procedures for co-ordinating emergency responses on the Queensland-NSW border," Ms Bligh said.

"For example, we will look at the use of governments' Air Wings for personnel, transport and freight into and out of flooded areas.

"The Commission of Inquiry also recommended that Queensland work with NSW to co-ordinate road condition reporting procedures to inform local councils and road users of interstate road conditions in a variety of different ways.

"During the January floods almost 70 per cent of our state was flood affected. In many cases travellers were stranded on either side of the border because they had not known the roads were cut - this had a huge impact on families and businesses."

Mr O'Farrell said the MOU continued a long history of cross border collaboration between NSW and Queensland to overcome the unique working and living arrangements for people living close to the border.

“There is a strong spirit of cooperation between our two States and this MOU is another sign of our shared determination to achieve positive outcomes for communities near the border,” Mr O’Farrell said.

“The MOU will formalise cooperation on strategic growth issues in key population centres and advance policy development and service delivery in the cross-border regions.

“Our ongoing shared response to the Hendra Virus outbreak is a practical demonstration of how closer cooperation will work.

“The MOU also provides for an annual meeting of the NSW and Queensland Premiers to progress cross-border issues,” he said.

The MOU commits to involving other stakeholders such as local and the Commonwealth Government where required.

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